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Wilkes-Barre Record

WEATHER FORECAST
Today cloudy with occasional rain except rain or snow and little colder northwest portion.
Weather Details On Last Page

DAILY FOUNDED 1873. WEEKLY FOUNDED 1832. ★ WILKES-BARRE, PA., THURSDAY MORNING, JANUARY 16, 1947—20 PAGES FIVE CENTS BY THE COPY. WEEKLY, 24c.

15 KILLED IN NOTTINGHAM COLLIERY GAS BLAST; 4 OTHERS ARE INJURED

Battle of 2 Governors in Georgia Court

Suit to Enjoin Talmadge From Functioning Filed by Attorney General

HEARING IS SET FOR FEBRUARY 7

Adjutant General Named by Both Men, But No Troops Are Called

Atlanta, Jan. 15 (AP)—Georgia's battle of the two Governors entered the courts late today when Attorney General Eugene Cook filed suit to enjoin Herman Talmadge from functioning as Governor on the basis of his election by the Legislature several hours earlier.

After a day in which both Talmadge, 33 and 39-year-old Ellis Arnall, completing a four-year term, had performed the duties of Governor, Cook filed a petition for the injunction in Fulton Superior Court at Arnall's direction. The suit asked Judge Walter C. Hendrix to decide title to the office, leading to a Supreme Court appeal.

Throughout the day Arnall and Talmadge had operated as Governor from offices less than 20 yards apart at the Capitol and engaged in battle for control of the State Militia to bolster their claims to the office.

Talmadge had left the Capitol when the suit was filed but his Secretary, Benton Odom, described the action as "merely a maneuver."

"In accepting the order from Governor Arnall directing me to file a petion for a declaratory judgement in this matter, and in filing this petition, I am recognizing Gov. Arnall as the lawful Governor," Cook said. "I feel that the Supreme Court of Georgia should have an opportunity to pass on it," Cook added.

Judge Hendrix directed Talmadge to show cause February 7 why he should not be barred from the office.

Arnall contends a legislative election is illegal. Talmadge says a constitutional provision required such an election and that he should take over for his father, the late Eugene Talmadge, who died 23 days before his scheduled inauguration yesterday.

2 Militia Heads Named

Each appointed an Adjutant General to command the militia but at the day's end there had been no development to determine whom the troops would heed should the Commanders in Chief call for assistance.

Marvin Griffin, who has served under the Arnall Administration as Adjutant General, resigned and was promptly recommissioned by Talmadge. Arnall countered by naming Col. R. W. Collins as Adjutant General.

Then Talmadge issued an executive order dissolving the State Guard on the grounds it had served its purpose and that the reorganized National Guard, with Griffin in command, was in position to take over if needed.

"Just wait and see whose orders the State Guard and the National Guard will take if they get orders that are conflicting," commented Arnall, who vested Collins with

(See NORMAL STATE on Page 2)

Treasury Balance

Washington, Jan. 15 (AP)—The position of the Treasury January 13: Receipts, $95,113,568.09; expenditures, $96,762,823.90; balance, $3,115,533,268.43.

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SCUFFLE IN GEORGIA GOVERNOR DISPUTE

This was the early morning scene in the Georgia capitol in Atlanta, as a mob sought to invade the governor's office, after the legislature had "elected" Herman Talmadge, son of the late governor-elect, Eugene Talmadge. Gov. Ellis Arnall refused to turn over the office to young Talmadge. (AP Wirephoto)

Grant to Offer Bill to Retain Luxury Levies

Knutson Promises Measure Will Be Given Priority When Offered Today

Washington, Jan. 15 (AP)—Rep. Grant (R-Ind) announced today he would introduce tomorrow his bill to continue beyond July 1 the so-called luxury taxes on liquor, furs, jewelry, lipstick and other items.

Promptly, Chairman Knutson (R-Minn) of the tax-framing House Ways and Means Committee announced Grant's measure would be given priority over all other tax legislation, and might be approved at the first committee meeting on Friday.

Meanwhile, House Democrats, with statements chiding Republicans who previously favored letting the wartime excise rates die July 1, swung into step with the GOP's surprise drive to continue them indefinitely.

