

SAN FRANCISCO HOTEL FIRE KILLS 18

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Castro Indicates Campaign Against Roman Catholic Church

Printing Plant Of Religious Paper Closed

Militia Guarding Havana Approaches

Havana - (UPI) - Premier Fidel Castro's militia moved in on half a dozen Roman Catholic institutions today, indicating a major government offensive against the church might be under way.

It was announced that U.S. Embassy Charge d'Affaires Daniel Braddock and the rest of his staff would leave Cuba Saturday morning after turning over the keys to the embassy to Swiss Ambassador Walter Bossi.

Defense Preparations
The Castro regime stepped up its preparations for defense against an alleged "invasion" and sought to turn its failure to get United Nations action against the United States into "a moral victory."

Militia and army units were ordered into a round-the-clock guard of the city's approaches. The government newspaper Revolution had a headline said "Paratroopers, vessels readied for invasion."

Castroite Militiamen
Castroite militiamen closed the printing plant of the Catholic bi-weekly Quincena, the last publication in Cuba that had dared criticize the government, and posted guards at the Salesian Convent that housed it.

KC Quarters Occupied
The nuns were not molested. The militia also occupied the downtown headquarters of the Knights of Columbus, a Catholic laymen's lodge, and the Catholic Workers' Association.

Reports from the provinces said militia detachments had seized seminaries at Calvario and Santiago de las Vegas. Reports that at least five priests had been arrested could not be confirmed immediately.

The militia invoked the emergency powers granted it as part of the current "invasion" scare.

Salem - (UPI) - A 1,560-acre oil and gas lease in Coos and Curry counties has been approved by the State Land Board.

WEATHER
FORECAST: Cloudy with rain and gusty southerly winds tonight. Intermittent rain Saturday. Low tonight 36-40. High Saturday 45-48.

Our Skies Tonight
Sunset today 4:54 p.m.
Sunrise tomorrow 7:41 a.m.
Moonrise tonight 9:42 p.m.
Low tide 1:15 a.m.
High tide 7:15 a.m.

Duncan Sees Services as Top Legislature Problem
Salem - (UPI) - House Speaker Robert Duncan (D-Medford), said today the main problem of the 1961 legislature as in past sessions will be to determine the level and cost of services the state will provide during the next two years.

Duncan was on the job today working on prelegislative planning.

Five Specific Issues
He said at least five specific issues stand out this session. He listed them, not necessarily in order of their importance:

Oregon Urged To Begin Tideland Oil Explorations

Technical Aid Offer Extended By Oil Companies

Salem - (UPI) - Oregon officials were told Thursday they would be wise to begin tideland oil explorations in the state's 600,000 acres of offshore lands - and were offered technical assistance.

The subject was discussed at a conference of Oregon, California and oil industry officials called by Oregon Attorney General Robert Y. Thornton.

The attorney general is preparing legislation which would allow Oregon to grant a lease for oil exploration in the tidelands, so far undeveloped.

The state granted an exploration lease in 1958, but the contractor did not drill a well and it was cancelled. This issue came up again two months ago, when Shell Oil Co. asked the Oregon Land Board to negotiate a lease for offshore oil exploration.

Thornton advised the board last month that present Oregon laws are inadequate for the state to enter into such a lease. The board, headed by Gov. Mark Hatfield, directed Thornton to prepare new laws for introduction in the 1961 legislature, which convenes Monday.

Hatfield said he believed negotiations for such a lease should involve competitive bidding.

Francis Hortig of Los Angeles, executive officer of the California Lands commission, described tideland oil as a "blue chip operation." He was asked to attend because California is the forerunner of all states in offshore oil development.

Hortig said California's experience can be "extremely helpful" to Oregon. He said state regulations have made the problems of fish loss by underwater explosions and water pollution due to oil operations virtually "non-existent."

Oregon officials have expressed concern about protection of other natural resources and the beauty of the coastline.

Henry Wright of Los Angeles, secretary of the Western Oil and Gas association, offered technical assistance from the association, which represents about 85 per cent of the oil industry in six western states.

Duncan said Gov. Mark Hatfield's proposed move toward a cabinet system is basically "on the right track."

Duncan agrees with Hatfield on abolition of the Board of Control and regrouping state institutions according to function such as correctional under one department and mental institutions under another.

New Committee
Duncan said he is considering creation of three special committees this session - reorganization, reorganization and constitutional revision.

