

# Czech Railroad Tragedy

## May Claim Lives of 186

### Light Failure Panics Church Goers, 23 Die in Rush to Door

TOLUCA, Mexico (U) — A lighting failure caused by a short circuit sowed panic during a Christmas mass in a village church early Friday and 23 persons were killed in a rush for the doors.

Some 200 more were injured as the crowd of 3,000 piled up around the two doors of the church in Temoaya, a mountain village 15 miles northwest of here.

The parish priest, the Rev. Jose Cruz, attempted to quell the panic but without success.

"Mass was just finished," he said, "and the congregation was leaving the church. Somebody stepped on a wire lying on the floor. There was a blue flash and the lights went out."

"Then when the lights came on again, there was nobody in the church but me and the victims. I went around and administered the last sacraments to them. There was nothing else I could do."

Most of the congregation were country people from the surrounding hills, many of them unaccustomed to electric lights. The crowd in the church was unusually large because of the Christmas midnight mass.

### Twins Make Merry Christmas Merrier

It was a Merry, Merry Christmas for the John Merrys early Christmas morn when mama Merry gave birth to two little twin Merrys at Salem General Hospital—a boy and a girl.



By Charles A. Sprague

The pair, which brings the Merry total to a Merry four, were two among five Christmas babies born in Salem's two hospitals Friday.

The new little Merrys were named Carol Mary Merry, 6 pounds, 6 ounces (born at 2:23 a.m.) and John Scott Merry, barely over 5 pounds (born at 2:25 a.m.). Papa Merry, who was home with his other Merry Friday evening, Mary Ellen Merry (4½ years) and Jonette Merry (19 months), said he and his wife Paula were expecting the twins.

Merry, a sheet metal worker for the Reimann Sheet Metal Co., said that "way back" on his wife's side there was record of twins. Mother and children were said to be doing "fine" at the hospital Friday night. The Merrys live at 3240 Fisher Rd.

Other Christmas surprises for Salem parents were a son at Salem General to Mr. and Mrs. Charles Feskens, 4680 Macleay Rd., and a son to Mr. and Mrs. Harold Halfman, 4180 Macleay Rd., also at Salem General. A boy was born to Mr. and Mrs. George A. Coen, 3233 S. Liberty Rd., at Salem Memorial Hospital.

Hospital officials said late Friday night that no other Christmas children were expected, and for the most part, "OB" (abbreviation for obstetrics) floor was relatively quiet.

### Perfume Gift Blamed for Wife's Suicide

MODESTO, Calif. (U) — Mrs. Kathleen Vinyard was disappointed Thursday night when she unwrapped a Christmas present—a bottle of perfume from her husband, Joe. She flew into a rage. Friday morning, Mrs. Vinyard, 38, died a short time after her husband found her in their closed garage, the auto engine running.

Police Capt. William Coulson said she killed herself.

Mrs. Vinyard had complained, Coulson said, that it was the fourth straight year she had received perfume from her husband.

### Blaze Strikes Albany Home

ALBANY — Fire Friday night destroyed a small one-story house just north of here on David Avenue and placed its lone occupant, George M. Jimmerfield, 58, in a serious condition at Albany General Hospital.

An attending physician said the man suffered third degree burns about the face and body.

Neighbors called the Albany fireman when the blaze was discovered at about 7:20 p.m. and took about two hours to extinguish. Cause of the fire was not known. It was believed that Jimmerfield was overcome by smoke and unable to get out of the burning house.

### Red Troops Press Attack In Thailand

BANGKOK (U) — The Thai government Saturday proclaimed a state of emergency in all nine northern and northeastern states after reports that Vietminh troops had attacked in force and with planes. The reports said also set up new defenses along the Mekong River which separates Thailand from Laos.

The new French defense lines were reported about 30 kilometers (31.5 miles) from Thakhek, a Laos town on the Mekong opposite the Thai province of Nongkhai.

The declaration of emergency was decided upon at a meeting of the cabinet and high military officers at the residence of Premier Phibun Songkram. The situation in Laos was considered a threat to the sovereignty of Thailand.

### Animal Crackers

By WARREN GOODRICH

"He's in bad shape. He's not only forgotten who he is, but what he is."