Rep. Doughton (D-N C), leading Democratic tax man in the House, said, "This proposition is sure to get my vote." He told reporters:

"Sure, we should continue the extra tax on liquor and such things. Since the Republicans now have decided to follow President Truman on this issue, they might find some merit in his other recommendations on fiscal matters."

The President, in his $37,500,000,000 budget message to Congress last week, asked for continuation of the high excise rates for a year beyond the scheduled July 1 rollback. He also took a firm stand against the Republican proposal to slash individual income taxes 20 per cent.

"I don't know whether they will change their minds about the 20 per cent cut," Doughton said, "but they might find it necessary if we are going to balance the budget and make a good payment on the national debt."

The House Democratic Whip, Rep. McCormack of Massachusetts, commented:

"Having changed their position once, the Republicans ought now to change their position on the 20 per cent windfall reduction of income taxes. They now should apply any revenue surpluses to the reduction of our national debt."

The new Republican move apparently was calculated in part to make room for their promised 20 per cent. tax slash.

Senator Capehart (R-Ind) told reporters tax-cutting must be delayed until some "remedy" is found for the current wave of suits for back pay on a portal to portal basis.

If the pending suits are successful, he told a Senate Judiciary Subcommittee, the result "inevitably would be loss of tremendous sums of money in Federal revenues due to reduction or elimination of tax liability and the greatly increased cost of goods and services to the Federal Government."

House Democratic ranks appeared to be closing tightly against the Republican proposal to cut income levies by 20 per cent. Some dissention in Republican quarters cast doubt also on whether such legislation can pass.

However, it appears likely that some sort of legislation easing individual tax loads will be approved by Congress.

Some Republicans, while oppos-

(See SOME INCOME on Page 2)

Duff Names 10 Newcomers, 9 Holdovers to Cabinet

Miss S. M. R. O'Hara, Retiring Welfare Secretary, Appointed Member of State Parole Board

Harrisbur, Jan. 15 (AP)—Mayor Charlie R. Barber, of Erie, was named Secretary of Welfare succeeding Miss Sophie M. R. O'Hara of Wilkes-Barre, and Frank A. Robbins, Steelton industrialist, Secretary of Public Assistance, by Governor-elect James H. Duff today.

Duff at the same time announced the selection of eight other new cabinet officers and reappointment of nine members of former Governor Martin's to complete the official family which will direct State affairs after his inauguration Jan. 21.

The incoming governor also disclosed he is considering recommendation to the Legislature of the creation of two new State departments of cabinet status—the Department of Mental Health and the Department of Safety and Motor Vehicles.

New appointees and their salaries were:

Thomas McKeen Chidsey, Easton attorney, Attorney General succeeding the incoming governor, $12,000.

Rear Admiral Mila Frederick Draemel, retired, of Wynnewood, Secretary of Forests and Waters, replacing James A. Kell, $10,000.

Dr. Norris Wistar Vaux, Philadelphia physician, Secretary of Health, succeeding Dr. Harry W. Weest, Altoona, $10,000.

Orus J. Matthews, Philadelphia businessman, Secretary of Commerce, replacing Floyd Chalfant, Waynesboro, $10,000.

David Emmert Brumbaugh, Claysburg banker and former member of Congress, Secretary of Banking, succeeding William C. Freeman, Lebanon, $10,000.

Brig. Gen. Frank A. Weber, of Beaver Falls, Adjutant General, replacing Brig. Gen. Robert M. Vail, Wilkes-Barre.

James F. Malone, Jr., Allegheny County Republican chairman, Insurance Commissioner, succeeding Gregg L. Neel, Pittsburgh, $10,000.

David R. Perry, of Camp Hill, deputy attorney general, was named by Duff as his chief secretary at $9,000 a year.

Reappointed to cabinet places were:

David W. Harris, of Philadelphia, Secretary of Revenue, $12,000.

Richard Maize, of Uniontown, Secretary of Mines, $10,000.

Col. Cecil M. Wilhelm, Harrisburg, commissioner of the Pennsylvania State Police, $8,000.

Charles M. Morrison, Traymore, Bucks County, Secretary of the Commonwealth, $10,000.

Ray F. Smock, Meadville, Secretary of Highways, $12,000.

Miles Horst, Lebanon, Secretary of Agriculture, $10,000.

William H. Chestnut, Philadelphia, Secretary of Labor and Industry, $10,000.

