

BULLETIN

22. Am + P & M. Wed. Dec. 20, 1946

A bulletin. The greatest airline disaster in history. Seventy seven persons are dead tonight and twenty three injured near Shanghai China when three Chinese airliners crashed in/^aheavy fog. ■■■ Still another plane is missing tonight, and may have crashed on the outskirts of Shanghai. Only one American is reported among the dead. That's the only news we have so far.

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And, another airplane disaster in this country. A passenger transport with twelve aboard, crashed and exploded in the mountains of California. All we know so far is that the wreckage of the plane has been sighted.

CHINA

China selected Christmas as the day for adopting its new Constitution. That, however, is not as much of a bow to christianity as ^{it} might seem.

December the ~~Twenty-Fifth~~ was chosen because it was the anniversary of what is called the Sian incident. That was the spectacular melodrama of Nineteen Twenty-Six, when Chiang Kai-Shek was ~~stix~~ kidnapped by a military Chieftain called "the Young Marshall".

^R There were all sorts of strange oriental doings ~~then and~~ the Sian incident was a turning point in the course of political events in China. Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek, after having been kidnapped, was released just ten years ago today.

~~And~~ that anniversary ^{was selected as} ~~the~~ the occasion for the adoption of a new Chinese constitution. The vote in the National Assembly at Nanking was unanimous - which, however, is less impressive, when we remember that Chinese Communists were not represented. They ^{having} boycotted the Constitution-making national Assembly.

Still, there remains the fact that Chiang Kai-Shek has not^w~~s~~ given China a charter of liberal democracy, which the Nationalist party will try to enforce everywhere in the^t great Far Eastern Land.

The new constitution combines the ideas of the western democracies with the liberal teachings of Dr. Sun Yat-Sen, founder of the Chinese Revolution. The document guarantees ~~in~~ complete civil rights, and provides for government by a parliament and a President. The Parliament ^{to}~~will~~ elect the President for a six-year term -- subject to recall.

The principle of recall is one of the doctrines of Sun Yat Sen, and pervades the new constitution -- which abounds in provisions enabling the people to recall their representatives and officials -- vote them out of office. The new constitution emphasizes the principle of keeping political office-holders in the line of good conduct, making sure that they fulfill their duties in the ~~proper~~ proper way.

INDO CHINA

The French situation in Indo-China is so serious that a second World War hero of France is flying out to take military charge -- General ~~Tacques~~ Leclerc, ~~He~~ the soldier who led the famous march of the fighting French from Lake Chad in Central Africa, ~~across the Sahara,~~ all the way into Tunisia, to aid the Americans and British in the North African campaign.

General Leclerc now goes to command an operation that today was featured by heavy fighting between colonial French forces and the troops of the native Republic of Vitnam. French columns were driving against violent resistance. The French claim that among the ^{Indo-Chinese)} ~~Indo-Chinese)~~ are many Japs - war-time enemy soldiers who, instead of surrendering, took service in the rebel army.

ZIONISTS

London reports that there may still be an attempt to bring the Zionists into the round table conference with the Arabs. This -- in spite of the way the Zionist conference in Switzerland voted, no. At that conference, which closed last night, the cause of the London conference was urged by Dr. Chaim Weitzmann, head of the Jewish agency, who argued for participation on the basis of some kind of plan to divide the Holy Land. This the Zionist Congress rejected.

All of which was a rebuff for Dr. Chaim Weitzmann the long time chief leader of Zionism, who, back in the days of the First World War, negotiated for the Balfour declaration. That Balfour Declaration marked the beginning of the modern Jewish settlement in Palestine, and Dr. Weitzmann may be said to be the father of present day Zionism.

His status now is ambiguous. Some ^{think} ~~suppose that~~ he may withdraw as head of the Jewish agency, but

London thinks it probable that Dr. Weitzmann may ~~make~~ make a final attempt to bring about what he advocates --

Jewish ~~participation~~ participation in the London Talks.---

~~They say~~
~~he will~~ make a supreme effort to persuade the British government to agree upon a formula acceptable to the Zionist Congress leaders.

On the personal side, the question is whether or not Dr. Chaim Weitzmann, father of present day Zionism, will retain his position of leadership in the Jewish cause. The opposition to his plan was led by Jewish American delegates, who successfully championed the demand that all Palestine be turned over to the Zionists for a Jewish national state. The Congress adjourned last night, leaving much undecided -- the question of Congress leadership, ~~for~~ ^{for} example. That issue has been turned over to a newly appointed council -- and the leadership of Zionism stands in doubt tonight.