### 'Curtain' Shields Size of Disaster

VIENNA, Austria (U) — A Christmas railway disaster in Czechoslovakia has killed perhaps as many as 186 persons, according to reports penetrating the Iron Curtain Friday night. Signs pointed to it being one of the world's worst rail disasters.

The first official announcement made by radio Prague said "many persons were killed or injured" when the Bratislava-Prague express crashed into another passenger train near the Moravian village of Jsakvice.

Officials at Scene — High Czech officials sped to the scene to conduct an investigation but gave out no exact figures on the death toll.

Police officers at Hustopice, who said they were in charge of identifying victims, told The Associated Press in Vienna by phone that "more than 100 persons" perished in the crash.

A telephone operator at Brno told The Associated Press by phone that she overheard Czech officials place the death count at 186. This would make it the third worst rail disaster in history.

### 600 Died in 1917

The French news agency records the No. 1 disaster as a troop train wreck in the Alps in 1917 when 600 were reported killed. World War I censorship plugged the news until the war's end, the agency said.

The second worst rail disaster occurred in another Iron Curtain land—Poland—in 1949 when 200 persons were killed.

Railway officials at both Brno and Prague refused to comment on the extent of the death toll but the extensive emergency measures taken by Czech authorities indicated it was a major catastrophe.

Near Czech Border — Radio Prague announced that Interior Minister Rudolf Barak and Traffic Minister Antonin Postpihl had left Prague for Sakvice to investigate the wreck. The fact that two top ministers went personally to the scene was a further indication of the seriousness of the tragedy.

Sakvice is a small country town about 12 miles north of the Austrian-Czech border station of Breclav (Lundenburg). (Additional Details on New Zealand Crash on Page 2.)

### 40,000 Left Homeless in China Blaze

HONG KONG (U) — Fire that started Christmas night in the squatter area of Kowloon burned itself out Saturday, leaving more than 40,000 homeless, causing 2 deaths and more than 50 injuries.

Officials of the Hong Kong fire brigade estimated that more than 6,000 dwellings, some of them little more than huts, had been destroyed in the Sekkipie district which has been congested with war refugees. Both victims were women war refugees.

The fire started about 9 p.m. Christmas night and burned until after dawn Saturday, despite efforts of the fire brigade and several scores of volunteer fighters.

It was the worst of a number of fires which have swept the squatter district since refugees began thronging into the area from Red China several years ago.

Some Chinese newspapers estimated the number of homeless at 70,000, but officials put that figure as far too high.

Firemen as usual were handicapped with lack of water.

### Mrs. Pierce Marks 80th Birthday Today

Mrs. Walter M. Pierce, wife of the former governor of Oregon, will celebrate her 80th birthday today.

Mrs. Pierce, state librarian, until her retirement in 1929, lived with her husband at 4561 Dallas Rd. He is 92 years old.

### THE WEATHER

	Max.	Min.	Precip.
Salem	43	37	.00
Portland	42	38	.00
San Francisco	60	50	.00
Chicago	38	35	.00
New York	45	29	.00

FORECAST (from U. S. Weather Bureau, McNary Field, Salem): Mostly cloudy with early morning and evening fog. High today near 44 and low tonight near 33. Temperature at 12:01 a. m. was 37 degrees.

SALEM PRECIPITATION  
Since Start of Weather Year Sept. 1, 1949  
This Year 9.15  
Last Year 9.15  
Normal 18.92

### Ermine Bathing Suit too 'Hot' for Cold Korea, But Agent, Not Army, Orders Actress Home

SEOUL (U) — Actress Terry Moore reported early Saturday she had been ordered out of Korea, where she is touring with a show for service men, but the announcement of the order appeared to be a little premature.

Miss Moore, who had been ordered not to wear a bikini bathing suit made of ermine in her Korean shows, wore the much discussed pieces in a Christmas night show for men of the 10th Army Corps. Early Saturday she made the announcement she was ordered home, leaving the impression that the decision was the Army's.

Later, however, Johnny Grant, Los Angeles disc jockey who is managing the troupe in Korea, said the so-called order was not an "order" but a "request" from Hollywood Coordinating Committee which arranges shows for servicemen.

The request, Grant said, apparently was based on "the misconception that Miss Moore performed a strip act, which of course is not true."