Chester M. Woolworth, Lancaster, Secretary of Property and Supplies, $10,000.

Dr. Edward B. Logan, Harrisburg, Budget Secretary, $8,000.

The new governor also announced appointment of Miss Sophie M. R. O'Hara, retiring Secretary of Welfare, to a vacancy on the State Parole Board at $9,000 a year. Barber, the new secretary, will have to resign as Erie's mayor to take the new office.

He also announced that retention of Robert P. Wray, acting secretary of Public Assistance, as

(See VAIL FAILS OF on Page 2)

Ford Cuts Car Prices to Help Halt 'Insane Spiral'

$15 to $50 Reductions Are Intended as 'Shock Treatment' to Restore Sound Postwar Base

Detroit, Jan. 15 (AP)—Henry Ford II, president of the Ford Motor Co., today announced price reductions ranging from $15 to $50 on current models of Ford passenger cars and said the action was intended as "shock treatment" to halt "the insane spiral of mounting costs and rising prices."

The action, first of its kind since the end of the war brought an immediate commendation from Presidential Assistant John R. Steelman, who wired young Ford:

"Your announcement of price reductions is good news for the country and I believe good business for your company."

Walter P. Reuther, president of the CIO United Automobile Workers, declined immediate comment, saying he desired to further study the announcement. The UAW-CIO recently indicated it planned to ask 23½ cent hourly wage increases throughout the industry.

The present UAW-CIO contract runs until next May. Ford said at a press conference late today that the union had been given advance information of the plan to reduce prices, but that "no commitments" of any kind had been made.

While the price cuts were announced as ranging from $15 to $50 in Detroit they will amount to from $16.26 on some of the super deluxe eight cylinder models to $54.20 on the super deluxe sixes.

In explaining that the reductions applied only to Ford models, Ford said Mercury and Lincolns were excluded because "the Ford cars are our main line."

"We believe that the 'shock treatment' of prompt action is needed," he said, "to halt the insane spiral of mounting costs and rising prices and to restore a sound base for the hopeful period of postwar production we are now entering."

He said the Ford Company had lost millions of dollars since V-J Day, even after all tax adjustments, but answering questions, he said a "modest profit" was realized in the latter part of last year and was currently indicated.

He declined to speculate on probable production this year, but asserted it would mount if

(See STABLE COSTS on Page 2)

Great Britain, France Seek to Form Alliance

Attlee Announces Understanding Reached With Premier Blum

WASHINGTON SAID TO FAVOR TREATY

French Communists Expected to Oppose Alliance as Anti-Russian

London, Jan. 15 (AP)—Britain announced tonight that she and France had agreed to conclude a treaty of alliance "at the earliest possible moment"—thus continuing the historic partnership which has bound them as Allies in two wars in this century.

An announcement from Prime Minister Attlee's residence said the decision was reached during the past 48 hours during the visit of French Premier Leon Blum.

"It was recognized," the statement said, "that the two countries, having been twice attacked by Germany in a period of 25 years, have equal interest in protecting themselves against a fresh German menace.

"It was therefore agreed that in these circumstances a treaty of alliance should be concluded between them at the earliest possible moment within the framework of Article 52 of the Charter of the United Nations and with the object of preventing any further aggression by Germany and of preserving peace and security."

The announcement added that the "two Governments were furthermore convinced that the conclusion of such a treaty would facilitate the settlement, in a spirit of mutual understanding, of all questions arising" between them.

While the announcement was interpreted as being directed primarily at the military aspects of the alliance, the possibility of closer economic links between the two Western European Powers also was suggested in this section of the statement:

"In view of the close links which exist between the two countries in the commercial and industrial fields, it was agreed that directions should be given to the French and British representatives on the Anglo-French Economic Committee to press on urgently with their task of examining their respective reconstruction and modernization plans with a view to preventing conflicts between them."

Britain and France recently abolished the use of the visa for residents of the two countries travelling across the 22 miles of Channel which separates them at Dover.

Observers in London attached considerable significance to the use of the word "alliance" in the announcement. It is a word that usually carries more significance than the term "pact."

British diplomatic circles were enthusiastic in their comment on the announcement.

"It makes a magnificent triangle in post-war treaties linking Eastern and Western Europe," a Foreign Office spokesman said. "There is the Anglo-Soviet pact of 1942, the French-Soviet pact of 1944 and now, to complete the triangle, the Anglo-French Alliance of 1947. We think it is a very favorable combination and hope it will be seen in that light."

