

DEFEND SEIZURE OF VICHY ISLES

Free French Express Surprise, Hint Rejection of U. S. Protest; Point to Plebiscite as Justification For Their Actions.

LONDON, Dec. 26 (U. P.).—A Free France spokesman, implying a tacit rejection of an United States rebuke, said today that Free French leaders had been asked to free St. Pierre Island from "Vichy dictatorship" and they saw no reason to alter the situation resulting from their action.

Shocked by the news that the United States State Department had denounced the Free French seizure of St. Pierre and Miquelon off the Newfoundland Coast, the leaders had conferred anxiously and it was reported that their men might be withdrawn.

But a spokesman said today that nothing official had been received from Washington or Canada and added:

"Our attitude is that the people of St. Pierre asked us to liberate them from Vichy dictatorship and we did so. As Frenchmen we see no reason to alter the situation. The results of the plebiscite, 98 per cent in our favor, confirm the eagerness of the population to be with us."

The spokesman denied that any agreement had ever been made by Free France leaders concerning St. Pierre.

Before the statement was made, it was reported that the Free French might withdraw in deference to American wishes, especially as British sources here said that the occupation was a surprise to them.

Later the Free French national committee charged that the radio station on St. Pierre had been broadcasting weather information "useful to the enemy."

DeGaulle Lauds Admiral
Regardless of future developments concerning the islands, it was understood that Gen. Charles de Gaulle, Free French leader, had sent congratulations to Admiral Emile Muselier, who commanded the expedition.

A Free France spokesman said: "Admiral Muselier, commander of the Free French naval forces, went to St. Pierre and Miquelon because he was absolutely certain that the populations of these islands desired to resume the fight by the side of the Allies for the liberation of France and the cause of liberty in the world."

"The fact that he succeeded in taking control of these islands without any incident proves that he was acting solely in conformity with the will of the interested populations."

De Gaulle Hopes Damaged
Belief was expressed here that the State Department rebuke had set back the hopes of de Gaulle for early recognition by the United States of his Free France regime as a de facto government. Well informed sources here expressed belief that the State Department rebuke was made in a desire to avoid provoking the Vichy Government, and possibly driving Marshal Henri Philippe Petain, Chief of State of the Vichy regime, toward closer relations with the Germans.

VICHY, Dec. 25 (U. P.).—The government today issued a communique expressing satisfaction at the American State Department's "public condemnation" of the Free French action in seizing the French islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon.

HULL ACTS TO OFFSET COUP

Plans Joint Move by U. S., Britain and Canada in Seeking Withdrawal.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 26 (U. P.).—Joint action by the United States, Great Britain, Canada and the Vichy Government to bring about withdrawal of the Free French forces from St. Pierre-Miquelon was initiated today by Secretary of State Cordell Hull.

The first move was a conference between Mr. Hull and French Ambassador Gaston Henry-Haye. The Ambassador told reporters after the meeting that further conferences, bringing in "all the parties concerned," would be started later in the day.

Meanwhile it was learned in authoritative sources that the United States, Canada, and Britain had been concerned for some time over the activities of a wireless station at St. Pierre.

Awat Mackenzie King
A proposal that observers be sent there, to make certain that nothing helpful to Axis raiders in the Atlantic was being sent from that station, was being considered when the free French forces took over the islands Wednesday. It was indicated control of the station would figure in any settlement arranged with Vichy.

Canadian Prime Minister W. L. Mackenzie King and his top advisers are scheduled to arrive here this afternoon to join conferences between President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Winston Churchill. Elimination of the threat to delicate relations with the Vichy Government will be high on the agenda of those meetings.

The United States already has put the question to Canada by asking her what steps she "is prepared to take to restore the status quo" of St. Pierre-Miquelon—that is, restore sovereignty over them to Vichy. Mr. King probably will give his country's answer to Mr. Roosevelt shortly after his arrival.

Hull Foregoes Holiday
Secretary of State Cordell Hull interrupted his Christmas holiday to go to his office and study the situation and to issue a statement which said Free French occupation of the islands was "an arbitrary action contrary to the agreement of all parties concerned and certainly without prior knowledge or consent in any sense" of the United States.

The Free French action created acute embarrassment here where efforts have been underway for a long time to prevent further collaboration between the Axis and Vichy.