Grant said "everything seems to have been straightened out and 'I feel certain that Miss Moore is going to continue the tour.'"

Miss Moore was one of the members of the troupe which did a show at noon Saturday for officers and men of the 10th Corps artillery headquarters — but she did not wear the controversial fur bikini.

Miss Moore had been warned that the ermine bikini would not be allowed after a Hollywood publicity picture and announcement that she intended to strip down to it for the Korean service men had brought a storm of protests from church groups in the United States.

The actress said she had worn the suit Christmas night after it had been approved by Lt. Gen. Bruce Clark, commanding officer of the 10th Corps.

However, an aide to the general said Saturday General Clark had not seen the suit before the show and had neither approved nor disapproved it.

The 8th Army denied it or any of its lower commands had issued the order for Miss Moore to leave Korea.

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## Holiday Death Record Feared

### Shubert Taken By Death

NEW YORK (U) — Lee Shubert, president of the vast Shubert theatrical enterprises, died Friday at the age of 78.

He died just four days after entering Mount Sinai Hospital for treatment of a circulatory disturbance. The hospital said death was caused by "the complete failure of the circulatory system."

Lee Shubert was one of three brothers whose far-flung theatrical business at one time was estimated conservatively to be worth \$400,000,000.

### One Survivor

The eldest brother, Sam S. Shubert, died many years ago.

The youngest brother, the only survivor now of the famous trio of showmen, is Jacob J. Shubert, generally known as "J. J."

The careers of the brothers were closely interwoven — so much so that the life story of Lee Shubert was also largely the life story of Sam and J. J.

The three left Syracuse, N. Y., as young men and invaded Broadway.

They became engaged in a violent war with the old Klaw & Erlanger booking business, then known as "the combination."

### Broke Up Combine

The task was a difficult one — but the three Shubert brothers broke the combine and emerged eventually as the most powerful single group operating in the theater.

As the Shubert brothers gradually broke the hold of the combination, they built many theaters in New York familiar to theatergoers throughout the nation.

These houses included the Forty-Fourth Street, the Lyric, the Shubert, Broadhurst, Booth, Plymouth, Morosco, Bijou, Ritz, the Forty-Ninth Street, Nora Bayes, Forrest, Maxine Elliott and the Al Jolson.

### No Worries Keep Man, 103, Young

PORTLAND (U) — Charles Mack of nearby Troutdale says he lived to be 103 because he's "dumb."

"When you're dumb," he explains, "you've got nothing to worry about so you keep on living. It's worry that takes a man down."

Mack, vigorous and alert, celebrated his 103rd birthday Wednesday. Among his other advice on how to live long is don't over-drink or overeat.

Mack, a former tavern operator, says he hasn't had a drink in a long time.

"I used to sell a big glass of whisky for 10 cents," he says. "Think I'd pay 50 cents for a glass now?"

### Morning Fog On Forecast

Weather outlook for Salem and vicinity today didn't look too warm at midnight when the U.S. Weather Bureau predicted a high of 44 and a low of 33 degrees for Saturday.

Highest temperature in Salem for Christmas day was 43 degrees which dropped to a 37 low before the day ended. Today was slated by weathermen to be mostly cloudy with early morning and evening fog.

Weather must have been worse in the Medford area, though, because United Air Lines had to cancel its regular flight 155 when Medford was "soaked in." This flight originates in Portland, going to Medford in the evening, remaining overnight and returning the next morning.

### Toddler Falls To Death in Yule Tragedy

WARREN, Pa. (U) — Mr. and Mrs. Donald Perrine awoke early Friday to take their only son to see his Christmas presents, but instead found him dead on a landing at the foot of the stairway.

Coroner Ed Lowrey said the boy, James, 2, apparently fell down seven steps during the night. He died of a broken neck.

Lowrey said the parents told him the child was too young to fully appreciate Christmas and they doubted if he was searching for Yule presents. They were unable to explain his being out of bed.

### TB No Handicap to Studies



Tuberculosis is the immediate problem for 11-year-old Sharon Moore, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Moore, Silverton, but schoolwork must be continued. Sharon was struck with TB last June and is continuing her sixth grade studies with the assistance of Mrs. A. B. Swigart, (above right) one of two teachers at the Oregon State Tuberculosis Hospital east of Salem. (Story on page 2.)