Washington Favorable To Anglo-French Alliance

By JOHN M. HIGHTOWER

Washington, Jan. 15 (AP).—American officials welcomed tonight the Blum-Attlee announcement of intention to negotiate a Franco-British Alliance, but foresaw two obstacles in the way of carrying out the plan.

First, there is the fact that Socialist Leon Blum heads a French government which is on its way out. The organization of a new regime begins tomorrow under the new constitution. It is impossible to tell whether Blum will be succeeded by a leader determined to carry through his commitment.

Second, the Communists are expected to oppose, directly or indirectly, any move which tightens the relationship of Western European Powers among themselves rather than with Russia.

American reaction was largely unofficial. The State Department said it had no comment on the announcement of the results of the conference in London between Blum and British Prime Minister Attlee.

However, diplomatic authorities did not hesitate to say privately that this government regards as a good thing anything that brings Britain and France closer together.

Senator Hatch (D-NM), a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said he "would

(See BLUM, ATTLEE on Page 2)

Hundreds Flock to Glen Alden Operation After Explosion in Ross Vein

Casualty List

The list of dead and injured in the gas blast in the Top Ross Vein of Nottingham Colliery, Glen Alden Coal Company in Plymouth, as announced by company officials late last night follows:

THE KNOWN DEAD

Louis Kupinski, 248 Weston Lane, Wilkes-Barre.

Chester Ostrowski, 269 Orchard Street, Plymouth.

Carl Zlotek, 165 Church Street, Plymouth.

John Zielinski, 453 West Shawnee Avenue, Plymouth.

Felix Konobroski, 552 West Main Street, Plymouth.

Daniel Lewis, rear 305 West Main Street, Plymouth.

Edward Parker, 130 Franklin Street, Plymouth.

John Wilde, 167 Nottingham Street, Plymouth.

Luke Usefera, 40 Curry Hill, Plymouth Township.

Joseph Krajnik, 946 West Main Street, Plymouth Township.

Peter Minkiewicz, 629 Lee Street, Plymouth.

Charles Cylwik, 48 Hillside Street, Wilkes-Barre.

James Smith, 22 Smith Row, Plymouth Township.

Stanley Mytych, 4 West River Street, Plymouth.

William Bockus, 25 Mountain Road, Plymouth Township.

THE INJURED

Injured, as listed by Wilkes-Barre General Hospital:

Andrew Balinko, 54, of 239½ Orchard Street, Plymouth, machine laborer, fractured left leg and lacerations of the scalp.

Samuel Reese, 35, of 313 West Shawnee Avenue, Plymouth, lacerations of the scalp.

Mutilated Body of Girl Found in Los Angeles

Los Angeles, Jan. 15 (AP)—The mutilated nude body of a young girl, about 17, was found today in a vacant lot beside a frequently-traveled sidewalk near the Los Angeles Coliseum.

Police later discovered a bundle of clothing two miles away they said may belong to the slain girl. There were no marks of identification on the body, authorities reported, but laundry marks on the clothing bore the name "Miss Ceal" of Los Angeles.

Mine Laborer Saved From Blast When Coal Loader Fails

John Gush, 63, of 324 West Main Street, Plymouth, a laborer, probably owes his life to his transfer to another location in the underground workings, according to members of his family. His miner is said to be one of the men killed.

Gush worked on a coal loader in the section of the mine where the explosion occurred. Yesterday afternoon the loader broke down and he was sent to another section to work.

He is reported to have told members of his family he was unable to get air in the section in which he was working and suddenly felt a gush of air, believed to have been the result of the blast. The man is said to have run to safety and last night was reported at home in a highly nervous state.

Injured Men Who Survived Blast Are Soon Taken to Surface

EDWARD GRIFFITH, PRESIDENT OF COMPANY, QUICKLY ON SCENE

Eyewitness Describes Shattering Suddenness of Blast in Working

The lives of 15 mine workers were wiped out late yesterday afternoon by a gas explosion that rocked the Top Ross Vein of Nottingham Colliery of Glen Alden Coal Company in Plymouth.

