

Fri. May 5, 1950 P.I. - P.H.

The Senate votes to cut a quarter of a billion dollars out of the funds for the Marshall Plan. The Administration bill was for three billion, one hundred million dollars. Which now the Senate votes to trim by two-hundred-and-fifty million.

This was the final vote of three - one after another in a sort of logical progression. This morning, the Senate voted on an amendment to cut ^{European Recovery/} ~~the Marshall Plan~~ money by a round billion. But that was beaten by an overwhelming majority, sixty-two to seventeen. Then up came a second amendment, proposing a smaller cut - half a billion. That was rejected by a smaller majority, much smaller - no majority at all. It was a tie - forty to forty.

After which the next bit of action seems inevitable. A still smaller cut was proposed, a quarter of a billion, and that was carried - forty-seven to thirty-two. Which, by the way, is exactly the same as the reduction of Marshall Plan funds voted in the House of Representatives. *Then tonight, by a large majority the Senate passed the Marshall Plan bill.*

PLANE

The United States addresses to Soviet Russia, what the Washington dispatch calls - "one of the most bristling notes of modern times." To which the dispatch adds: "The language of the note was about as tough as diplomatic usage permits."

All - on the subject of that navy patrol plane, the Privateer - ~~shot down~~ the Baltic, ~~the~~ crew of ten ~~lost~~.

The United States calls the ^{government} ~~government~~ of Soviet Russia virtually - a liar. Our contention is that the unarmed patrol plane was shot down by Red fighters out over the Baltic Sea - and today's diplomatic note rejects the Moscow counter-charge as - false. The Soviets, of course, contend that there was an exchange of gunfire over Red Latvia between an American B-29 and Russian fighter planes. To this today's American communication responds: "The U.S.S.R. continues to base its position on the erroneous account - and it has failed to carry out the careful investigation suggested by the United States, which would enable it to correct these errors." Which is a diplomatic

equivalent of that four-letter-word -- liar. ^P The note summarizes by saying that the Soviet behavior is - "a further obstacle to the establishment of harmonious relations among the nations.")

But, at the same time, it seems to close the matter - because no further move, no further action, is suggested.

This American-Soviet news is accompanied by representations made to Moscow by Great Britain, Sweden and Denmark. Which governments are inquiring about the disappearance or seizure of seven fishing boats. A British trawler was grabbed by the Reds in the White Sea, and taken to a Russian port. Two Swedish fishing vessels were similarly seized - while four ships of Denmark are missing in the Baltic.

The broad meaning of it all is that the Soviets are acting as if those open international waters were - a Russian lake. Contrary, to the accepted law of the nations.

GERMAN PRISONERS

In Germany, U.S. High Commissioner John J. McCloy joins West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer in denouncing a statement made in Moscow - the statement that all German prisoners-of-war captured by the Russians had been accounted for listed, repatriated, sent back. The German figures show that one-million,-five-hundred thousand war captives are still missing - never sent back. Today the three main parties in Western Germany, including the Socialists, joined in bitter expressions, and demands were made that the Communist Party in Western Germany be outlawed.

What has happened to the million and a half? You can imagine the state of mind of countless families in Germany, still waiting for soldier husbands and sons to come back -- and now Moscow says that -- all have been returned. U.S. High Commissioner McCloy calls this inhuman.

NORWAY

At the Norwegian towns of Sarpsborg and Frederikstad, sixty thousand people are back in their homes tonight - after a mass migration today. They were ordered out, as a cloud of poison gas moved down upon their town.

It came from a giant plant making wood pulp - where chlorine gas is used to bleach the wood - that same deadly chlorine, the first poison gas used by the Germans in the First World War.

(Last night, when a huge chlorine tank was empty, somebody left a valve open, carelessness. So today when ~~chemical~~ chemical operations began, [^] to fill the tank, [^] the deadly gas poured out of the open valve - and the next thing you know,) a great cloud of the greenish noxious vapor went rolling down the valley, heading straight for the towns of Sarpsborg and Frederikstad - as if duplicating a poison gas attack of the First World War.

Orders were sent quickly - evacuate the towns. Which was done at a fast clip and in good order - the sixty thousand people getting out by bus, automobile, bicycle.

The drift of the wind was such that the murderous cloud headed for Frederikstad. But no harm was done, nobody home - and the poison gas rolled on down the valley and out to sea.

So tonight the people are back in their houses .

~~after having been~~ warned to be careful about lingering traces of chlorine gas.

WEATHER

(The weather-man explains that all the trouble was caused by a clash of opposites. In that great middle section of this nation, the Mississippi Valley, there was a conflict of North and South - a sort of Civil War among the elements.)

In the north, out of Canada, came a vast ocean of cold air.

In the South, blowing from the Gulf of Mexico -- an immense mass of warm air. These two collided, and the result was a violent uproar of storms, blizzards, dust, tornadoes, a deluge of rain, blazing electrical disturbances.

A whole series of tornadoes ripped across the country in the Southwest, an epidemic of twisters hitting one town after another - huge damage, ~~at least one life lost,~~ scores of injured, - *at least 4 lives lost.*

But the most fantastic of all the melodrama of weather was at Pittsburgh - where the rain poured down like a falling ocean, an inch in an hour - and a stupendous bolt of lightning hit a crowded street car, and set it afire.

