

DRAMATIC NORTH ATLANTIC RESCUE SAVES 43 LIVES

Russia Seeks Postponement Of Big Four Conference

France's Sorry Plight Seen In Political, Labor And Economic Matters

PARIS, (AP)—Frenchmen saying "merry Christmas" or "happy New Year" during this holiday season are doing so a little hollowly. There is nothing very merry about the political, economic and labor headaches they have suffered in the past weeks.

For one thing, a strike of communications workers has swept the sky clear of all commercial air transportation at a time when thousands of persons normally come to Paris to see the old year out and the new one in.

Only one plane took off from Orly airport here. It was bound for Indo-China to help in the French war effort there.

Most airlines, including American and British, continued to divert their planes to Brussels, shuttling passengers to Paris by train. There was little hope the strike of 2,000 control tower, radio and radar operators would end before Jan. 1.

A strike of postal letter sorters has reduced holiday mail deliveries—usually at their peak—to a trickle. More than 100,000 bags of mail from all over the world are piled high in the big Paris railroad stations. Even if the strike should end now, and there is no sign it will, it would take two weeks before deliveries could catch up.

Strikes After Election

The strikes hit the French just as they had begun to sigh with relief over the election of a new president.

French morale, which is already low, suffered a tremendous beat-

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Volcano Eruption Cause Of N. Z. Train Disaster

By J. C. Graham
Canadian Press Correspondent
AUCKLAND, (CP)—An eruption of the 9,000-foot volcano Ruapehu in the centre of New Zealand's North Island has been established as the cause of a Christmas Eve railway disaster which took 166 lives.

Mountaineers who examined the summit of the mountain Sunday found evidence of a volcanic upheaval which sent a vast volume of water from Crater Lake rushing in an irresistible flood down the mountainside.

The lake, which normally covers 14 acres, is in the crater of the volcano. Several times in living memory it has been dispersed by eruptions. Usually the water runs down the many streams which have their source on slopes of the mountain.

Sweeps Away Bridge

This time the upheaval appears to have forced a tremendous volume of water over the southeast edge of the crater carrying an avalanche of ice, snow and volcanic ash down the mountainside into the narrow Wangaehu river, swelling it to 25 feet above normal level and sweeping away the railroad bridge on the plain below.

Thousands of tons of ice were carved out of the glacier and swept down with the debris.

Coming Events

- **Dance in Glenroy School tonight. Good music.
- **Dance in Kelly's Cross school Wednesday, Dec. 30th.
- **Bingo — Dance, St. James Church, Georgetown, Monday, December 28th.
- **Dance, Fort Augustus Hall, Wednesday, Dec. 30. Burke's Orchestra. Luncheon.
- **Crockinole Party, North River Hall, Tuesday, 8 p.m. Admission 5c. Everyone welcome.
- **Dance, Fortune Hall, Tuesday, December 29. McEwen's Orchestra.
- **Variety Concert and Dance at Lot 85 Hall, December 28th, 8 o'clock.
- **Dance South Rustic Hall Monday, Dec. 28. Alex MacLean new four piece orchestra. Canteen service.
- **Annual meeting L. O. L. and L. O. B. A. Monday, December 28th. All members both Lodges are requested to attend.

War In Indo-China Carries On

HANOI, Indo-China, (AP)—Communist-led Vietminh troops dug in near the border of jittery Thailand Sunday to meet expected French counter-measures following the lightning Red thrust across Laos which sliced Indo-China in two.

The rebels, who launched their four-day, 100-mile drive from the Annam coast, completed the push Saturday, rumbling into the Laotian border town of Thakhek on the heels of retreating French troops.

The French pulled out of Thakhek in the face of the overwhelming Red pressure and began calling in reinforcements for a counter-attack which observers predicted would come swiftly.

This is the first time in the eight years of the Indo-China war that the Vietminh have reached the Thailand frontier on the Mekong river. The Reds came within 30 miles of the Mekong last April in their invasion of Laos—one of the three French-associated states in Indo-China. But, after threatening the Laotian capital of Luangprabang, they quit with the approach of the rainy season.

Spain Predicts First Surplus Since Civil War

MADRID, (AP)—Spanish taxpayers will have to dig deeper next year to meet the highest budget in Spain's history.