### Discovery to Take Lethal Kick From Atomic Materials Said Basis for Ike's Pool Offers

PARIS (U) — Paris-Press, one of the leading afternoon newspapers of Paris, said Friday President Eisenhower's proposal for a U.N. atomic pool had been made possible by an amazing new discovery that atomic materials can be "denatured" to remove their destructiveness.

The paper did not give either the source of its story nor details of the reported discovery in the article which it displayed prominently.

Paris-Press said President Eisenhower was prepared to turn over the secret of the discovery to Russia, and that this would effectively remove Russian fears that atomic material it might contribute to the world "nuclear bank" would ever be used against the Soviet Union.

In Washington, a spokesman for the Atomic Energy Commission said he had no comment on the report.

The newspaper said American scientists had made the discovery and had perfected means for "enriching" plutonium and other nuclear material which goes into an atomic bomb.

Fissionable material thus "denatured" could never again be used for military purposes, the article said, but would be unpaired for peaceful civilian purposes.

The paper said the process was too complicated to explain in laymen's language, but takes the lethal kick out of nuclear material.

It added that President Eisenhower was convinced the system would work before he proposed before the U.N. General Assembly on Dec. 9 that the United States, Russia and other nations with the secret of the atomic bomb turn some of their material into a peaceful pool.

Paris-Press said the new discovery opened up new horizons for human progress which staggered the imagination.

### French Fight To Turn Back Attack by Reds

SAIGON, Indochina (U) — French troops fought all Christmas Day a powerful new Communist-led Vietminh drive aimed at reaching the Thailand frontier and cutting Indochina in two.

A French army spokesman said elements of two Vietminh divisions had been identified as taking part in the new drive toward Thakhek, on the Mekong River frontier between Thailand and Laos, one of the three French-protected Indochinese states.

The French population of Thakhek was asked by officials to evacuate to Savannakhet, 200 miles to the south.

The spokesman said the invading units, which apparently started their drive in North Annam, were about 80 miles from Thakhek. The drive was being pushed at the narrowest part of Indochina, which at this point is only about 100 miles across with Thakhek as the farthest point in the interior.

Thakhek is approximately 240 miles south of Hanoi and dominates the Mekong Valley to the south. It is just across the river from the Thailand town of Lak-hon.

"We will try," Ward said as spokesman for the group, "to tell the young people we meet about life in this country and hope to be able to exchange information on the different modes of living."

### Young College Editors Start Russia Tour

NEW YORK (U) — A second group of seven young college editors left Friday for a three-week tour of the Soviet Union.

Richard E. Ward of New Rochelle, N.Y., managing editor of the University of Chicago "Maroon," said his companions hope to visit areas not included in the first group's tour last summer.

He mentioned the Crimea and the Caucasus in southern Russia.

"We will try," Ward said as spokesman for the group, "to tell the young people we meet about life in this country and hope to be able to exchange information on the different modes of living."

The tourists include: David Barney, Portland, Ore., editor of "Reed Quest," Reed College, Portland.

### DAMAGE IN BLAZE

BOMBAY, India (U) — Eight people were injured and damage estimated at more than half a million dollars was caused by a fire which started in the timber market at Poona Friday night and spread over 20 acres of the heart of the city.

The boys' escape was apparently unrelated to the other events.

Salem police received word at 10:50 p.m. that the boys had gotten away about an hour previous. At 11 p.m. city police got a call that the home of Page Stevens, 610 D. St. had been entered and a 38 caliber revolver, holster and wrist watch taken. Entrance was forced through a window.

At 11:15 p.m. city police received word that a 1951 model car owned by Joseph W. Dougherty, Aums-

### Traffic Claims 228 in First Thirty Hours

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Traffic accident deaths on the nation's highways threatened to set a record for the Christmas holiday season as the toll mounted steadily Friday night.

At least 272 persons had died in all types of holiday accidents during the first 30 hours of the holiday period, which began at 6 p. m. (local time) Thursday and will end at midnight Sunday. Of the total, 228 were killed in traffic accidents, 23 in fires, and 21 in accidents of other type.

