

BERLIN

A2. Bureau - Moscow, July 16, 1946

In Berlin, the American and Soviet dealings in the matter of prisoners brings mention of the ugly word -- hostages. The latest is news that the American Military authorities have agreed to turn loose three Russian spies, two of them Red Army Officers -- who were caught wearing civilian clothes and prowling around for military information. Red Army Officials asked for the release of the three -- to which the American Command made the comment that the Russian occupation force in Berlin had been invited to inspect things on the American side, openly and freely. So why send spies".

The agreement to release the three Russians follows the return from the Soviet Zone of ~~the~~ ^{the} American Warrant Officer and his wife, ^{who were} held prisoner for fifteen days. They ~~seem to have~~ ^{had} wandered, by accident, into Soviet ~~territory~~ Territory in Berlin, while out trying to buy a dog. -- **B**ut there is some supposition that they ~~xx~~ may have been lured by two German women who went with them. Anyway, Warrant

Officer Samuel Harrison and his wife Helen Harrison, of Oklahoma and Texas respectively, tell of a bitter ordeal of the Soviet captivity. The Warrant Officer ~~was~~ kept in a dungeon-like cellar, his wife imprisoned in a tiny room;-- and they underwent incessant questioning. Warrant Officer Harrison says the Russians asked him hundreds of questions and invariably called him a liar when he answered. His wife relates that Soviet Officers, putting her through an inquisition, wanted to find out about the boat on which she came across the Atlantic -- how many soldiers and soldier's wives were aboard.

There still remains the case of two American Officers who have disappeared in the Soviet Zone -- Captain Harold Cobin of Newark, New Jersey and Lieutenant Wyatt of Oklahoma City, ~~They have been~~ missing since July Fourth, on which day they were last seen boarding a train for Orianburg, which is in the Russian Sphere of Occupation. There is some belief that American authorities were hoping to procure their

liberation -- when the release of the three Russian spies was agreed upon today.

The question is insistent -- why have the Red Army people been seizing Americans and holding them prisoner? The inevitable surmise is -- hostage. It would seem as if the Soviets were seizing American hostages -- for bargaining in cases like that of the three Russian spies.

Today at Berlin one high American Officer said that, if the Russians kept on seizing hostages, we would start doing the same thing on our part. He put it in these words: "If this is the way the Russians want to play, then we will play with them!"

It's hard to think of anything uglier and more sinister than such a ~~nd~~ development -- Americans and Soviets in a competition of capturing hostages in occupied Berlin.

ITALY

Late news tells of a sudden crisis in Italy -- a nationwide strike, a wholesale walk-out that has paralyzed industry all over the country. And at the same time, food riots have broken out in southern Italy and Sicily.

The oil fields involved are the property of the Anglo-Iranian Company. The strike apparently has nothing to do with wages or conditions of employment. We hear that a hundred thousand oil field workers walked out yesterday because of the return of a provincial governor whom they don't like. Also because of what the strike leaders call -- "the interference in the Anglo-Iranian oil company in the political affairs of Iran".

Such is the strike as it is being reported. One story is that the strikers were aggressive against the Arabs. Another version, propounded by the strike leaders, is that bands of Arabs have been incited by what they call -- "British agents".

IRAN

Now about ~~the~~ far-off Persia, ^{and those} obscure disturbances ~~have broke out~~ in the great Iranian oil fields. A bulletin from Teheran states that bands of Arabs have killed seventeen strikers. It seems strange - Arabs attacking strikers.

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Such is the strike in which bands of Arabs have intervned with violence and bloodshed. One story is that the strikers were aggressors against the Arabs. Another version, propounded by the strike leaders, is that bands of Arabs have been incited by what they call - ~~British~~ "British agents".

The disturbance, though obscure and far away, might have international implications - the strike is said to be backed by the leftist political faction in Iran - the faction that supported Russia in the Soviet-Iranian dispute that caused so much dispute a short while ago.

JAPAN

There's a curious turn of historical reminiscence in a Japanese war plan -- disclosed in Tokyo today. The document was for secret circulation among high Japanese Officers, and it pointed to the likelihood that Japan, though boasting so loudly of the certainty of complete victory, might find it necessary to seek a negotiated peace. If so, what would be the best way to try for a compromise settlement with the United States?

Well, the answer the Japs dreamed up went back to the United States at a previous time -- the Japs imagining there might be a repetition of former history. In this war the American President against them was named Roosevelt -- and their thoughts reverted to another Roosevelt, Theodore. The wise men of Tokyo remembered how in the Russo-Japanese war they had been able to make a negotiated settlement, and how the intermediary, in bringing about peace negotiations, had been President Theodore Roosevelt.

So maybe they might have to try that same

thing all over again -- though they could hardly use the American President as a go-between this time. So who else was there? In the midst of the global war the Japs could think of only one personage -- the Pope. They had ideas that, if it became convenient for them to negotiate, they might invoke the mediation of Pope Pius the Twelfth.

In behalf of this expectation, the Japanese high Officers were warned about the conduct of their Troops in occupied countries. ^{That} If they misbehaved too badly, it would jeopardize the chance of having the Roman Pontiff act as a go-between in peace negotiations. Hence, their conduct should be good -- all of which was forgotten ~~xxxx~~ obviously in the orgy of brutality that attended the short-lived conquests made by Japan.

ARGENTINA

The report of an Argentine-Soviet deal for armament brings up some angles that it is well to scrutinize carefully. The United States is trying to work out a joint Western Hemisphere defense plan, whereby the Latin-American Republics would get armament from this country. The idea is to bring about a unified system of the same kind of military equipment from the Canadian Border to Cape Horn. Yet -- here we have Argentina negotiating with Soviet Russia for supplies of weapons and munitions.