Limousine Firms On Probation for Six-Month Period

Both of the city's limousine companies have been placed on six-month probation by the Medford city council. The action came last night following arguments by attorneys representing both of the firms.

The term of probation will expire when the companies' licenses expire. Any violations of the city code or airport regulations that occur during that time will be considered by the council as the basis of further penalizing action. Repeated violations could mean the council would refuse to renew one or both of the licenses when they expire in June.

The decision to place the companies on probation came last night after a motion to revoke the license of the Yellow Cab Limousine service, owned by Carl Kellenberger, failed by a 6 to 2 vote.

The Medford Airport Limousine service, owned by Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Jones, had requested that the council revoke Yellow Cab's limousine license charging them with repeated violation of the city code.

Does 'About Face'
Councilman R. L. Van Sickle, who said he had done an "about face" in his thinking, made the motion to revoke Yellow Cab's license. He was backed by Councilman Donald Hansen. Hansen said he had held from the beginning that there was not enough business at the airport to support two limousine companies.

He said: "The result of the hearing and recent newspaper articles are evidence to me the two operators cannot compete in business."

Other councilmen, while noting that violations of the code have occurred, said they were in favor of placing one or both of the companies on probation but did not think that the violations warranted revoking Yellow Cab's license.

Councilman Jimmy Dunlevy, saying that he agreed with Hansen that there is only enough business to support one company, added that "it is a cat and dog fight between two competitors." He contended that there is just as much competition among other firms, but the council does not try, nor does it have the authority, to regulate it. He indicated he felt the council should not interfere in the existing competition between the limousine services either.

Councilman Al Bradford said the only thing the council should consider is whether the result of a recent hearing on alleged violations of the city code by the companies "justified cancelling out one license." Bradford said: "I can't substantiate in my mind that we should cancel it out on the basis of this report."

Report of Findings
The report of his findings at the hearing, held during December, had been submitted to the council by Alan B. Holmes, then municipal judge acting as hearing examiner, now district attorney.

Attorneys for both of the companies were given three minutes to speak at the meeting last night.

Ben Day, attorney for Medford Limousine service, contended that the violations by Yellow Cab were "serious matter" and "go right to the heart of the authority of the council and city of Medford."

He told the council that although they have never before, revoked a license of a

Testimony Starts In Bengtson Case, In Grants Pass

Grants Pass - Testimony got under way this morning in Josephine county circuit court in the trial on the second indictment charging O. H. Bengtson with larceny by embezzlement from the Medford Escrow company. Bengtson is a Medford lawyer and former official of the company.

Expected to testify the majority of the afternoon, according to Paul Haviland, court appointed prosecuting attorney, is Mrs. Rachel Peterson Carter, Jacksonville, former president of the Medford Escrow company.

First witness called by the state today was John Humphrey, Medford, life insurance underwriter for Mutual of New York. He reviewed an analysis he had made in 1958 of Bengtson's five life insurance policies and that he, at Christian practice of trying to find some good in each other," and added, "I mean that sincerely."

Discuss Purchase
Humphrey said that at that time Bengtson discussed the possible purchase with him of a \$25,000 executive equity life insurance policy. He testified that the premium was first listed as \$1,600, but later raised to \$1,658.25.

Humphrey said that due to the change the first check he received Feb. 1, 1960, he returned to Bengtson and received another check for the larger amount. During cross examination by Defense Attorney Richard Carney, Portland, the check for \$1,658.25 was introduced as an exhibit.

Hearing the case is Judge Orval Millard.

The jury of nine women and three men was sworn in Thursday at 4 p.m. Opening statements by the state and defense were given prior to the close of yesterday's session.

Converted to Own Use
In the opening statement by Haviland, he stated that the state would show that Bengtson, as secretary of the Medford Escrow company, took company funds which he converted to his own use. The state charges that Bengtson instructed Mrs. Carter, president of the company, to write a check for \$1,658.25 to pay for a life insurance policy for himself.

Carney said that the defense would show that Mrs. Carter, who handled the bookkeeping for both Bengtson's legal practice and the Medford Escrow company, took it upon herself to write the check for the policy from the company's funds. The defense claims that Bengtson did not know that a company check was used until several months later.