Company officials this morning at 1:15 said 14 bodies had been recovered, but the body of the 15th victim, Carl Zlotek, 165 Church Street, Plymouth, was under tons of debris, and impossible to reach. The place worked by Zlotek was caved by the force of the explosion, rescue workers reported to officials.

The blast occurred less than two hours after the afternoon shift begun work, and within a few seconds, miners said, the area in which the explosion occurred was a shambles.

Edward Griffith, president of Glen Alden Coal Company, and William Everett, general superintendent, said late last night the cause of the explosion, which injured at least four others, had not been determined.

Within a few minutes after the blast occurred, hundreds of residents of Plymouth and surrounding territory rushed to the Nottingham operation, but were kept at the gates by Plymouth Borough and State Police, assisted by police of 10 other municipalities.

For hours the hundreds stood around anxiously awaiting information on relatives among the men who were in the Top Ross Vein or nearby workings when the explosion took place.

Following the blast, officials of Glen Alden Coal Company sent eight ambulances to the Nottingham, and rescue crews were immediately assigned.

While crews were at work inside, attempting to reach the majority of the mine workers, whose fate still was unknown several hours following the blast, emergency crews were held in readiness.

Hundreds Flock to Gates

The hundreds gathered at the two main gates of the operation shivered for hours as a damp, comparatively warm day gave way to chill winds descending Plymouth Mountains.

Chief of Police Larry Kendig of Plymouth was attending annual dinner of the Police Executives' Association of Pennsylvania in American Legion Home, Wilkes-Barre, when he was informed of the tragedy.

Chief Kendig arrived in Plymouth to find the streets around the colliery yard jammed with families and relatives of workers.

Realizing that his own force would be unable to cope with the crush of persons and vehicular traffic, Chief Kendig called Warden William B. Healey, who was presiding at the police meeting, and asked for assistance.

10 Municipalities Aid

Chiefs of police of the more than 10 municipalities represented at the meeting went to the scene after calling their respective departments and ordering extra men assigned to Plymouth.

A detail of State troopers was assigned from Wyoming Barracks to aid in the patrol work.

Sgt. Samuel J. Pinola of Lehigh Valley Coal Company Police was among those who left the Police Executives' Association dinner to go to Nottingham Colliery and offer his assistance.

The two injured men were removed from the explosion area a short time following the blast, and it was reported unofficially, that several others had been assisted to the head of the shaft, from where they went to their homes.

Though company executives could not verify the report, employes in the section said that 22 men reported for work on the afternoon shift yesterday. Only seven of them, according to company compilation, escaped death.

One of those was Thomas Miles, 357 Fairview Street, Plymouth, a miner.

Miles said that he and his laborer, Charles Krawiec of Smith Row, Plymouth, had been working approximately two hours when Miles inquired of his laborer as to the time.

Story By Eye Witness

Miles said Krawiec pulled his watch from his pocket, and replied, "It's 5:45."

"He shoved his watch back into his pocket, and then it came."

"There was a terrific explosion. Everything seemed to go topsy-turvy."

"My place is the second one in from the foot of the shaft. The others who really were caught in the blast, were a lot farther in than I was.

"My laborer and I went out into the gangway, where we saw a couple of men sprawled around. They didn't appear to be injured too badly, so we assisted them to the foot of the shaft.

Miles identified those assisted as John Salusky, a miner of 82 Coal Street, Plymouth, who was not reported hospitalized, and Samuel Reese, who is in General Hospital with a broken leg.

"We had to help them over rubble and boulders as big as kitchen tables that had been blown into the gangway by the force of the explosion.

"Props were knocked down, and in my chamber, the props were twisted and blown from their places."

Miles said he did not leave the mines until after 9 last night, and that he was met by his family who had not definitely learned as to whether he was alive or not.

At the Miles home last night, a happy family reunion took place, interrupted every few minutes by telephone calls and visits of relatives and friends who had heard of his good fortune.

A niece, whose name was not given, rushed to the home under the impression that Miles had been injured, but she too, quickly joined the crowd of happy relatives.

As the long minutes ticked by, and while rescue crews were exerting their strength in the Top Ross vein, Rev. Thomas S. Kelly, Rev. William Burke, both of St. Vincent's RC Church in Plymouth, went to the head of the shaft.

Not long afterword, Captain Harry Carlson of the Salvation Army appeared.