But there is good news for the national economy: Generalissimo Franco's government predicts a surplus in its funds for the first time since the civil war.

The Cortes Parliament unanimously approved last week a budget for 1954 of 26,020,778,835 pesetas—13 per cent higher than 1953—aimed to leave a surplus of 53,422,164 pesetas.

At a valuation of 2 1/2 cents for the peseta, that is a budget of about \$650,519,000 and a surplus of \$1,335,000. Defence costs will account for a little less than 30 per cent of the money. That is a drop of about 10 per cent from this year.

The United States is supplying Spain \$226,000,000 by new June 30 under the 20-year aid-for-bases agreement signed here Sept. 26. Of this, \$141,000,000 will go for military equipment and the rest for defence support, meaning use in some way in the development of military strength.

Queen Replies To Canadian Message

OTTAWA, (CP)—The Queen's reply to the Christmas message sent her by Governor-General Vincent Massey on behalf of the Canadian people states:

"Please convey to the people of Canada the sincere thanks of my husband and myself for their kind and loyal message of good wishes."

Four Persons Rescued After Six Days In Bush

WINNIPEG, (CP)—Four persons marooned in a snowbound bush plane in northeastern Manitoba were rescued Sunday after a six-day ordeal in freezing weather which saw life and death come to an Indian baby.

The child was born Tuesday to Mrs. Annanias Harper of Therese Point, Man., the day after the plane carrying her home became lost and was forced down 340 miles northeast of Winnipeg. The plane, piloted by Paul Rickey, 37, of Winnipeg, also carried Mrs. Harper's children, Elizabeth, 4, and Joseph, 6.

All were safe when an RCMP search plane spotted the craft. A radio message brought one of the plane's ski-equipped sister ships from Central Northern Airways to the scene, and the four were flown

Wants At Least Three More Weeks For Preparation

WASHINGTON, (CP)—Russia moved Saturday to postpone for at least three weeks the Big Four foreign ministers' conference in Berlin on the German and Austrian problems.

The Russians, in notes to Britain, the United States and France, proposed that the conference be set back from Jan. 4—the date suggested earlier by the West—to Jan. 25, "for any subsequent date."

The U. S. state department and British diplomatic quarters indicated the date change would be accepted by the Western powers.

French sources welcomed the proposal because the delay may provide enough time for a new government to be chosen. Premier Joseph Laniel's government must resign when the new president, Rene Coty, is installed Jan. 17.

In a statement accompanying release of the Soviet note, the state department here administered a mild rebuff, but appeared resigned to the delay.

Waiting Since July

"The Soviet note would appear to delay for three weeks but not to prevent this meeting, which the three Western powers have long sought and to which they attach high importance," the statement said.

Citing the Russians' assertion that more time is needed "for appropriate preparation," the state department commented:

"This seems somewhat curious in light of the fact that the three-power invitation to the Soviet Union has been outstanding since last July." It added:

"In suggesting a postponement, the Soviet Union refers to the necessity of assuring conditions for all four governments. The Soviet Union presumably has solicitude for other participating governments and assumes that it is better qualified than the governments of France, the United Kingdom and the United States to decide what suits their own interests."

The Russian note said the Soviet

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Urges World Atom Pool

NEW YORK, (AP)—David E. Lillenthal, first chairman of the U. S. atomic energy commission, Saturday night urged prompt implementation of President Eisenhower's plan for a world atom pool.

"Any long delay may well be fatal to the plan and world peace," he told a national radio audience, "NBC Lecture Hall."

The pool can be operating in a modest way "within six to eight months from today," he said.

In his prepared speech, Lillenthal suggested Belgium as a site for an experimental atomic power plant and Geneva as the home of international research organization outlined by Eisenhower.

The former U. S. atom chief, who once headed the vast Tennessee Valley authority hailed the Eisenhower proposal as "a gift of peace on earth" and "a courageous effort to establish a basis for some degree of confidence and mutual faith."

"After years of exposure to undisciplined atomic jingoism by lesser men, this country has at last put its case before the world on the highest level of moral leadership," he declared.

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An Entire Family Of Five Lost In Tragic New Zealand Disaster

WELLINGTON, (Reuters)—Sunday's casualty list of New Zealand's Christmas Eve rail disaster included an entire family of five.

