



CAPTAIN TOM Sawyer, skipper of the British trawler St. Fintona, climbs down a rope ladder from the vessel's side and later sank off Newfoundland while being towed to port. Thirteen of the crew of 25 survived. (CP Wirephoto)

Horror-Filled Christmas Events Described By Trawler Skipper

By DON McLEOD
ST. JOHN'S, Nfld. (CP)—Capt. Tom Sawyer, 38-year-old veteran of 25 years at sea, told Wednesday night of a horror-filled Christmas morning aboard his burning British trawler St. Fintona in 10-below-zero weather off the desolate Labrador coast.

Capt. Sawyer, a native of Fleetwood, Eng., and father of four, spoke in the comfort of a hotel suite two hours after he and 12 other survivors from his 25-man crew arrived on the rescue ship Orsino.

"I had just got on the bridge after breakfast Christmas morning," he said in a news conference. "The second cook came on the bridge and informed us there was smoke in the accommodation down below."

"I ran off the bridge and managed to get down two decks, but the smoke was so intense I just couldn't stand it so I had to go back to get a rag to put around my face. I went down again and dragged the smoke mask out of the locker. It got jammed. I couldn't see but somebody behind me was pulling it."

GETS QUICK AID

Capt. Sawyer, obviously fatigued, said he returned to the bridge, sounded the alarm and sent out a "mayday" message which was answered almost immediately.

The trawler Orsino, about 60 miles away at the time, and for the St. Fintona's position.

"I said I can't give you a position. The ship's on fire everywhere. I'm full of smoke. I'll put the lights on. I'm going around in circles."

He continued to circle the ship, partly to keep the wind away from the fire which was confined to the forward third of the ship.

CALLED 2ND TIME

He went back to the telephone to call Capt. Edward Woodruff, 52, of the Orsino.

"I picked the telephone up. I called 'mayday' again."

Captain Sawyer asked re-

porters, "would you like the actual words?"

"I said, 'Christ, she's blown up. The acid thing I knew I was outside on the funnel casing, laid alongside the funnel with part of the telephone in my hand. That's how quick it happened. That all happened in a matter of seven minutes."

The captain then told of vain attempts to gather the crew and launch rafts in the smoke and flames, which also prevented men from breaking through to the accommodation quarters where other crew members were believed trapped.

The smothering valves, used to cut off air, also were inoperative.

In the life raft quarters, one raft container was ablaze. The crew left another in attempted launchings.

At this point, the men began to feel the effects of the frigid weather.

SOME HAD NO CLOTHES

"There were men with no shoes on men with no clothes on. Other ships started to gather around."

The Orsino is believed to have arrived on the scene about 20 minutes after the fire broke out.

The St. Fred Parkes, another British trawler, appeared off the St. Fintona and fired lines carrying rafts over the stricken vessel.

The men on the St. Fintona tried to pull one life raft in from a point 20 yards away.

"We tried and tried, but we just hadn't the strength. It was so cold. Nobody had any clothes. Just a pair of trousers. The mate had a pair of boots on but no stockings. The chief engineer had nothing on but his overalls."

The skipper and the two again went below decks, jumping up and down in an effort to keep warm. They returned to the deck when the Orsino came alongside and asked if the men wanted her to send over a lifeboat.

"The port side of the ship was white hot when I took him off and the bridge was one mass of flames," Capt. Woodruff said.

He added that ports along the Labrador coast were iced in and the ships could not put into any of them.

American Appeals Sentence Of 3 Years In Russian Court

MOSCOW (Reuters)—American Paul Ray Wertham, 25, has appealed to the Russian Supreme Court against a three-year prison sentence for "left and currency speculation."

The appeal was lodged by his Russian lawyer, Fyodor S. Rozhdestvensky, in Leningrad, where the tourist was sentenced last Wednesday.

Wertham of North Little Rock, Ark., was convicted of changing U.S. dollars and Finnish marks on the black market and of stealing a statue of a bear from a Leningrad hotel. Under Soviet procedure, the appeal may not be heard for several months.

