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L.T.- DELCO. MONDAY, JANUARY 10, 1955

(Chas. Collingwood substituting)

PRISONERS

U.N. Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold has left Peiping. He and Red Foreign Minister Chou En-Lai - had their fourth, and last, meeting today.

So what's the result of the mission, intended to bring about the freedom of the eleven imprisoned American flyers? Dag Hammarskjold and Chou En-Lai, upon concluding their talks, issued a communique. But it tells us virtually nothing. No mention of the American prisoners. It doesn't even mention the case of the American airmen convicted of espionage, which was the whole point of the U.N. mission to Red China.

The communique, is worded in a curious way. The statement begins with a mention of the exchange of messages that brought about the Hammarskjold mission. Then, it says"

"In these talks, reference was made, at the

same time, to questions pertaining to the relaxing of world tension."

The phrase "at the same time" would seem to indicate that something else was discussed. The question of the American prisoners - we hope.

The communique concludes: "We feel that these talks have been useful, and we hope to be able to continue the contact established in these meetings."

Which might indicate - that negotiations will continue between the UN and Red China, on the Prisoner issue.

SENATE.

Today was - Committee Assignment Day, for the Democrats in the Senate. Most of the assignments, announced by a Steering Committee, are simple routine. Two - are noteworthy.

Places on the Foreign Relations Committee are much sought after. Senator Barkley of Kentucky gets one, Senator Wayne Morse of Oregon gets another.

In Barkley's case, the Seniority Rule was waived. The seventy-eight year old veteran was in the Senate previously, then became Vice-President. Now, returning to the Senate, he's technically a "freshman." At the bottom of the seniority ladder. - But an exception was made in the case of Alben Barkley - because of his long distinguished service.

Wayne Morse gets the nod, ^{for the Foreign Relations Committee} although he's technically, no Democrat at all. An ex-Republican, who bolted the party in Nineteen Fifty-Two, he ranks ^{even} ~~—~~

PERESS.

Senator McClellan, taking the place of
Senator McCarthy, says his Investigating Sub-Committee
will, promptly, take up the Peress case. Which
follows a resolution introduced by Senator Price Daniel
of Texas - calling for a continued investigation of
Communism by the Democratic-controlled Congress.

Senator Daniel criticized the army's conduct
in the case of the army dentist, called ^{BY McCARTHY} a Fifth
Amendment Communist. He charged - the army created
"confusion, suspicion, and discord," by waiting nearly
a year before giving facts in the honorable discharge
of Major Peress.

EISENHOWER.

The response in Congress to President Eisenhower's message, today, is almost unanimously favorable. On the Democratic side - approval. On the Republican side - [mostly approval, with] signs of an element of disagreement. This first challenge to the Democratic-controlled Congress ^{by} the Republican President is likely to find opposition ^{chiefly} in his own party.

The message concerned foreign trade, and called for a three year extension of the Reciprocal Trade Law. That Act gives the President the authority to reduce tariffs up to fifteen percent.

Last year, the President wanted a three-year extension, but the Republican Congress granted a continuation of only one year. So now, with the Democrats running things, the White House comes back with a three-year proposal.

The opposition on the ^{Republican} ~~Democratic~~ side comes

from high tariff advocates, who don't like the prospect of tariff cuts under the principle of reciprocal trade. Which President Eisenhower, today, recommended as a means of strengthening the free world against Communism.

The message also called for a reduction of income tax on foreign profits earned by American corporations. There are other clauses too - all in the interest of a greater American participation in foreign trade.

The Democratic Speaker of the House, Rayburn of Texas, said the new Eisenhower trade program ^{will} be put at the top of the list, for prompt action.

COSTA RICA

Costa Rica, today, called for a Western hemisphere conference - to consider a complaint against Nicaragua. Costa Rica charges that its neighbor, in Central America, plans aggression and invasion. Saying - the Nicaraguan government has recruited an army of "adventurers" for an attack on Costa Rica. Nicaragua denies all.

In Washington, today, the Costa Rican Ambassador, acting under a Pan American Treaty - urged a meeting of Western Hemisphere foreign ministers. He said that Nicaragua plans an invasion under the guise of a revolutionary movement in Costa Rica.

FORMOSA.