The list, fourth to be issued, raised the total identified dead to 73. Rescue teams now have recovered 114 bodies of the 166 perished on the Wellington-Auckland express thundered from a broken bridge to destruction in the Wangaehu river—"River of Death." The train carried 267 persons. Many were injured.

The Benton family of North Island township was wiped out. Searchers have found the bodies of Mrs. Florence Benton and her three daughters, Glenis, 9, Beverly, 6, and Roselyn, 3. They are still looking for the body of the father, E. R. Benton, a former garage attendant.

Search parties Sunday combed an 80-mile stretch of the Wangaehu from the disaster scene at Tangiwai to the sea coast, for the fifth

Bound For Holiday

Fifty-two bodies still are missing.

Many of the victims were young women and teenaged girls, bound for a holiday in Auckland.

Prime Minister Sidney Holland has ordered a public inquiry into the rail disaster, New Zealand's worst in history. Government experts will investigate whether it was a volcanic crater north of Wellington or a cloudburst which caused the floods that wrecked the bridge.

The span collapsed when a wall of water loosed an avalanche of ice and snow into the narrow river, swelling it to 25 feet above normal level.

Ike Orders Reduction Of Ground Forces In Korea

By Marvin L. Arrowsmith
AUGUSTA, Ga., (AP)—President Eisenhower Saturday ordered a progressive reduction of American ground force strength in Korea. But he solemnly declared any new aggression there will be opposed "with even greater effect" than before.

As an initial step in the reduction of United States forces, the president announced "two army divisions will soon be withdrawn and returned to the United States."

Eisenhower cautioned that U. S. combat strength in Korea still will be maintained at a level calculated to discourage new aggression. The forces staying on, he said, will be highly-mobile naval, air and amphibious units.

The units being withdrawn from Korea were not identified. Eisenhower also indicated that he named said they are manned by upwards of 32,000 combat troops.

Units Unknown

An army spokesman at Washington said no decision has been reached on which of the six army divisions in Korea will be withdrawn.

The army's eight divisions in the Far East—including two in Japan—number about 100,000 men. Two marine divisions have about 20,000 and an airborne regiment is estimated at 3,000.

In Ottawa, a defence department spokesman, commenting on the announcement, said the United Nations have given no indication that it wants Canada to reduce its ground forces in Korea. The spokesman added that "Canada hasn't asked to withdraw any troops. At present Canada has about 7,000 ground troops in Korea."

Gives Meaning

In his statement, Eisenhower said the reduction of American forces in Korea means:

"We move forward in pursuance of our broad policy to make evident to all the world that we ourselves have no aggressive intentions and that we are resourceful and vigilant to find ways to reduce the burden of armament and to promote a climate of peace."

Word of Eisenhower's decision was given to President Syngman Rhee of South Korea earlier last week.

Lose Second Child By Drowning

DRUMHELLER, Alta., (CP)—Mr. and Mrs. James Tuckwood of East Coulee have lost their second child by drowning in two years.

Lawrence George Tuckwood, 7, was drowned Christmas Eve near his home when the ice gave way while he was skating on the Red Deer river. His six-year-old sister was drowned near the same spot two years ago.

ARTISTS' HOAX

OXFORD, England (CP)—A student hoax went undiscovered by crowds visiting a university student art display. The new college art committee announced that a much-admired "conventional painting called 'descent' was a poster-paint product of three students who turned it out in less than half an hour.

Queen And Duke Leave Auckland For Maori Grounds

WAITANGI, New Zealand, (Reuters)—The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh leave Auckland by air today for the Maori treaty grounds here, the first stop in a 2,250-mile air, train and car tour of New Zealand.

At Waitangi-Maori for "weeping waters"—the Queen will be greeted by descendants of the Maori chiefs, who, in the same place in 1840, submitted to Britain's rule.

During the ceremonial welcome, she will be asked to stand on Waitangi's sacred mat—the first British sovereign to do so.

Her plane will land at Kaikohe, on the narrow North Island peninsula jutting out into the Pacific. From there she and the duke will drive to Waitangi, in the lovely Bay of Islands.

The couple will lunch and spend the night at Whangarei, a short drive from the old Maori treaty ground.