Claim St. Pierre Voted 65-1 For Coup by De Gaullists

ST. PIERRE, Dec. 26 (U. P.).—The Free French naval force which took over this Vichy controlled French colony Wednesday to the embarrassment of the United States and Great Britain, sailed from an Eastern Canada port, it was revealed today.

Vice Admiral Emile Muselier, commander of the Free French Navy, put out from the port on Monday with four courvettes for "maneuvers at sea." The ships maneuvered Monday and Tuesday, Wednesday they sailed between St. Pierre and Miquelon, the chief islands of the tiny dots of the Newfoundland coast that have been French for more than 100 years, and

only then did the crews learn their mission. (The British announced in London that the ships had not sailed from an United Kingdom port. Free French leaders in London seem to indicate that they had known in advance of the excursion. The British announced that they hadn't.)

These further details of the surprising Christmas coup were made public as Admiral Muselier and the population in general rejoiced over the results of yesterday's plebiscite shown St. Pierre males which showed 65 for the Free French and 10 for Vichy.

There was no indication whether a plebiscite had been held on Miquelon.

AYRES DOWNSTAIRS STORE

AFTER-CHRISTMAS SALES & CLEARANCES

SAVE 1/4 - 1/3 - 1/2 OFF OF REGULAR PRICES

All Items Subject to Prior Selling



Special Purchase and
Stock Clearance of

Reg. \$7.98 to \$10.95
Better DRESSES

SALE PRICE **\$5.00**

Dressy, tailored, street and sport style dresses in rayon alpaca, rayon crush resistant velvet and various wool contents. 2-piece and suit styles. Junior, misses and women.

Special Purchase and
Stock Clearance of

Regular \$5 DRESSES **\$3**

Lovely rayon alpaca and various wool contents in this big special purchase and clearance from our better dresses. Sizes for juniors, misses and women. This is a sale that every budget wise woman will want to attend, be here tomorrow morning sure.

Clearance Sale

WINTER COATS

Regular \$17.95, \$19.95, \$21.95, \$24.95

SALE PRICE **\$14.88**

Sizes for Juniors, Misses and Women!

Select group of higher priced coats for Juniors, Misses and Women reduced for this great After Christmas Clearance Sale! Included are: Loch Lomond plaid backs, full slipper lined wool tweeds and fleeces, large plaids, Commadore fabric dress coats with lambs-wool innerlining. All are priced far below their regular prices, priced to sell and help you save. Many styles will be smart for spring wear.

SALE Sport and
Reversible COATS

Reg. \$10.95 and \$12.95 Values

SALE PRICE **\$7.88**

Manufacturer's closeout of smart reversibles. Plaids, tweeds, cavalry twills, and shetlands with reverse side of gabardine. Some with hoods and some with slipper closing. Sizes 9 to 17.

Infants' and Tots' Wear

Infants' Reg. 59c Sweaters.....39c
Infants' 59c Knit Leggings.....39c
Infants' Bootie Sets.....\$3.00
Infants' Blankets, reg. \$1 to \$1.59...89c
Infants' Handmade Dresses, regular 59c, now.....39c
Infants' 59c Handmade Creepers...39c
Infants' 79c Wool Knit Creepers...39c
Tots' \$6.98 3-Piece Snow Suits...\$5.00
Tots' \$3.98 Coat and Hat Sets...\$2.99
Toddlers' 89c Wool Sweaters.....69c
Tots' \$3 Rayon Velvet Dresses...\$1.99

WOMEN'S SPORTWEAR

Drastically Reduced

Reg. \$3.98 to \$7.98 Winter
Jackets.....\$1.98 to \$4.89
Fitted and boxy styles in flannel and corduroy fabrics. Many colors. Broken sizes.
\$1.00 Cotton Blouses.....88c
Long and short sleeve styles, convertible and Peter Pan collars. White and colors. Size 32 to 40.
\$1.78 Wool Sweaters.....\$1.29
Long and short sleeve styles, convertible and Peter Pan collars. White and colors. Size 32 to 40.
\$2.55 Boxy Cardigans.....\$1.69
Heavy knit boxy alpones in bright and pastel colors. Sizes 32 to 40.
\$3.98 Boxy Slipper Sweaters.....\$2.99
Heavy knit boxy alpones in bright and pastel colors. Sizes 32 to 40.
\$2 "Fruit of the Loom" Blouses.....\$1.69
Washable rayon crepe blouses with convertible neckline. French cut. White and colors. Size 32 to 40.
Long and Short Sleeve Sweaters.....88c
Wool sweaters in long or short sleeve styles. Wine, black, juster blue, red or maize. Broken sizes.
\$3.00 Winter Skirts.....\$2.49
Dark colored skirts in pleated and flared styles. Zipper closing. Sizes 14 to 20.
\$3.98 Winter Skirts.....\$2.88
Assorted popular colors in winter skirts. Deep pleats, all with slipper closing. Size 14 to 20.