Today's information shows that the Chinese Red Air Force assailed the island of Tachen in a series of bombing raids. The first came early this morning - light bombers, escorted by fighter planes, including jets. They blasted the island for half an hour. Then, during the day, came three other major air assaults.

The casualties are described as "many." The damage - heavy. Huge fires lighted on Tachen, which is the anchor base of ^{the} a string of islands held by the Formosa Nationalists.

Today's air attack was the heaviest blow thus far, in the vest-pocket war off the coast of Red China.

RECORDING

Tonight's recorded report from Lowell Thomas might give an impression - that Lowell is back in New York.

Returning - to the skyline of Manhattan. But he's far away from that.

L.T. RECORDING

Good evening, everybody. Now maybe I shouldn't have said that because Charles Collingwood has already said it, but after these twenty-four years, I say it from habit even if I am broadcasting a message to you from far off South Arabia with an eight-hour difference in time. I wish all of you could have been with me on a flight that I have just made. In a sense it was a flight into the past. A flight from the modern world into the Middle Ages. Not quite into antiquity to the time of the Queen of Sheba three thousand years ago, like the last one on which I reported.

But in a way this one was even stranger because we were not just seeing the ruins of the Queen of Sheba's moon temple and the rather sketchy outlines of her great Mareb Dam. This time I was in a region where the people live about as they did hundreds and hundreds of years ago. And it's getting harder and harder to find places on this planet where that is true.

I wonder how many of you think, as I used to think, that we in America invented the skyscraper. In fact, I once thought that the era of the skyscraper really began not many years ago with the Flatiron Building in New York. Down there at that once world-famous corner - Fifth Avenue and Twenty-third Street.

But far far back in early times the Troglodytes of Cappadocia in Asia Minor lived in weird skyscrapers. And the Dalai Lama's palace at Lhasa in Tibet is a lofty skyscraper. But in some ways most startling of all are the skyscraper cities just south of the land of emptiness, the Rub al Khali in south Arabia. A section of our planet that is way off the beaten path in Hadramaut, six hundred miles or so east of the nearest point in Africa, and about fifteen hundred miles west of India.

In fact, there are four larger towns that you could call cities and thirty or forty smaller towns where these

skyscrapers are found. They're in a remote south Arabia valley. Some of them in side canyons. It's an immense valley; it resembles our Grand Canyon of the Colorado in Arizona, except that it's not so deep and the colors of the strata in the walls not so brilliant. The color here in the Wadi Hadramaut is predominantly dark red.

First we flew east and a little south of the only partially explored area where the British Protectorate of Aden and the little known country of Yemen and the vast Rub al Khali desert come together. For an hour or so we were over completely uninhabited desert. And then slowly, slowly we became aware that we were above a waterless valley that was growing wider and deeper. That's the head of the Wadi Hadramaut.

And in ancient times when the rainfall must have been far greater, archeologists and other scientists tell us this may have been one of the most densely populated parts of the earth. That, along with the valleys of the Nile and the Tigris and Euphrates, the Wadi Hadramaut may have been one of the cradles

of civilization. Be that as it may, we soon were above villages and fields.

Even now they don't have to dig far beneath the sands in this valley in order to strike water. Donkeys and camels provide most of the energy to bring the water from these wells for irrigation. And they raise millet, indigo, sesame, tobacco, dates, of course, honey, cocoanuts, and even some frankincense, although the great forests that provided the extremely valuable frankincense of antiquity, those forests have disappeared.

After we had been flying for about an hour and a half, from the eastern border of the Yemen, we came to what are known as the four principal cities of Hadramut: Hauta, Shibam, Saiyan, Tarim. These are the skyscraper cities. The most striking of the four - Shibam.

When it suddenly appears around a cliff that juts out into this great red valley, you simply can't believe your eyes. For here is a city made up of some six hundred of these skyscrapers, with streets between them like narrow canyons. The

city is made up entirely of tall buildings, most of them are dazzling white.

Every building, I believe, must be at least eight stories high. And they taper a bit as they go up, for an obvious reason. For no steel is used in their construction. Evidently this has always been a land of blood feuds. So one of the reasons for the tall buildings and the wall around these buildings is obvious. And then too, they're said to be warm in winter, which isn't really a cold season. And then cool the rest of the year which is blazing hot. Many of these skyscrapers and the handsome villas in the oases nearby are owned by rich men.