Then they will continue their tour of New Zealand, covering 700 miles by air, 600 by train and nearly 950 by car. Thirty-three days later they will rejoin the royal yacht Gothic at Bluff, New Zealand's southernmost point.

To Present Colors

Before leaving Auckland this morning in a specially-equipped air force C-47, Elizabeth was scheduled to present colors to the Royal New Zealand Air Force.

A large crowd lining Auckland's streets gave an impromptu three cheers for the Queen Sunday as she drove back from morning service at St. Mary's Cathedral. During the service, a silent prayer mourned the 166 persons killed in the Christmas Eve train wreck.

Czechs Halt News On Xmas Train Wreck

VIENNA, (AP)—Czech railway and police authorities prevented any further leakage of information Sunday on the Christmas Eve train wreck in Moravia which is reported to have killed more than 100 persons.

Czech officials, evidently acting on orders from higher authorities, rebuffed all enquiries on the subject made by telephone from Vienna.

However, the Prague newspaper Rude Pravo, organ of the Czech Communist party, said by telephone it would carry the following report on the accident today:

"A railway disaster occurred on Dec. 24 one hour after midnight when the Bratislava-bound Balkan express ran into a passenger train near Sakvice. The collision caused a large number of casualties. The Czech deputy traffic ministers Richard Urx and Andrej Gerec, as well as the Czech vice minister for the interior, Jindrich Kotál, and other top ranking personalities, arrived at Sakvice."

U. S. A. Limits Imports Of Non-Canadian Oats

AUGUSTA, Ga., (AP)—President Eisenhower, acting to protect American producers, has decided to limit imports of oats into the United States from non-Canadian sources to 2,500,000 bushels from Dec. 23, 1953, to Sept. 30, 1954.

The move, announced Sunday, supplements an earlier agreement which restricts shipments of oats from Canada to 23,000,000 bushels during the period Dec. 10, 1953, to next Sept. 30.

Argentina is the biggest exporter of oats to the U. S. aside from Canada.

Eisenhower's action limiting oats imports from non-Canadian sources was based on studies by the United States tariff commission made in accordance with the Agricultural Adjustment Act. That law provides for import restrictions when such shipments are interfering with or threaten to interfere with domestic price supports or marketing programs.

Equitable Basis

A White House statement said that Canada, in agreeing earlier to a similar limitation, did so "with the expectation that substantial quantities of oats would not enter the United States from other sources and thus displace the competitive position of Canada, which has traditionally supplied almost the whole of United States imports of oats."

"Accordingly, today's action by the president in limiting imports from other sources is supplementary to the Canadian decision. Taken together, the two actions will have the effect of treating imports of oats from all sources on an equitable basis."

Trend Continues

The steady trend towards shorter working hours, longer vacations and more paid statutory holidays in manufacturing indus-

Swedish Ship Cracks Up In Storm 400 Miles Off Newfoundland Coast

NEW YORK, (AP)—A dramatic night rescue in the stormy North Atlantic saved 43 persons early Sunday after their ship broke in two off Newfoundland. All apparently were unharmed.

However, one of the rescue vessels, the U. S. military sea transport ship Bluejacket carrying 36 of the 43 survivors, reported late Sunday she was making little progress.

"Have to due to mountainous seas and severe storm," a message from the Bluejacket said.

The entire crew of the Swedish freighter Okla, 42 men and a woman, were hauled from four lifeboats some 400 miles off Newfoundland after the ship cracked up.

They spent 10 hours or more in lifeboats on the icy, windswept ocean before their rescue by the Bluejacket and the Finnish freighter, which carried the other seven survivors.

But, a coast guard spokesman said that since the seven were rescued about the same time as the others, and the Orlon proceeded on her course toward Europe, it could be assumed the seven also were unharmed.

The message from the Bluejacket said the 36 survivors were

56 Killed In Canada During Holiday Week-End

By THE CANADIAN PRESS
Death, by accident or violence, came to 56 persons in Canada over the long Christmas week-end.

Traffic was the big killer. A tabulation by The Canadian Press showed 38 deaths in highway accidents from Christmas Eve, Thursday, until Sunday night.

There were two slayings, both in Ontario. Eight deaths were attributed to falls, burns or suffocation. There was one drowning—in Alberta.