The record holiday traffic death toll was 556, during last year's four-day Christmas period.

"Unless motorists put on the brakes, it's going to be the most tragic Christmas in history for traffic accidents," Ned Dearborn, president of the National Safety Council, said Friday night as the toll climbed.

The council had predicted 510 would die in traffic accidents during the holiday period.

The figures told little of the poignant human tragedy. At Versailles, Ohio, a Christmas auto accident left two children orphans. A mother and her four youngsters died in their flaming home near Flat Rock, Mich. Three young boys were victims of another fire at Gloucester, Mass.

At Packwood, Wash., the task of recovering bodies of two brothers, drowned when their car plunged into a lake, fell to a third brother who operated a car wrecker service.

An unusually heavy flow of Christmas traffic made the holiday hazard greater than that of the usual weekend.

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### Carter Harrison, 5 Times Chicago Mayor Succumbs

CHICAGO (U) — Carter H. Harrison, five times mayor of Chicago, died Friday. He was 93.

Harrison, who served as collector of internal revenue for the Chicago district from 1933 to 1944, died in his Chicago apartment.

A Democrat, he bore the same name as his father, also mayor for five terms.

The younger Harrison was first elected to the chief city post in 1897 and retired after serving four consecutive two-year terms. He returned to the office of the mayor for a four-year term in 1911.

### Wavell's Son Ambushed By Mau Maus

NAIROBI, Kenya (U) — Maj. Earl Wavell, 37, son of the late Field Marshal Earl Wavell, was killed by Mau Mau terrorists Thursday night.

He was leading a Black Watch patrol investigating the beheading of an African loyal to the British when his patrol was ambushed by the Mau Mau, a secret organization whose members have sworn to drive the white man out of Kenya. Wavell fell early in the encounter.

An African policeman was killed and two police officers were wounded. The Mau Mau casualties were five dead and four captured.

The late Field Marshal Earl Wavell commanded the British North African campaign during the first part of World War II and later commanded British forces fighting the Japanese in Burma. He died in 1950.

### Section Hand Dies Of Bullet Wounds

KLAMATH FALLS (U) — A Mexican railroad worker, Unzueta Cruz, died here Christmas morning from wounds suffered when shot early Thursday.

Police have few clues to the identity of who shot him. He and another man came out of a tavern. Someone fired a pistol and Cruz fell, unconscious. The gunman sped away in a car.

His companion, Georgia Harris, 35, also of San Francisco, was on route from North Hollywood to a new home in Sutherland, Ore., when the accident occurred.

### Auto Mishaps Take Lives of 3 in Oregon

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Holiday traffic accidents in Oregon had claimed three lives late Friday night.

Mrs. Virgil Harrington, about 40, Benton City, Wash., was killed about 20 miles north of Ontario, near the Idaho border.

A car driven by her husband swerved out of control on an icy stretch of Highway 30 and crashed at 12:30 a.m. The husband and their daughter, Karen, 8, were not injured but suffered shock.

Near Oakridge, southeast of Eugene on Highway 58, an automobile flipped over and plunged into Salt Creek, killing Herbert C. Nelson, 35, San Francisco.

His companion, Georgia Harris, 35, also of San Francisco, was on route from North Hollywood to a new home in Sutherland, Ore., when the accident occurred.

### Chain of Events Keeps Valley Police Force Busy on Otherwise Quiet Christmas Holiday

A chain of events was touched off through the Salem area in an otherwise quiet late Christmas night and included escape of six boys from Mac Laren School at Woodburn; burglary of a Salem home and theft of an auto.

The boys' escape was apparently unrelated to the other events.

Salem police received word at 10:50 p.m. that the boys had gotten away about an hour previous. At 11 p.m. city police got a call that the home of Page Stevens, 610 D. St. had been entered and a 38 caliber revolver, holster and wrist watch taken. Entrance was forced through a window.

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### Babson Report Next Thursday

The Oregon Statesman will publish Roger W. Babson's Business and Financial Outlook for 1954 next Thursday.

It will contain outstanding forecasts covering such important topics as: General business, commodity prices, taxes, trade, labor, inflation, farm outlook, stock market, real estate, politics.

We are calling this feature to your attention because we believe that every one of our readers will find it of inestimable value.

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