The principal industries of the Wadi Hadramaut today are making yarn, weaving cloth, tanning hides, preparing indigo and making the plaster that is used in all the skyscrapers and other buildings of this region. Ah, but the chief export for centuries, since they had their great depression around the time of Christ; the greatest export of all from the Hadramut has been young men. Just like with Scotland. Around thirty percent of

their young men here leave when they are in their teens.

They go to the East Indies and Malaya, where they enter the world of commerce. Ninety-five per cent of the Arabs in the strait settlements and Indonesia are Hadrami. They seem to have a flair for commerce. And then, after ten or fifteen years, they return. Some of them bring millions of dollars back. Then they build more skyscrapers.

Also, there's a new trend in the Hadramaut - like our own skyscraper cities. For all the wealthy city dwellers now have villas in the country nearby, surrounded by palm trees. Every wealthy family has at least two homes. One in the skyscraper city, and then one out in a date grove.

The first European to write about this little-known part of southern Arabia was a German named von Werder, who afterward went to America, in fact, to Texas. And there the Texans refused to believe the tales he told about the skyscraper cities of southern Arabia. Whereupon in despair he committed suicide. Freya Stark wrote several books about him.

And a few British came here after World War I, including a remarkable Englishman named W. H. Ingrams. He became advisor to the Sultan of Makalla and Shihr on the coast. Makalla is a skyscraper seaport between Aden and where the Wadi Hadramaut enters the Indian Ocean. Makalla is four hundred and fifty miles along the coast east of Aden.

Until Ingrams started his work, when rich Hadramis returned home, they not only built villas and tall buildings but they also got out their rifles. And they took part in those ancient blood feuds. And it wasn't until between 1934 and 1940 that the Ingrams got them to stop these tribal wars.

And the Sultan of Makalla didn't free his slaves until 1944. Inland, slavery still goes on. Four of us, our Australian and New Zealand pilots, explorer Mal Miller and I, landed on a stretch of desert midway between the cities of Saiyan and Tarim. First we buzzed the Sultan's gay blue and white palace at Saiyan, whereupon out came a car to pick us up. And what a car! It turned out to be an automobile that had been brought to this

valley by camel caravan and then assembled, and it was the first one ever brought here. A 1929 Chevrolet. And, in spite of the beating it has taken, the like of which you can't imagine, it's still going strong.

And, by the way, the first motion picture that was ever shown in the skyscraper city of Saiyan was shown the night that we were there. A documentary about Queen Elizabeth's recent voyage to Australia. It had been sent up by the British Governor at Aden, nearly five hundred miles away.

Hadramaut has a population divided into some seven classes. First the Saiyids, the aristocrats, at the top. They're descended from the prophet's daughter, Fatima and Ali. And then the sheiks, of whom there are many, some fairly well educated. Third, the Euphatis, or Janizary troops. They were brought in long ago as mercenary fighting men but they stayed on and took over a lot of the power. And the tribesmen who live up and down the great valley; and the townsmen who are merchants and artisans and slaves. For they still have slavery. And finally there are

the Hudon, who are like the untouchables of India and do the extremely menial jobs. They're said to be descended from invading armies of Abyssinians who came here during wars between the third and sixth centuries. They were captured and never had a chance to leave. And now they like it too well to leave. At the bottom of the social scale in Hadramaut they are. Musicians and dancers are at the bottom of that scale, so all of them are of this class the Hudon. Nor are they allowed to take part in the blood feuds. Only upper class men are permitted to shoot it out with each other. The women, all still veiled, of course.

We spent the night in the Palace of a Hundred Rooms.

We had our dinner sitting on the floor on Persian rugs, right in the middle of a vast hall. All sorts of strange dishes, topped off with pomegranates and dates. I felt like a caliph of old. That is, until I started to get up. And my knees creaked and I could hardly get off that floor.

My next report I hope will be from the islands of pearls and oil. Over a thousand miles to the north in the middle of the Persian Gulf. So long!

FOLLOW RECORDING

Lowell, that was a novelty all right. The
skyscrapers, not of New York, but of the Hadramaut.
Hugh, Lowell certainly has a knack for finding fascinating
places in out of the way corners of the world, doesn't he?