The priests entered the mine where they administered the last rites of the Catholic Church to these whose bodies had not yet been removed.

Capt. Carlson gave the Protestant benediction.

Several hours following the explosion, Maj. W. W. Inglis, retired president of the company, joined Mr. Griffith and Mr. Everett in the investigation on behalf of the company.

The State was represented by Mine Inspectors Daniel Connolly, John Edwards, Kenneth Lee and others who entered the mine to make a thorough inspection of the area effected by the blast.

Last night at 10 the company was making arrangements to re-

(See 15 MINERS KILLED on Page 2)

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Nanticoke and Utility Agree on Light Bill

Nanticoke City, through Solicitor Peter A. Kanjorski, yesterday made settlement with the Luzerne County Gas & Electric Company for the payment of $46,887.87, without interest, on a street lighting bill.

The company sued on the unpaid account. The case was heard by Judge John S. Fine and a verdict was found for the company in the amount of $48,000, with interest from 1939 to 1946.

Solicitor Kanjorski and Attorney James Costello, who represented the company, reached an understanding by which it is stipulated that the city will pay $46,887.87 over a five-year period.

15 Miners Killed in Glen Alden Coal Company Blast

(Continued from Page 1)

move the bodies of the blast victims from the shaft.

A truck loaded with blankets was driven to the head of the shaft, and at least eight ambulances were placed in position for reception of the bodies.

At the head of the shaft was Deputy Coroner Charles Fitzpatrick of Plymouth, who represented the county.

President Griffith declared that the bodies of the blast victims were to be turned over to Mr. Fitzpatrick for preparation for burial.

The vein in which the disastrous explosion took place, is known to employes of the operation as the "Nine East, No. 2 Slope Extension."

It is located, according to reports, approximately 2,000 feet in from an 835-foot shaft.

In the same shaft is the Red Ash Vein, which was not affected by the explosion. Miners in this vein completed their shift.

Following last night's blast, distant relatives of those employed in the operation attempted to telephone the colliery for information.

Volunteers Handle Calls

However, the colliery telephone was busy practically all of the time, and the calls were transferred to Plymouth Police Station, which was deluged with inquiries for hours.

As most of Plymouth police went to the colliery as soon as word of the accident was received, a number of volunteers, including Dr. Benjamin S. Davis, Plymouth, assisted in handling the calls at the police station, and in attempting to placate families of men who were known to have been in the mine at the time.

Capt. John Tomek of Squadron 3, State Police, directed a squad of 16 State Troopers in keeping crowds from the colliery while the rescue work was in progress and in directing traffic on the main highway through Plymouth.

Dr. C. C. Grobiewski and Dr. Burton Weil, Glen Alden Coal Company doctors in the Plymouth area, were at the colliery shortly after the blast and remained there until early this morning when they went to Fitzpatrick Morgue, where the bodies of the dead men were to be taken.

Nine Plymouth undertakers were at Fitzpatrick's Morgue to take charge of the bodies after they were positively identified and released.

Nottingham Mine Scene of 3 Fatal Gas Explosions

Yesterday's explosion at Nottingham Colliery came almost on the 37th anniversary of a disaster which took seven lives at that operation, January 11, 1910.

Eight men were killed in a previous gas explosion at the Nottingham on February 1, 1890.

Plymouth's worst mine accident was that at Avondale shaft, September 6, 1869, when 108 men were asphyxiated and two rescuers killed when the breaker over the shaft was destroyed by fire.

Last major gas explosion in the Luzerne County area was at Volpe Coal Company, near Pittston, on June 10, 1925, when 10 men were killed.

Student Nurse Checking in Injured Finds Father Died

A heart-breaking occurrence resulting from the blast at Nottingham Colliery was the discovery by a student nurse at Wilkes-Barre General Hospital early this morning that her father was one of the victims.

Miss Alice Cytwik, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Cytwik, 48 Hillside Street, Wilkes-Barre, was one of the nurses who accepted into the institution two of the men injured in the explosion.

Miss Cytwik inquired as to the scene of the accident in which the two men were injured, and was shocked to find that they worked in the same place as her father.

Shortly after, members of the family went to the hospital to inform her of the sad occurrence and to take her home.

The injured, Andrew Balinko, 230½ Orchard Street, and Samuel Reese, 35, of 313 West Shawnee Avenue, both of Plymouth, early this morning were reported in good condition.