The Soviet news agency Tass said Wertham's lawyer asked for a reduction in the sentence on the grounds that the American's actions were "a result of thoughtlessness."

Tass also said Wertham's travelling companion, Craddock Gilmour of Salt Lake City, Utah, does not intend to appeal against his 1,000-ruble (\$1.11 U.S.) fine for his part in the currency deal.

Gilmour paid his fine and left Moscow last week.

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Fifth Nuclear Explosion Is Announced In China

Rumblings Heard Of Postal Tieup

By PAUL DUNN
OTTAWA (CP)—The threat of a national postal tie-up is at the ominous-rumbling stage again. The current threat could become serious early in the new year if the post office department fails to meet demands of the 11,000-member Canadian Union of Postal Workers.

An agreement between the government, the postal workers union and the Letter Carriers Union of Canada signed Nov. 15 was to have guaranteed postal peace until July 31, 1967.

Now the postal workers union is claiming breach of a "gentleman's agreement" that went along with the formal document. The document granted postal clerks who sort mail, and letter carriers a flat 25-cent-an-hour pay increase.

Rick Otto, executive vice-president of the postal workers union, has sent letters to Prime Minister Pearson, other cabinet officials and to his union's members blasting the department for not living up to the unwritten letter of the agreement.

His point is that some 2,500 employees in semi-staff post offices—the full-time and part-time workers in small rural offices—should receive the increase granted workers in main offices.

"There was agreement that we would continue negotiations on behalf of these employees and certain other categories," Mr. Otto said in an interview Wednesday.

The department has declined to discuss—except for "minor verbal consultations"—the semi-staff personnel with the postal workers union, he said.

PLANS TALKS

A department spokesman said Wednesday he knew nothing of any gentlemen's agreement but the department soon intends to invite the union for talks on semi-staff personnel.

The department already has consulted with the Canadian Postmasters' Association, which represents some 2,000 of the semi-staff and reverse post office personnel.

"We do not intend to get into any jurisdictional dispute between the CUPE and the postmasters' association," Mr. Otto said.

Mr. Otto said his union represents about 500 of the semi-staff personnel. The postmasters' association "is little more than a social club which doesn't dare to challenge the wrath of the postmaster-general."

The department spokesman said the flat 25-cent increase could not be passed on to semi-staff personnel without disturbing the relatively among the salaries of some 12,000 employees.

Mr. Otto said his union's large locals already have indicated they will support "some form of industrial action" if the semi-staff pay question is not resolved.

The union now is awaiting membership reaction and if it supports drastic action, a national referendum would be called.



KING MOSHOESHOE ARRESTED

Leabus Jonathan, the prime minister of Lesotho, Wednesday ordered the confinement of King Moshoeshoe II in his palace in Maseru, Lesotho, after months of feuding over their respective powers. Jonathan, Lesotho's premier chief, and Moshoeshoe have been disputing the division of political powers made when Lesotho, formerly Basutoland, gained its independence from Britain Oct. 4, 1966.

(AP Wirephoto)

Trawlers Ready To Sail Shortly

Georgetown's fleet of fishing trawlers, like those the closure of Gulf Guardian Fishing Limited plant December 2, will be leaving this weekend and by Tuesday of next week all six will be in action on the fishing grounds.

Leonard L. Baisley, chairman of the Fishermen's Loan Board, last night reported that the vessels have been manned with crews, as well as fueled.

"Repair work is now being carried out and the fishing gear and supplies are being placed aboard."

LEAVE ON WEEKEND

"The vessels will commence to leave this weekend—Friday at the earliest—and by Tuesday of next week all six will be fishing," said Mr. Baisley, who went on to say that the fleet will be confined to the Gulf area, landing their catches at Souris so long as weather conditions permit.

Mr. Baisley said that when Souris Harbor freezes over the fleet will operate out of ports on the southern coast of Nova Scotia as the trawlers are not re-insured to navigate in ice.

