



**SAILORS ON LEAVE**—Jim Dale St. Onge, left, Carmel Ray Smith, center, and Richard Nelson St. Onge were home on leave for Christmas from the U.S.S. Los Angeles. Jim and Richard are sons of Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Summers of 1919 Mulholland drive, and Smith is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Jack Smith of Myrtle Creek. These men enlisted in the navy Sept. 6. Jim is striking for boatswain mate, Richard for shipfitter and Smith, radioman. (Picture by Paul Jenkins).

## World Still Kept Guessing On Activity Of Joe Stalin; Always Right, Aides Assert

By DEWITT MACKENZIE  
AP Foreign Affairs Analyst

Prime Minister Stalin's 71st birthday December 21, was noted with elaborate praise by the Soviet press, but the world still is left speculating about the health and activity of this man who wields far more power than any other individual on earth.

One is reminded of an incident back in 1936 when it was rumored Stalin was ill and even dead. Charles P. Nutter, the AP chief of bureau in Moscow, addressed a letter to Stalin asking for the facts. He got a reply in the Soviet chief's own handwriting:

"I know from the reports of the foreign press that I long ago abandoned this sinful world and moved into the other world. As one cannot doubt such foreign press dispatches unless he wants to be expelled from the list of civilized people, I request you to believe them and don't disturb me in the calm of the other world."

This question of whether Stalin still has a firm grip of Bolshevism is mighty important not only to Soviet Russia and her satellites but to the world at large. He is (or has been) the absolute dictator of the Russian regime and of the world revolution for the spread of communism. It was he who laid the groundwork for the revolution.

**Five-Year Plan Upset**  
Long before the last war, Stalin was given credit by European observers for expecting another global conflict. He was said to be

figuring that this would give the world revolution its real opportunity to spread.

Accordingly Stalin inaugurated his series of five-year plans to make Russia strong militarily and industrially. He signed with Hitler the non-aggression pact which enabled the Führer to launch his war of aggression. The plan went awry in that Hitler suddenly attacked Russia, but ultimately it worked out to the advantage of the Red revolution, which quickly brought all eastern Europe into the Moscow sphere of control.

Well, now, absolute power such as Stalin has possessed creates a delicate situation. His sudden removal by illness or death might create chaos in the Soviet bloc, and conceivably could precipitate a third world war.

The point of course is that while Stalin has maintained unquestioned control of the Soviet regime, there are a dozen or more ambitious men who might be expected to reach for his job when it was vacated.

That's too many for unity. Naturally one assumes that Stalin already has designated his successor, but that designation might not stick, once his powerful influence had been removed.

**Purges Block Ambition**  
Why is it that Stalin has been able to remain in unquestioned power all these years? Why hasn't some one of his ambitious lieutenants reached for the big job?

## Commie Party Dwindles, Denied Hall For Meeting

NEW YORK — (AP) — The American Communist party, beset by membership and financial worries and its leaders facing jail terms, opens its 15th biennial national convention here tonight.

The convention will begin with public rallies in Manhattan, the Bronx—and in Brooklyn if the party can find a meeting place there. Owners of a hall where the Brooklyn rally was to be staged canceled the reservation. The small, separate rallies contrast with two years ago when the public convention was held in Madison Square garden.

The rallies, however, were expected to be just a backdrop for the real business of the convention — "closed door" sessions at which the Communist high command will exchange views on the future of the shrunken party.

Communist leaders are frankly worried by a drop-off in dues payments, declining membership and the difficulty in maintaining the party organ, the daily worker.

Three years ago the party claimed a membership of 100,000. FBI Chief J. Edgar Hoover recently put the total at 55,000. Last spring, an official party report on membership gave no overall figure but did admit a 17 percent drop in 1950 registration over that of 1949.

Eleven members of the party's top echelon face five years in prison, convicted of conspiracy to teach and advocate the violent overthrow of the government.

Ten probably will be present at the convention. They are free in bail pending appeal of their conviction. But Eugene Dennis, general secretary of the party and one of those convicted, already is in jail for contempt of congress.

