

SUB LEAD L.J.-P.G. Tuesday, Dec. 27, 1949.

Tonight's Air Force report on the flying saucers is about as definite as a denial could be. The mystery of the soaring discs is described in the following words: "a misinterpretation of various objects -- a mild form of mass hysteria or hoaxes."

The Air Force points out that it ran investigation for two years - beginning six months after the first fantastic report. The whole thing began in Nineteen Forty-Seven, when a businessman of Boise, Idaho, stated that, while flying his own private airplane, he sighted nine saucerlike objects that went zipping through space at a fantastic speed. Thereupon that story in the words of the Air Force -- "set off a veritable chain reaction."

Reports of the mysterious discs poured in from all sides -- many from experienced ~~xxx~~ pilots, who should have known what they were talking about. One flyer, for example, said he was able to distinguish forms of people inside -- while another told how he narrowly avoided a collision with a

disc. Accounts like these, which sounded so real, so factual - caused the Air Force to make an exhaustive investigation.

A special group was set up at Wright Field to run down every possible bit of evidence. That was in January of Nineteen Forty-eight, and a preliminary report was issued last April -- stating that there appeared to be no truth in the whole fantasy -- but that there were some question marks "still to be cleared up." Well, those question marks have ^{now} been cleared up, so satisfactorily, in the topinion of the Air Force, that the investigation has been discontinued. The verdict -- "mass hysteria." All those vivid, first hand stories are attributed to a sort of epidemic of imagination - a sort of contagious delusion causing various people to mistake natural phenomena for flying saucers.

This Air Force report follows a startling story in True magazine, which stated that "informed authorities" believe the discs to be - interplanetary space ships, with crews of tiny beings aboard. Further, that this earth has been subject to observation by what the Magazine called "living intelligent observers from another planet."

Which sure was a climax in the fantasy of the flying saucers a climax that evokes tonight's all-around Air Force denial.

HOLLAND

There was a solemn ceremony in the old royal palace at Amsterdam today, when Queen Juliana signed what is called - "The Act of Transfer of Sovereignty." That is, the official document creating the United States of Indonesia, the Dutch East Indies becoming an equal partner under the crown of the Netherlands.

Simultaneously, there ~~were~~ were wild scenes of jubilation at Batavia, until now the Dutch capital of the Indies - where crowds surged throughout the city cheering the royal signing of Indonesian independence. But in Amsterdam, itself, there was no public jubilation - the Dutch people taking it all in gloomy silence. It's hard for ~~the small nation~~ the small nation to accept the end of that fabulous empire of the East, which their ancestors wrested from Portugal some three and a half centuries ago.

RUMOR

In Berlin today, a melodramatic rumor was published - the Western Zone of that city being a hot bed of rumors about Soviets and Communists. This one states that news has seeped through of a wild shooting affair at Oberhof, a ski resort in Thuringa, Soviet Zone. It ~~is said to have~~ happened on Christmas Eve, when a Russian officer stalked into a meeting of German Communists, and opened fire with a submachine gun - killing nine of the Reds. This Russian officer is said to have criticized Stalin, and to have complained about the lack of Christmas trees at the ~~ski~~ resort. He is described as a skier out on the snowy slopes, who came skiing to the Communist meeting with a submachine gun. After the mass killing of the Reds, he fled on ~~skins~~ skis, ~~in~~ and was pursued by a Russian ski patrol, and shot dead.

The newspaper which prints this declares that the Communist authorities have tried to hush up the shooting, and pretend it was done by a German in a Russian uniform.

American newsmen telephoned to the Communist chief of police at

Oberhof, who replies that the story is - "a fabrication from beginning to end". And adds: "We would like to put this editor in jail immediately."

YUGOSLAVIA

The government of Yugoslavia announces that the World Bank in Washington has agreed to grant a new loan of twenty-five million dollars to the regime of Marshal Tito.

This follows a series of deals between the former Soviet satellite and the Western powers. It's the second multimillion dollar advance for Tito - Yugoslavia having already received a twenty-five million dollar credit from the United States Import-Export Bank.

SUB FOR LAST PARAGRAPH OF PRISONERS

From Red Hungary - news of the release of an American prisoner Israel Jacobsen -- an official of a Jewish relief agency. The Hungarian Reds turned him loose tonight - but Jacobsen immediately ran into trouble with the Russians. To get from Hungary to the Americans in Vienna, he had to pass through the Soviet zone of Austria - and the Russians immediately detained him. They say they are holding him until his travel papers are straightened out.

PRISONERS

The Chinese Communists, for the first time, admit they are holding the two U.S. Navy flyers - Elmer Bender and William Smith, who disappeared on a routine training flight more than two months ago. Previous word came through that the two were held by the Chinese Reds near Tsingtao, and this today was confirmed by the Communists - who say that the prisoners are alive and well. Our State Department immediately informed their families; also that efforts are being made to procure their release - though there's no sign of their actually being set free.

JAPAN

In Japan, General MacArthur today announced two new steps for the restoration of the economic independence of the conquered country. ^{First --} ~~One~~ more than half of Japan's import trade is turned over to private enterprise, the American Military Government giving up control. Second - Japan is authorized to add more than half a million tons of shipping to its post-war merchant fleet. Twenty-nine vessels are to be transferred to the ocean-going class, while another series of ships will be built - for the Japanese merchant fleet.

JAPANESE EARTHQUAKE

Japan is having a series of earthquakes, which still continue. Three new tremors shook the area north of Tokyo today - with some loss of life and heavy damage. In Tokyo the quakes ^{were} ~~was~~ felt - but only slightly.