Pope Pius Gives Audience

VATICAN CITY, (Reuters)—The Pope gave audience Sunday to nearly 10,000 Christmas pilgrims from all over the world.

The 77-year-old pontiff was carried on his portable throne through the cheering crowds of pilgrims, massed in the halls of the Vatican Palace.

From a golden throne in the Hall of Benedictions he later spoke to the pilgrims in six different languages, giving them his blessing.

DELICATE STUFF

MELBOURNE (CP)—Individual bales of Victoria state's famous lamb's wool have sold as high as \$5.30 a pound this month. The wool, of superfine quality, is to be used for making skin-tight costumes for ballerinas abroad, one correspondent reported.

Gregg Says 1953 Good Year For Working People

OTTAWA, (CP)—Labor Minister Gregg said in a year-end message Sunday that measured by any standard 1953 was a good year for the working people and industries of Canada.

Industrial output is expected to be \$2,000,000,000 compared with \$2,000,000,000 in 1952 and the labor force in industries other than agriculture totalled 4,451,000 in August—latest month available—compared with 4,326,000 a year ago.

Personal incomes rose although wages increases averaging 10 cents an hour were smaller than in some years since the Second World War. However, the cost of living levelled off allowing the working man a greater return for his work in terms of goods and services.

"Not only was the average worker able to obtain more goods and services with the money he spent but by and large he was able to save more money," Mr. Gregg said.

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The steady trend towards shorter working hours, longer vacations and more paid statutory holidays in manufacturing indus-

South Koreans Displeased With Ike's Decision

SEOUL, (AP)—President Eisenhower's announced plan to reduce U. S. military forces in Korea, with two divisions to be withdrawn "soon," was received with undisguised displeasure today by South Korean officials.

Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, commander of the U. S. army forces in Korea, said "it may be safely assumed" that the departure of these divisions will not affect men with considerable time to serve in Korea. Such men will be transferred from the designated divisions to other outfits in favor of men whose tours are about over.

Officials in the government of South Korea President Syngman Rhee, who frowns on the current truce and favors resumption of the war against the Reds, criticized Eisenhower's plan.

Foreign Minister Pyun Tung Tai said it would weaken the republic's position and indicated he felt South Korean troops were not ready to step into the gap.

"We do not welcome any UN divisions being withdrawn, especially when their replacements have not been built up with Korean personnel," he told newspapermen.

Claim Not Notified

Both Pyun and the South Korean prime minister, Paik To Chin, said they had not been notified of the plan. President Eisenhower said in his announcement Saturday that the South Korean government had been informed.

The U. S. has eight ground divisions in Korea. There was speculation that the 25th division would be one of those pulled out.

IRATE DRIVER

LEEDS, England, (CP)—Bus conductor Xavene Arratoun, 20, lost his temper with two passengers who offered them his equipment if they thought they could do the job better. Arratoun then caught another bus back to his depot to resign.



HALIFAX, (CP)—The Dominion Public Weather Office here says temperatures fell rapidly throughout the Maritimes Sunday as a strong current of cold air flowed in from the northwest. In the evening skies were mostly clear but the air was a few snowflurries where the air was coming over the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The clear, cold weather will not last long. An area of snow is approaching from Ontario and is forecast to reach the Maritimes Monday afternoon.

Regional forecasts:

Prince Edward Island: Sunny becoming overcast in the morning with snow beginning in afternoon; much colder; light wind increasing in afternoon to southeast 15. Low-high at Charlottetown zero and 30.

TORONTO, (CP)—Minimum and maximum temperatures:

	Min	Max
Dawson	10b	10b
Vancouver	35	42
Victoria	41	48
Edmonton	23	34
Calgary	17	40
Regina	1	27
Winnipeg	6	9
Toronto	0	11
Ottawa	6	9
Montreal	9	13
Quebec	7	10
Saint John	28	—
Halifax	33	37
Charlottetown	23	32
Sydney	31	33
Yarmouth	29	38
St. John's Nfld.	33	35

High tide today at Charlottetown 3.38 A.M. and 3.03 P.M. Summerside tide eighteen minutes later than Charlottetown. Sun rises today at 7.51 A.M. and sets at 4.38 P.M.