PALESTINE

Christmas Day in Palestine was celebrated with an accompaniment of violence and menace. Moslem terrorists resorted to assassination again today -- when an Arab landowner, Amir Mohammed El Saleh, was shot down on a street ~~in~~ in Haifa. The crime was committed in full daylight, and is attributed to the Arab underground in its campaign against Moslems who sell land to Jewish purchasers.

~~This was another~~ ^{One more} indication that the Arabs are developing a campaign of violence -- in preparation for an approaching showdown. Zionist extremists are likewise getting ready for a crisis of underground war. The two chief terrorist organizations, Irgun Zvai Leumi and the Stern Gang, have announced what they call -- unification. The two groups have merged, and now are virtually one organization -- ready for what they consider the coming conflict. The truce observed by the Extremists during the meetings of the World Zionist Conferences in Switzerland is expected

to end at any time -- with new violence. The British, on their part have prepared, with a reorganization of the Palestine Police -- "designed to meet the stress of coming events" - says today's news bulletin from Jerusalem.

On Christmas Day today British soldiers went into the streets only in groups of twos and threes, with machine guns for protection. And last night heavily armed troops stood on guard in Bethlehem -- the area of the Church of the Nativity. The dispatch from Jerusalem notes the novelty of this -- saying that, even in the embattled era of the Crusaders, armed men were not to be seen at the Church of the Nativity. *In those*

days Leaders of the Crusaders passed edicts that banished "swords, pikes and crossbows" from the area of the sanctuary. The Crusaders went there unarmed. To them -- warlike weapons of any sort, "swords, pikes and crossbows" would have desecrated the shrine of Bethlehem dedicated to the Prince of Peace. But it's different in the Holy Land today.

HOTEL FIRE

Last night, Christmas Eve at Macon, Georgia, two sailors walked into the Lanier Hotel and stepped quickly to the night telephone operator, Miss Marjorie Bishop. They told her the hotel was on fire, upper floors ablaze. "I thought at first they were kidding" she said today. The telephone operator might have retorted with ~~some~~ ^{some} smart remark, kidding back -- but she saw the two sailors were dead serious.

So she got busy with her telephone switchboard giving the alarm. She worked with quick, quiet efficiency, calling hotel guests in their rooms, telling them to come downstairs.

"I didn't want to alarm them" she explained today "and when a guest answered the telephone, I informed him ~~calmly~~ ^{calmly} to come downstairs immediately because of a small fire. There was no panic"

She is right with that last remark. There was no panic of any sort -- thanks largely to her. Today at Macon, praise was being showered on Marjorie

Bishop, the telephone operator. They were saying that, except for her, the fire in the Lanier Hotel might have been a dreadful holocaust on Christmas Eve, something as horrible as the Winecoff Hotel fire in ~~Georgia~~ *Atlanta*.

Praise is also given to two Negro ~~men~~ elevator boys, who ferried the passengers down in a cool, unexcited way. And the Fire Department, too, gets a pat on the back -- for quick and skillful work in getting out some people who were trapped *and had to be taken out by* ~~taking them down~~ ^{TP 50} ladders ~~for these reasons~~ there is nothing more than a cheerful Christmas story ~~to~~ to tell about ~~that~~ ^{the} fire in the Lanier ~~Hotel~~ ^{— a hotel} ~~one~~ dating back to the ~~times of the~~ Civil War.

PAGE BOYS

Bad news this Merry Christmas for members of a select profession. On January Third, in Washington, they are going to lose their jobs. The page boys of the Congress.

When the Eightieth Congress, the new one, when it meets, they'll be replaced by a lot of new youngsters -- political patronage being what it is.

But, be they Republicans or Democrats, the boys, aged from twelve to sixteen, are becoming such

as we hear,
a headache [^] that they're the subject of a congressional committee investigation.

For one thing, they are well paid -- two hundred and twenty five dollars a month after taxes. That's a lot of money for even the most angelic looking little gentleman. Unfortunately that much money has led not a few of the boys into shady adventures.

It's a matter of polite record -- records which have never seen the light of day -- that some of the page boys in Congress *have been known to* [^] indulge in gambling, stealing, drinking and exploits with women.

Now Congress is going to try to do something about it. For that's bad ~~business~~ for any youngster, no matter what his job or who his dad. And a committee, headed by Senator La Follette, of Wisconsin, is trying to remedy the situation. With a resolution providing that all page boys in Congress ~~to~~ be chosen from the District of Columbia, right in Washington where

their parents can keep a watchful eye on them.

The resolution may have trouble before it becomes law -- page boy jobs are choice and jealousy-guarded patronage plums. One Congressman, recently defeated for re-election, is known to have made his young ~~man~~ appointee kick back most of his salary.