Our Big Annual Event!
A Maker's Pre-Inventory Clearance

**MEN'S OVERCOATS
AND TOPCOATS**

SALE PRICE **\$11.88** SAVE FROM \$5.00 to \$7.50

★ Grays! ★ Tweeds! ★ Balmacaans!
★ Tans! ★ Herringbones! ★ Double Breasted!
★ Greens! ★ Diagonals! ★ Raglan Shoulders!
★ Browns! ★ Mixtures! ★ Ulsters!
★ Teal! ★ Overplaid! ★ Single Breasted!
★ No Blue! ★ Navy Blue! ★ Half-Belt Styles!
★ Fleece! ★

We've been planning this big annual sale for you for months! Knowing that prices would rise, we prevailed on one of our large manufacturers to co-operate in helping us assemble this splendid selection of coats. Now you can see the result of this planning! A great group of quality topcoats and overcoats, fine fabrics, smart new styling, patterns and colors. Sizes 34 to 48. Be sure to see this selection tomorrow morning sure. Doors open 9:30 sharp!

USE OUR CONVENIENT
LAYAWAY PLAN!
(Ask Your Salesperson)



Annual After-Christmas

FUR SALE!

Regular \$79.50 Value

"NEVA SPLIT"

DYED CONEY COATS

SALE PRICE **\$59.50** Plus Tax

Our big annual sale of those famous Neva Split Fur Coats that women everywhere are waiting for. Beautiful dyed coney coats in seal-dyed coney and beaver-dyed coney furs. Coats of durable construction, 45% stronger at the seams, no rips or tears. Anchored pockets won't pull out, reinforced eyelets, lined with rayon satin. Sizes for misses and women and half sizes.



287 Prs. **SUEDE SHOES**

Reg. \$3 to \$5 American Girl and Betty Shaw Style Shoes

Black and brown suede shoes in discontinued styles. Pumps and oxfords. 4 1/2 to 9 in the group. AAA to B. **\$1.89**

Regular \$5 American Girl **ARCH SHOES**

Black and brown suede in pumps or ties. Cuban heels. Sizes 4 1/2 to 11. **\$3.69**

\$4 and \$5 American Girl and Betty **Shaw Style Shoes**

Just 281 pairs. Black, blue and brown leather and gabardine pumps. Medium and high heels. 4 1/2 to 9 in the group. **\$2.89**

125 Pairs Reg. \$4 **ARCH SHOES**

Odd styles of Betty Shaw arch shoes in black or brown. Cuban heels, pumps and oxfords. Sizes 4 1/2 to 9 in the group. **\$2.89**

110 Pairs Men's **OXFORDS**

Seconds of higher priced shoes in black or brown leather with rubber heels. Sizes 6 to 11 in the group. **\$2.59**

Reg. \$1.49 **HANDBAGS**

Simulated leather handbags in calf and alligator grains. Smart styles in black or brown. Zipper and coin purse in each bag. **\$1**

Leather Handbags, Reduced

Alligator calf in black or brown colors. Choose zipper, top handle and underarm styles. **\$1.69**

"Famous Name" Sample Gloves.....59c

Leather backs and leather trim on double woven and rayon fabrics. Right irregulars in sizes 6 to 7.

Women's White Scarfs.....79c

White rayon scarfs for women. Rayon crepe and rayon satin. Tubular and ascot styles.

ROST

INVEST YOUR
CHRISTMAS MONEY

in

- ★ A Sparkling Diamond from ROST.
- ★ A nationally famous Hamilton, Elgin, Bulova or Gruen watch.
- ★ Make your diamond look larger and more precious by having it reset in a Beau.

PAY WEEKLY OR MONTHLY

Rost

230 E. ILLINOIS ST.