Strike Threat Removed

At a special meeting of the general membership of Charlottetown Typographical Union No. 963, held last night, tentative agreement was reached on a company proposal. As a result, there is no longer any danger of strike action against The Guardian-Patriot newspapers.

Earlier this month members of Local 963 had voted to strike, with the deadline set for 6:30 p.m. Dec. 28. Subsequently a meeting between union and management was arranged, and the deadline was cancelled.

A seven-hour meeting was held Tuesday night, with Allison Cousins, president of Local 963 negotiating for the union and W.J. Hancock, publisher of The Guardian-Patriot speaking for the company. Proposals made then were placed before the meeting last night.

Company rejection of a conciliation board recommendation had led to union action setting a strike date.

RC Church Destroyed

DARTMOUTH, N.S. (CP)—Fire of undetermined origin destroyed the interior of St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church Wednesday.

No official estimate of damage was available but firemen said the brick-and-wood building was a total loss. The brick shell and portions of the roof of the 81-year-old church remained.

St. Peter's was the largest Roman Catholic church in the city.

All available Dartmouth fire units battled the blaze. Water was pumped from a park pond about 100 yards from the burning building to augment supplies from fire hydrants.

Speedup Is Indicated In Peking's Program

PEKING (Reuters)—China announced it exploded its fifth nuclear device in the western region of the country Wednesday.

A government communique issued by the New China news agency, said the success of three nuclear tests this year is a "heavy blow to the plot of U.S. imperialism and Soviet modern revisionism and a great encouragement to the Vietnamese people."

As it has done in the past, China reaffirmed that at no time and in no circumstances will it be the first to use nuclear weapons.

China became the world's fifth nuclear power when it exploded its first atomic device in October, 1964. Its series of tests since then have convinced observers that it is making rapid progress in the nuclear field. All tests are understood to have been conducted in the atmosphere.

The last previous Chinese test, in which a nuclear warhead was carried about 400 miles by a guided missile before detonation, took place Oct. 27.

GAVE NO DETAILS

The communique gave no details about Wednesday's explosion.

China's four earlier tests were conducted at intervals ranging from five months to one year. The fifth, coming one month after the fourth, indicated an acceleration of Peking's nuclear program.

The other four nuclear powers are the U.S., Russia, Britain and France.

France and China have not signed a partial nuclear test ban treaty in which the other three undertook not to explode nuclear devices in the atmosphere.

China said its latest test and the series that preceded it were conducted solely for the purpose of defence, "with the ultimate aim of abolishing nuclear weapons."

WASHINGTON (AP)—Carl Barich, U.S. state department press officer, said Wednesday that preliminary estimates show China's fifth nuclear test was not as powerful as its third explosion last May.

U.S. officials said the latest test was 10 to 20 times more powerful than the 20-kiloton bomb dropped on Hiroshima, Japan, in the Second World War. They said it was conducted in the atmosphere in the Lop Nor proving ground in Sinkiang Province.

Barich repeated the state department's Nov. 29 comment that Chinese atmospheric tests "reflect the determination of Peking to move ahead in its nuclear program in defiance of world opinion and of more than 100 nations which have signed the nuclear test-ban treaty."

A spokesman for the Japanese foreign ministry in Tokyo said: "Japan and other countries are against nuclear testing. . . . It is most regrettable that China has conducted a nuclear test."

The Chinese set off their first explosion Oct. 16, 1964, and their second on May 14, 1965. U.S. officials put both in the range of the American bomb dropped on Hiroshima, equal to about 20,000 tons of TNT.

A spokesman for the most powerful test was conducted May 1 last. It had a yield of about 200,000 tons of TNT. An analysis of the fallout from the test showed that it contained thermonuclear material, indicating the Chinese might be groping toward development of a hydrogen bomb.

Three More Men Escape From British Prisons

LONDON (AP)—Three more prisoners escaped from Britain's leaky prisons Wednesday and a killer broke out of a mental hospital.

The home office reported that the escapes brought the year's total of prison breaks to 692—with 122 convicts still at large.