A pre-convention bulletin issued by the party some time ago charged the United States with "aggression" against Korea and China. It portrayed the Soviet union as the real force for peace in the world today.

## Forester Charges Theft In Yule Tree Cutting

ALBUQUERQUE — (AP) — The U. S. Forest service's official frown on cutting Christmas trees on its land was almost a glower today.

Why? Because between 200 and 300 trees are missing from the Sandia district of the Gibola national forest near here.

Bob Stewart, ranger in charge, was quite peeved about it as he made the estimate.

"A lot of Albuquerque residents start out showing the spirit of Christmas by stealing a tree," he said.

One answer to these questions is that the early purges which were carried out under the Stalin regime made it quite patent that ambition was a dangerous attribute. However, I don't believe that is the real answer.

The reason Stalin's dictatorship has been unchallenged is because he possesses powerful leadership and because he has kept coming up with the right schemes to implement the Red world revolution.

His followers claim that he is "always right" in his judgment, and that therefore his leadership hasn't been challenged.

That probably is the explanation of his power. He has delivered the goods—diabolical goods from the standpoint of the democracies.

## Newsreel Employees Get Russian Prison Terms

BERLIN — (AP) — Two German employees of the American Newsreel company, Pathe news, have been sentenced to prison by a Soviet zone Communist court, the West Berlin Telegraf reported.

Camera man Siegfried Rogge, 23, received a four-year term and chauffeur Heinz Tochtermann, 21, a three-year term, the newspaper said.

The men were arrested last June 30 in East Germany by German Communist police while driving a Pathe car and equipment from Berlin to Bremen on assignment.

The Telegraf said the trial was conducted without the defendants being represented by a lawyer. The prosecutor was quoted as saying their American Newsreel activities were "offenses against Democracy."

## Failure To Bomb Yalu Power Dams Raises Question

By ELTON C. FAY  
A.P. Military Affairs Reporter

WASHINGTON — (AP) — Why don't U. S. bombers blast the big hydro-electric power dams on the joint communist border of Manchuria and North Korea?

The question has been raised, among others, by representative-elect Alfred Sieminski (D-N.J.), just returned from duty as an army major in Korea.

So far as is known, there has been no formal, official answer to the question.

Sieminski said in New York several days ago that GIs having fought in the area and been forced into retreat by the Chinese Communists "are saying that a cartel has a stake in those (power) projects. . . let's blow them."

Unofficially and informally (which means they can't be

named) some Pentagon officials offer one explanation:

Russia might seize on destruction of the communist power plants on the Yalu river boundary as a pretext to take an open hand in the Far East war. On the other hand, she might not, but the gravity of the risk outweighs the military value of destroying the dams.

Just who has the responsibility for staying bomb attacks on the dams isn't quite clear. The Pentagon vaguely refers questions to "a higher level" and to Gen. MacArthur's headquarters at Tokyo.

There appears to be no tactical, purely military reason why the bombing couldn't be done.

## Easy Targets From Air

Unless the Reds displayed unprecedented air activity, B-29 bombers which have roamed close to the Yalu river area without

serious opposition from the enemy could make such strikes.

If they wanted to remain as meticulous as they have been up to now about refraining from crossing into Manchurian territory, that could be done, fliers say. Bombing runs by the planes could be directed either up or down stream and bombs dropped without flying over Manchurian areas. The dams could be blown out on the North Korean ends, releasing impounded water and making the power plants useless.

Manchuria, and especially the city of Mukden, produces munitions for waging the war against the United States and her allies. Loss of electric power to the Manchurian arsenal, as well as to whatever plants the North Koreans may have back in operation, would reduce the output of those factories.

## Mountain States Co. Asks Stock Issue Permit

WASHINGTON — (AP) — The Mountain States Power Co., Albany, Ore., has applied to the power commission for authority to issue 900,000 shares of common stock, par value \$7.25 a share, in exchange for 300,000 shares of no par value now outstanding.

The plan would be subject to approval by stockholders. The company said the proposal would help facilitate sale of additional common stock to enable the concern to carry out a 1951 construction program.

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