Today's report is enlightening on one important point -- that the Argentinians are not trying to make a deal for Soviet armament. Not at all, They want German armament. We are told that the ^{Peron} Government, at Buenos Aires, is dickering for stocks of German equipment seized by the Red Army. It is known, of course, that the Russians captured vast amounts of warlike supplies from the Germans -- including entire German armament factories. And the story today includes the statement that Argentina would like to get from the

Soviets -- a whole German armament plant.

The reasoning behind all of this stems from the fact that the Argentine Army, before the war, was built up by German Military Men -- Argentina having hired German Army experts. The Troops were trained in German fashion, and were equipped with German armament. The result is that the Argentine Army right now has German-type equipment -- which required German-type ammunition and spare parts. Military material of another sort would not do so well. So that's the logic behind the story that Argentina is negotiating with Soviet Russia, trying to work out an armament deal.

O.P.A.

The question of the O.P.A. now goes to a Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Representatives. There are two very different versions, which will have to be compromised -- if there is to be a revival of the O.P.A. ~~The~~ The measure passed by the House of Representatives merely provides for a temporary extension of the O.P.A. as it was all along. The Senate bill imposes all kinds of restrictions -- to take price control off a series of items ranging from meat to cigarettes.

Today the Senate version was before the Lower House, and the question was whether the whole thing should be sent to a Joint Committee, or whether the Congressmen should consider the Senate Bill -- and maybe pass the greatly curtailed revival of the O.P.A. The Administration forces were in favor of the procedure by a Committee, and won out; -- the vote being two hundred and eleven to sixty four in favor of sending the two bills, so radically different, for a compromise.

This whole matter of O.P.A. and prices is

illuminated by a statement concerning one important sector of American industry. The statement, made by the Sun Oil Company, points out that, in spite of higher costs, the prices charged for gasoline are about at the same level that they were during pre-war days. "The petroleum industry, though technological developments," says the Sun Oil declaration, "has been able not only to improve the quality of its products, but has, at the same time, held down prices. These results, "That statement goes on, "have been possible only because the Petroleum Industry has been America's most highly competitive industry. The result," it adds, "is a never ending battle to produce better products at lower prices, a battle in which the consuming public is always the winner."

GIRL

Some while ago, a melodramatic thing happened in a Hollywood Dance Hall. On the stage the hot trombonist, Benny Benson, stood in the ~~st~~ spotlight and blared away in the wild tootlings of jive. The melodramatic event^t came when a sixteen year old girl in the audience swallowed a dose of polson. They picked her up and in her hand was found a note full of silly romantic clap-trap. This indicated that the girl was the victim of an infauation for ~~the~~ Trombone Player Benny Benson.

She wasn't badly poisoned -- and coming to, she told a story of fantastic romance. She related how she had met the trombone player, and how he had taken her here, there, thither and yon -- with all the lurid details of sloppy sentiment.

So Benny Benson was accused of misconduct against a minor. Confronted with the girl, he exclaimed in blank amazement -- "Why, I never saw her before."

Today the trombone player was on trial -- and the trial ended quickly. The girl admitted she had invented the whole yarn, and that actually, she had never

met the musician. Here's how she explained the weird act that she put on, the poison, the note, and all. "I knew when I made these charges, his wife would find out," she said, and added, "I hoped she would divorce him and then I would have a chance to marry him."

A psychiatrist corroborated, pronouncing the girl to be -- "A pathological liar."

All of which would indicate the kind of trouble that is possible when the over-heated imagining of a romantic juvenile goes wild.

BUTLER

In London, the Earl of Warwick has a butler; -- every Earl has a butler. His Grace of Warwick is of the highest nobility, with a **t**itle going back to Warwick the King-Maker, who dominated the realm of England in the days of the wars of the roses. Which would seem to entitle him to a paragon of butlers -- and he has one, a veritable Jeeves, ^{of} ~~is created by~~ ^{the} P.G. Wodehouse ^{variety.} ^a But even Jeeves may have some slight short-coming, a fault or two.

All this developed in a London Court room today where the story was told how the Earl of Warwick went to Africa recently -- to shoot lions. While he was gone, his butler, named Cook, went in for another kind of sport -- betting at the race tracks. While the Earl was shooting lions, the butler was playing the horses -- and he didn't do so well. He lost all his money, and tried to finance another bet or two in a way most unbecoming to a perfect butler. He took some diamond and platinum studs from a weskit in the wardrobe of his grace, and tried to sell them. He went to a

jeweler, who became suspicious and called the police. The horse-betting butler was thereupon thrown into jail -- where he remained until the return of the Earl of Warwick from his lion hunting trip.

Today, before the Judge, the Earl was supposed to participate in the business of sending the Butler to jail. Instead, however, his Grace explained to his honor the value of a good butler. As for the diamond and platinum studs, taken from the weskit, the Earl declared that it was an old westkit and he ~~had~~ hadn't worn it for ten or twelve years. Furthermore, said he -- the butler had the authority to dispose of his old clothes.

The Judge asked if old clothes included diamond and platinum studs. Well, hardly, the Earl admitted -- and went on to say that in the past the butler had got into previous difficulties with the horses, and had taken some small things to finance his betting, but had always paid back.

The Earl of Warwick had ~~an~~ only one idea in mind -- he wasn't going to lose a good butler. The Judge

cooperated to the extent of imposing a fine instead of a prison sentence, a fine of seventy-six dollars and forty cents. This the Earl paid, and the affair ended with ^{the Earl} His Grace of Warwick taking away his horse-betting butler, ^{his} a slightly tarnished Jeeves.

And now His Grace the Earl of ^{Scarshale,} ~~McBravy~~ and Mamaroneck, Hugh James.