In the first of the three new escapes, a dangerous prisoner, serving 16 years for armed robbery, scaled the wall of London's Pentonville prison with a ladder he grabbed from a guard in the prison yard. He was recaptured 40 minutes later.

Two men jailed for larceny took off hours later from a prison-without-bars near Preston in northwest England.

The new escapes point up the growing scandal of breakouts Britain's ancient prisons.

Home Secretary Roy Jenkins, in charge of prisons, broke off his Christmas-New Year vacation and returned to the capital.

The convicted killer escaped from Basingstoke Mental Hospital. He is John Mackrell, 51, convicted in 1947 for slaying a London taxi driver. It was the second escape for Mackrell, who previously had been kept in prison.

Union Nationale Loses Que. Seat

MONTREAL (CP)—The majority of Quebec's governing Union Nationale party has been reduced by one following a court decision to annul the result of the June 5 provincial election in Rouville constituency.

A majority judgment made public Wednesday, a three-judge provincial court in St. Hyacinthe ruled in favor of the defeated Liberal candidate, Francois Bouliard, and nullified the election of Yvon Hamel of the Union Nationale, leaving the seat vacant.

The ruling leaves the standings in the 106-seat legislative assembly at: Union Nationale 55, Liberal 50, Independent 2, vacant 1.

Lawyer Pothier Ferland, who represented the Liberal candidate and Mr. Hamel, has asked the court to appeal the verdict. Thereafter, it would be up to Hamel 28.

Union Nationale Loses Que. Seat

Premier Daniel Johnson to set a date for a by-election.

He said the verdict had the majority support of Judges Guy Genest and Robert Turgeon. The dissenting judge was Antoine Lamarre.

The vote count on election night had Mr. Bouliard, the Liberal candidate, elected by a narrow 21-vote plurality. He had 6,145 votes. Mr. Hamel had 6,124. Maurice Mercier of the Rassemblement pour l'Indépendance nationale (RN) and Albert Archambault of the Alliance des Québécois had 231.

But Mr. Hamel was declared elected by a five-vote margin following a subsequent judicial decision in which a number of ballots were rejected. In the recount Mr. Hamel received 6,150 votes, Mr. Bouliard 6,073, Mr. Mercier 637 and Mr. Archambault 231.

CBRT Rejects Railway Offer

OTTAWA (CP)—Negotiators for the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway, Transport and General Workers have voted to reject a railway wage offer of 24 per cent over three years and force the issue to compulsory arbitration, the union reported Wednesday.

The basic wage offer was accepted earlier this month by other union groups representing about 80,000 rail workers in the shop trades and non-operating categories and 20,000 conductors and brakemen.

Members of the CBRT's joint protective board decided on rejection of the proposal at a Montreal meeting Wednesday.

Meanwhile, informants said there was a good possibility that members of the seven rail shopcraft unions will refuse to ratify the agreement signed by their negotiating group. A vote on that union by the 25,000 shop workers has been held but announcement of the result is being delayed.

The wage offer was worked out in three months of mediation that began in September after Parliament ordered a halt to a countrywide rail strike. The strike began Aug. 28 and lasted seven days.

The legislation imposed an interim wage increase of 15 per cent over two years. Four per cent was retroactive to Jan. 1 of this year, four per cent to July 1, another four per cent applied Jan. 1, 1967, and the final six per cent next July 1.

This formula originally proposed by two conciliating boards, was made subject to mediation and, if that failed, compulsory arbitration.

On Dec. 19 Labor Minister Nicholson told the Commons that a settlement with unions representing 100,000 rail workers had been reached just before the mediation deadline which had twice been extended.

THEY WON'T SAY 'YES' OR 'NO'

Lyns Fird Johnson and actor George Hamilton evaded questions about plans to marry at a news conference in Acapulco, Mexico, Tuesday night. Hamilton said it was a "very personal question" and "we will keep it personal." They are shown as they attended church services in Blanco, Tex., in September while the actor was a visitor at the LBJ ranch.

(AP Wirephoto)