In a town to the north, a section of a hundred acres is shifting, the earth moving. Foundations of houses are disrupted and a school building is split in two.

HISS

In the trial of Alger Hiss, the prosecution today produced another bit of evidence which did not appear in the first trial of the former high official of the State Department. Evidence -- to show a close relationship between Hiss and Noel Field. The latter is a former State Department employee, who was named as a Communist and who this year went to the realm of the Soviets, and disappeared behind the Iron Curtain.

The federal attorney put on record a letter that Hiss wrote to Field last year - promising to help him sell some magazine articles.

Hiss advised Field to set himself up as an expert on eastern Europe -- and said he had recommended Field to a magazine editor.

BALCHEN

As everybody knows, there has been a lot of Air Force activity in Alaska, including scheduled flights to the Pole; - also some tragic trouble with planes forced down on far northern ice. Bernt Balchen was recruited to set up an Arctic rescue service. Which he did, with high flying success - as the story is now told in Collier's.

The Bernt Balchen rescue teams use various types of aircraft, including helicopters - and Lieutenant William Weed, an ex-combat pilot from Greeley, Colorado, was riding along with one passenger - on a routine helicopter flight. Suddenly, on his radio he heard a voice yelling: "One of my chickens is down." Chicken - being the code word for fighter plane.

A squadron of Mustang fighters had been practicing gunnery at a place called Susitna Flats, and one of the fighters had crashed. Conditions were wicked, Susitna Flats being strewn with huge cakes of ice - impossible to land a plane and make a rescue. But a helicopter could land, and Lieutenant Weed was

Johnny-on-the-spot -- to save the life of the pilot.

However, when he spotted the crash - it was fantastic, The plane was burning, and its ammunition was exploding like the Fourth of July - aerial shells hurled in all directions, like a tossing of giant firecrackers. The layout was such that Lieutenant Weed had to set his helicopter down within a hundred ~~yards~~^{YARDS} of the wreck - and two shells hit the fuselage, as he landed. But no fatal damage was done. Then the Lieutenant and his passenger hit the dirt, the ice rather -- and advanced under cover of frozen chunks, while the exploding ammunition bombarded them. Like battle experience under fire.

But they got to the pilot - who, though badly injured, had managed to crawl clear. Carefully and cautiously, they started to haul him to their helicopter - still under fire.

Then the Lieutenant noticed something, which was maybe the most alarming of all. "We'd better hurry", he told his companion. "If we don't get shot, we will be drowned."

Susitna Flats at a point where the tides are among the highest in the world. And a thirty foot tide was rolling in, the water racing in around them - and it looked as if they might be trapped. Twofold peril of shooting and drowning. You can imagine their hurry, as they got the injured fighter pilot to their helicopter and zoomed straight up - in a swift escape from the rushing water and the still exploding ammunition.

Back at their base, the doctors did some quick work, and saved the pilot's life - bringing to a lucky ending this Arctic thriller of the double danger of shooting and drowning.

SLAP

We all know that an elephant ^{is alleged to} never forgets -- but it would seem that a Frenchman can have an equally long memory. This was proven ^{today} at the pleasant old city of Toulouse, when Georges Raymond was condemned to pay thirteen thousand francs -- about forty dollars. His memory was too good.

It all goes back twenty-seven years -- to a scene in a dance hall in Nineteen Twenty-Three. Georges Raymond got into an argument with a fellow -- something to do with a mademoiselle, no doubt. The controversy led to a slap in the face -- and it was Georges Raymond who was slapped. The other fellow gave him the palm of the hand across the jaw -- smack! But, as things happened, Georges Raymond couldn't do anything about it. He could only nurse that injury to his honor.

Today in Toulouse, Georges Raymond was walking along a street -- and what did he see? There, among the passersby, was that same fellow. After twenty-seven years, Georges Raymond recognized him instantly. So he walked right up, and punched the fellow in the face -- revenge.

All this created a disturbance on the street in Toulouse, and the gendarmes grabbed Georges Raymond, taking him before a magistrate -- who ordered him to pay three thousand Francs as a fine, and ten thousand as damages.

• But it was worth it, in that exchange of blows. Nineteen Twenty-Three-- slap! Nineteen Forty-Nine -- bang!

MISS AMERICA

Miss America is a mademoiselle no longer - she just got married. Jacque Mercer, who won the Atlantic City beauty contest this year, was led to the altar by Doug Cook, her boyhood sweetheart -- in a ceremony at Litchfield Park, Arizona. She is eighteen, he is twenty. Their marriage had been announced - for July. But they couldn't wait. Why not? Well, today Miss America explained it in these words: "I couldn't bear the thought of seeing Doug go back to school." Anything to save a fellow from school - even marriage.

WATER

Along the highway from the southwest, a huge truck is rolling tonight - carrying three thousand gallons of water for New York. Water from Texas, and the Texans call it - a Mercy Mission.

Well, it sure is a lot of longhorn generosity, considering that the tank-load of water is from Austin, which is in west Texas - and the land of cactus and mesquite out there has never been famous for an over-abundance of water. However, it's a Mercy Mission, and the slogan is - have a drink on Texas.

The quality of mercy seems to be strained a bit - because ~~xxxx~~ we are told that priority will be given to Texans who happen to be in New York. They'll get the first drinks of water, and, if any is left when they get through, why the New Yorkers may have a sip. Meaning you, a California may not get one of these Texas highballs, Nelson!