Leo Levenson, Portland lawyer, who is one of the defense attorneys, told a Mail Tribune reporter following Thursday's recess that "in the last month or two the defense has spent more than \$3,000 for a complete audit of Bengtson's accounts."

ACTIVITY CURBED
Portland - (UPI) - Winter storms in the East and Midwest kept lumber and plywood activity at a minimum this week, according to Crow's Lumber Market News Service.

CAUCUS CALLED
Salem - (UPI) - House Minority Leader F. F. Montgomery (R-Eugene) today called a caucus of publicans to represent the caucus for 5:30 p.m. Monday.



GENERAL ALARM FIRE - Flames shoot through the Thomas hotel in San Francisco in a general alarm fire that gutted the hotel, killed 18 persons, and injured at least 30 others. Note the fireman, bottom left, as he prepares to be taken up to evacuate possible survivors. (UPI Telephoto)

Tenant Arrested On Suspicion Of Manslaughter

Smouldering Fire Suddenly Erupts

San Francisco - (UPI) - A small fire that was believed to have been extinguished suddenly erupted into a general alarm blaze in the Thomas hotel here early today and fire officials said 18 persons were killed.

Firemen said the blaze started in the first floor room of Raymond Gorman, 62, and ordered him arrested on suspicion of manslaughter.

Turned Into Torch
Gorman and 26 other tenants, two firemen and two policemen were treated at emergency hospitals for smoke inhalation and other injuries suffered as the fire turned the six-story low-rate hotel into a huge torch.

Most of the 150 occupants of the 50-year-old building were elderly pensioners. The brick structure was located at 5th and Mission sts. in downtown San Francisco.

Gorman admitted freely to newsmen that he had been drinking the night before and "I was feeling no pain." Witnesses said the fire started when Gorman dropped a cigarette in his mattress in his first floor room.

Went Back to Sleep
Fire Chief William Murray said Gorman and a neighbor thought they had extinguished the fire and went back to sleep. But the mattress rekindled during the night, causing the inferno, Murray said.

As the blaze swept through the building, occupants leaped in night clothes into fire nets and down light wells onto mattresses hastily placed in position by the 200 firemen who responded to the blaze. Firemen helped others down ladders.

A hero of the disaster was clerk Harry Gould, 71, who dashed from his second floor room and banged on doors to rouse tenants.

"It was horrible," Gould said. "It was the first time I've seen anybody at a fire act like animals."

Stunned by Fear
"But these people were making animal sounds, stunned by fear, as they fell or walked out."

Another hero was night clerk Clarence Broderick, 53, who remained at the switchboard and called room after room, waking tenants.

Work To Start on New Chamber Office

Construction of a new building to house the Medford Chamber of Commerce will start soon, Dwight Houghton, chairman of the building committee, told chamber directors yesterday.

The building will be located at the corner of Central ave. and 10th st. on a site which was cleared recently.

Houghton said financing for the new building and property is complete. Costs will include \$17,500 for the property and \$13,320 for the building, a total of \$30,820. Monthly payments by the chamber will amount to \$350.

Houghton expressed appreciation to Bob Taylor, new Chamber president, for his work in arranging the financing of the new building.

Ray Johnson, chairman of the chamber's annual banquet, said the banquet will be held at 6:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 28, at the Rogue Valley Country club.

Castro's Invasion Charges Buried by UN

United Nations, N. Y. - (UPI) - Premier Fidel Castro's charge that the United States planned an imminent invasion of Cuba was buried in United Nations files today after his regime failed to produce any supporting evidence.

The disease is not contagious by external contact. There is no danger to persons other than patients of Weiner and the odds are 90 to 1 against any more deaths, Kandle said.

No charges have been filed in the case.

Herter Requests ICC To Settle Fighting in Laos

Washington - (UPI) - Secretary of State Christian A. Herter said today the United States wants the International Control Commission to return to Laos and try to settle the fighting which has threatened world peace.

Herter stated the U.S. policy to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in a two hour and 20-minute report on world affairs which was described as "not very encouraging."

Early in the current Laotian crisis, the United States argued with its allies that the International Commission, composed of India, Poland and Canada, could not be trusted to work out a settlement that would save Laos from Communist subversion and intrigue.

This position has gradually weakened, however, as the situation grew worse today. Herter said he feels the commission could be reconstituted and "go back in business."