~~The Eightieth~~

The Eightieth Congress, when it convenes will have much to consider, problems at home -- problems abroad. But if it can take time out to remove ~~juvenile~~ delinquency from the shadow of Capitol Hill, *well that will be a start in* ~~it can give itself a pat on the back~~ *the right direction.*

PLANE CRASH

A strange Christmas was spent by three men on an ice floe in the St. Lawrence river. Hardly the most cheerful place for Yuletide.-- But, things were about as comfortable for them as things can be when you're marooned on drifting ice.

They are survivors of a plane with seven aboard that was flying over the wide spaces of the lower St. Lawrence. There the river becomes a gulf. A gulf choked by floating ice right now. They had to make a forced landing, and came down on a field of drift ice. ^{*in a hurry. A few moments before*} They got out, ^{*π*} the plane took a plunge to the bottom of the river. One of ^{*seven*} ~~the~~ disappeared, leaving six marooned on the ice.

Rescue attempts began. Three were taken out last night by a flying boat, which managed to make a landing. But the water was getting rougher, and the ice was grinding and churning. No more rescues ~~xx~~ could be made -- and that left three, adrift on an ice flow. Planes flew over, and dropped supplies

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~~PLANE CRASHED~~
to them -- food and sleeping bags. And that saw them through the night -- the night before Christmas. Today it was still impossible to get to them because of rough water and churning ice -- and a flying fortress took off to drop them a boat, with which it was hoped they would be able to get through ~~ix~~ to reasonably open water, where ordinary river craft could pick them up.

The latest is that a motorboat dropped by the flying fortress capsized when it hit the water. One of the survivors on the ice floe managed to get a smaller boat, and pushed off. He drifted for a couple of miles, got ~~mx~~ onto another ice floe and then ~~px~~ was picked up. And now a steamboat is on its way to rescue the other two who are still on the ice.

Meanwhile, river men say they are not in great danger -- unless a violent storm should blow up. There seems to be no sign of that; so, two marooned castaways with plenty of supplies, are having as merry a Christmas as you can have on ice. I hope all of you have had a far merrier Christmas than that -- including you, Nelson, Not on ice I hope.

Now about that laugh the other night. So many telephone calls came, followed by a flood of letters, asking what Hugh and I were laughing about that I guess I ^{*d better*} ~~can't~~ ^{*in*} ~~you~~ ^{*in*} explanation. As ~~some of~~ you know, if you were listening, Hugh could hardly get through his closing, and when ^{he} ~~he~~ handed the mike back to me to say solong until tomorrow, ^{*I was so doubled up*} ~~I~~ couldn't even say those three words.

Mrs. Clara Brennan of Cleveland, ~~this~~ ^{*she*} puts her query in verse. She writes:-

I would just like to know

And it is no more than right,

what brought the spasm

On last Thursday night.

Well, it was "that man" Bilbo and the remark he made about his secretary. Remember? Bilbo at the Senate hearing in Washington, went into a regular ^{Patrick Henry} ~~burst~~ ^{*burst*} of oratory. Patrick Henry declaimed: "Caesar had his Brutus, Charles The First had his Cromwell" and so on.

~~but~~ Bilbo rose to even greater heights. He told ~~him~~ how the Saviour had his Judas Iscariot, Caesar his Brutus, and George Washington his Benedict Arnold. Whereupon, the much-investigated Senator from Mississippi said that he had ~~had~~ a secretary who was worse than all of them. ^{TR} That seemed to strike the NBC people in the studio as funny; and they all began to laugh, ^{the} the production man, Announcer ~~and~~ Hugh James, the sound effects man, the engineer, and ~~the~~ special announcer Don Pardo who tells you how ^{by using Dynafed} ~~to~~ you save "two cents a gallon!" ^{TR} Laughter as we all know is contagious. ~~And I started to laugh and I couldn't stop. After all, real laughter is a thing that you can't control.~~ ^{and, it's} spontaneous. ~~My~~ My laughing and trying to hold ~~it~~ back made the others in the studio laugh all the harder, all of which made it still worse for me.

~~And matters were~~ ^{And matters were} things were further complicated by ~~the fact~~ that my next story ~~was~~ ^a a sad one, about the ninety-

four year old father who spent his later years searching for his son while the son was searching for him. The father dying, alone in a dingy room without finding the boy he had abandoned as a baby. And the father had fifty thousand dollars to leave to the boy.

I kept from bursting all through that story. But after I had the father dead and went on to the next story about the ex-Private who spanked his wife the ex-WAC Corporal, I had to release some of that pent up laughter.

But it was Bilbo calling his secretary worse than Judas Iscariot that really played the havoc.

And that Mrs. Brennan

If you still want to know,

By
Near Wrecked our ~~Sunoco Dynafuel Show~~
Sunoco Dynafuel show
With that wild haw haw

And that merry ho ho.

Which included you too Hugh.