Russia's Spitsbergen Bid Disputed by Great Britain

London, Jan. 15 (AP)—A Foreign Office spokesman challenged today any reassertion of Russian claims in the strategic Spitsbergen Archipelago, and said that Britain had no knowledge of a Soviet-Norwegian "understanding" on joint defense of the Arctic islands.

Commenting on a Soviet announcement of such an understanding, the spokesman said that Russia was bound by a 1920 international treaty which gave Spitsbergen to Norway and prohibited the use of the islands for "warlike purposes."

The official Russian statement issued in Moscow said Bear Island "actually was a Russian island" and that the treaty of 1920 which specifically included the island in the Spitsbergen group awarded to Norway, "cannot remain valid."

This appeared to be a reassertion of Russian claims. Before 1920 Spitsbergen was a sort of no-man's-land claimed by Russia, Norway and some other nations. Before the first World War Russia took about 400,000 tons of coal annually from the islands.

The Soviet announcement created a stir in Norway and Washington.

Foreign Minister Halvard M. Lange of Norway was closeted for three hours with foreign experts in Oslo. The Norwegian foreign office finally said there would be no comment today.

The Moscow announcement of an understanding about joint Russian-Norwegian defense of the islands was the first official indication that Russia might be seeking bases. Last Friday the Norwegians had announced only that Russia had sought special privileges while the last war was in progress.

The State Department in Washington said it would demand to be consulted on any Russian-Norwegian agreement affecting the 1920 treaty. Spitsbergen is 3,500 airline miles from industrial cities of Northeastern America and a way-station over the North Pole.

Washington diplomatic authorities said that the U. S. State Department had been keeping a wary eye on Moscow's moves toward the archipelago, and that America doubtless would maintain that the 1920 treaty could not be altered without consent of its 30 signatories.

Battery A, 109th FA Reviewed by 2nd Army

The last unit of the 109th Field Artillery, A Battery, was officially inspected Tuesday night in 109th Armory by Second Army officers, preparatory to receiving Federal recognition from the War Department. Lt. Col. Corey E. Patton, 109th commander announced last night.

Major General Edward J. Stackpole, commanding general of the 28th Infantry Division, previously announced that Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, C and Service Batteries, had also received recognition from the War Department.

Capt. Robert Becker is commanding officer of A Battery, the one remaining unit to attain Federal recognition.

Arms Cut Talk Delay Sought By Americans

Russia Strongly Opposes Surprise Request by Delegate Austin

By LARRY HAUCK

Lake Success, N. Y., Jan. 15 (AP)—The United States advised the United Nations Security Council tonight that it was not ready to discuss any arms reductions proposals at this time and pleaded for postponement of the whole question until Feb. 4.

The Soviet Union strongly opposed the move and the council adjourned after six hours of debate without voting. Another session was called for Friday for a decision on the American request for delay.

Herschel V. Johnson, deputy United States delegate, said he was "merely requesting that these complicated questions be deferred for further consideration." He added that he felt that private consultations between now and Feb. 4 would bring a wider area of agreement.

"The United States delegation is not prepared to discuss substantive matters (on arms reduction) at this time either in the council or in a committee," Johnson declared.

Warren R. Austin, new United States delegate who officially took his seat today, put forward the surprise proposal after failing to reach agreement with Russia on procedure at a 30-minute private parley.

Austin originally had insisted that the council give priority to the problem of control of atomic energy and the Soviet delegate Andrei A. Gromyko had in turn insisted on immediate setting up of a commission to start work on implementing the General Assembly's basic arms reduction resolution.

The postponement plea also was opposed by Oscar Lange, Polish delegate, who said that the question of disarmament was of "such paramount importance that it should not be subjected to the usual tangles of diplomatic procedure."

"To hell with small diplomatic procedure, to hell with high power politics, to hell with all technical obstacles," Lange shouted in an appeal for action.

The council already had four motions on how to approach the problem and Austin said delegates needed more time for study. He also called attention to the resignation of Secretary of State James F. Byrnes and said the incoming secretary should have an opportunity to study the various plans.

As authoritative source said that Austin abandoned his plan to push for atomic priority when it became apparent that it would not get unanimous council approval and turned to the blanket postponement as the next-best step.

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