Action Defended
Committee Chairman J. William Fulbright (D-Ark.) and senators said Herter's testimony also carried these highlights:

"The secretary defended the Eisenhower administration's action in severing relations with the Cuban regime of Fidel Castro."

"Pressure on West Berlin may be expected because the Soviets are expected to 'reopen negotiations' with the Kennedy administration in the very near future."

"Herter is 'very anxious' not to say or do anything that would make problems facing the new administration any more difficult."

Officials Gratified Over 'Lights' Plan

Medford school officials this morning said they were gratified with the enthusiasm of audiences at "Lights on For Education" programs last night.

Audiences ranged from a few interested citizens in some areas to comparatively large crowds in others. The programs consisted mostly of panel discussions, followed by question and answer periods.

Similar programs were held throughout the state last night to focus attention on possible legislation affecting schools and youth.

1,142 Enroll for SOC Winter Term
Ashland - Southern Oregon college winter term enrollment reached 1,142 yesterday, college officials announced today. On a comparable date last year there were 1,122 registered.

Home Rule Group Seeks Answers to Two Questions

How is the home rule charter affected by state law? What can and what can not a county under home rule charter do in relation to state law?

These are two main questions which the Jackson county home rule study committee feels must be answered before it goes further with its study.

Last night the committee agreed to ask Orval Eter, attorney and research assistant with the bureau of municipal research, to confer with the group late this month.

The committee also will invite the Lane county administrative assistant to meet with it in the near future. Committee Member MacLeod Maurice, Gold Hill, said he met with the administrative assistant in Lane county Dec. 14. The Lane county official has served for 15 years under succession of county commissions, Maurice reported.

"He serves as a buffer for the commissioners," Maurice explained. "No salesman contact them; they are detoured to the central purchasing agent. He is a great believer in centralized purchasing and a county personnel department."

The Lane county man said Jackson county's budget of \$3,500,000 to \$4 million could justify the salary and costs of a purchasing department, inventory and storage if properly handled.

The administrative assistant prepares each county budget. He makes all of the preliminary contacts with the various departments and obtains their estimates, Maurice was told.

Under his personal supervision, the Lane county official has arranged a pool of automatic office equipment, extra typists and stenographers. This pool of extras provided a nucleus of partially trained employees to fill additional jobs and replacements as they occur in the various county departments, Maurice told the committee.

Home Ransacked; Burglars Have Meal

Central Point - Hungry burglars visited the home of the Rev. Harlie Patterson on Fifth st., Central Point, over the New Year's holidays, Central Point police have reported.

The Pattersons left town Friday and returned Wednesday to find their home ransacked. All clothing chest drawers had been emptied and the contents strewn about the floor. Police said it appeared the burglars had been searching for money.

Instead they invaded the kitchen pantry, and polished off two bowls of dry cereal, leaving the empty bowls on the kitchen table.

Aside from the helpings of cereal, the only other thing taken was 15 pounds of venison stored in the freezer, police said.

An investigation is being made. The burglars gained entrance to the house by prying off a screen latch on the back door.

Doctor's Virus-Laden Needle Studied In Accidental Deaths of 14 Patients

Trenton, N.J. - (UPI) - Authorities today probed the possibility that a respected doctor accidentally injected death into the veins of 14 of his patients with a virus-laden needle.

Dr. Albert L. Weiner, 41, of Erlton, N.J., has temporarily lost his license to practice as an osteopathic physician, because the persons who died last year were among 44 of his patients who became ill with an acute liver disease, presumably serum hepatitis.

None of the patients 10 women and four men, were under 40 years of age.

Weiner, who is head of the neuro-psychiatry at Cherry Hill, N.J., Hospital and has been a licensed physician for 18 years.

A health department spokesman said Thursday the attorney general's office was investigating the possibility, among others, that the disease was transmitted to the patients accidentally through unsanitary hypodermic needles.

Gave Tranquilizers
The spokesman said that because Weiner dealt largely with mental disorders, he frequently gave his patients tranquilizers, mental drugs, or so-

dium amylal, commonly known as truth serum.

"It looks like he got hold of a dirty needle," the spokesman said. He said a patient of Weiner's may have had serum hepatitis.

State Health Commissioner Roscoe P. Kandle said Weiner had been "most cooperative" during the investigation.

The disease is not contagious by external contact. There is no danger to persons other than patients of Weiner and the odds are 90 to 1 against any more deaths, Kandle said.

No charges have been filed in the case.