The later news this afternoon goes into what happened.

P The electric power company says that the stroke of lightning

sent a stream of electricity ^{through} ~~the~~ the wiring system of the street car - which, ordinarily, ^{means} ~~is~~ nothing more than a flash and a noise. But this time it was a thunderbolt so powerful, ~~which sent~~ ^{sending} such a huge surge of electricity through the wires, that it burst through the insulation. ^{caused it to} ~~which~~ sounded as if the street car were blowing up - ~~and~~ fire broke out, threatening to burn ^{the} twenty-nine passengers alive.

This afternoon, passengers told weird stories of what happened in the wild panic to get out. A twenty year old clerical worker, Alda Laverene Grazer, says she was riding in the front of the car - when the lightning knocked her flat. "A wall of flame shot back of me," she relates, "and it seemed to cut the car in two." She picked herself up and tried to get to the door, which seemed to be stuck. "There was a jam and a pile up," she says. "The man in front of me was beating on the door with his fists. I don't know what got into me," she goes on, "but I gave him an awful push - and the doors flew open." So that's how she and some others got out.

WEATHER - 3

A fifty-eight year old Negro chemical worker, named Dennis Hinton, was sitting in the rear of the car. He says that, when the lightning hit, he was - "petrified." So startled, paralyzed and petrified - he couldn't get up. "The guy sitting next to me," he relates, "reached across and pushed his fist through a window. He scrambled over me, and went through." To which Dennis adds: "I still couldn't move. Somebody finally pulled me out!"

Twenty-three of the twenty-nine passengers went to the hospital, cut by glass, bruised, shocked - a few suffering burns. None seriously injured - all but one sent home after minor medical treatment.

(^{CV} *Centra*)

At Las Vegas, Nevada, last Friday, a young policeman picked up a hobo hitch-hiker -- who seemed to resemble the description of a robber wanted for a hotel burglary, committed that very day. The prisoner was locked up, but turned out to be the wrong man - not the burglar at all. But he was wide open for a charge of vagrancy, and the judge gave him thirty days. All of which would be an insignificant police item -- save for the fact that, in the usual course of things, the fingerprints of the prisoner were sent along to the F.B.I. in Washington.

The resonance for that routine check was a headline -- Stephen William Davenport. Which may not mean much to anybody, but to the F.B.I. it signifies - one of the ten most wanted fugitives in America.

Davenport, an outlaw charged with a long list of crimes, robbery, murder - who broke out of prison at Quincy, Illinois, last September. Such is the identify of the vagrant hitch-hiker at Las Vegas -- the end of a long chase for the F.B.I.

Today the prisoner said: "I'm glad to get it over with. Since my escape, I've been working on farms, staying at one place only a week or two, because I was afraid of being recognized."

He will be turned over to the federal authorities - as soon as he has served his thirty days for vagrancy.

BONNER

At Biloxi, Mississippi, Governor Bonner of Montana says - "It wasn't I." ~~He described that~~ He was not the drunk arrested in New Orleans last night, who said his name was John Bonner, and identified himself as the Governor of ^{Montana} ~~Nevada~~.

The arrest was made in the French quarter of New Orleans, a case of noisy intoxication. ~~When~~ The self-styled Governor explained that Montana was, in his words - "a pretty hard drinking state."

An inquiry was immediately addressed to the Montana state capital at Helena, where a spokesman stated that Governor Bonner had gone to New Orleans, scheduled to spend the day there yesterday, on his way to Biloxi, for a meeting on the subject of "oil."

That sent a news inquiry to Biloxi, where Governor Bonner explains that he was in New Orleans for a while yesterday. But no, a thousand times no, he was not that noisy drunk who described Montana as - a hard drinking state.

"It's all a mystery to me," says the Governor. To which we can only add, that it's all a mystery to us.

STUDENTS

At Ohio State University, police cars and motorcycle cops are patrolling the campus at night - to stop the boy students from raiding the sororities and dormitories of the girl students. It's all in fun, a lot of academic high-jinks - but the college authorities think it's going entirely too far, ~~and imposed disciplinary measures on sundry students.~~

Today, there were threats of wholesale abductions of co-eds -- the girls to be tossed into Mirror Lake on the campus. Actually, today several unwary young ladies were given a dunking in the lake.

It all began with a series of raids, during which the boys got into the sororities and dormitories at night, seizing girls in pajamas, pushing them into showers, and turning the water on. However, there were a couple of cases where the girls ganged up on a raider, and put him under a shower.

An investigation today discloses the fact that the invasions were possible, because girls left doors unlocked - and, in some cases, they opened the doors to admit the invaders.

SIAM

Today witnessed the coronation of the King of Siam - and in the royal city of Bangkok the ceremonies were a mixture of East and West, the old and the new - as befits a young potentate of the tropical Orient, soon to appear as a song writer in a Broadway musical. That is - his songs will appear in an extravaganza called "Michael Todd's Peep Show."

Today at Bangkok the ^(tinkle) ~~tinkling~~ of temple bells mingled with a roar of Siamese Air Force warplanes flying overhead. The King was installed as a constitutional monarch, the first that Siam has ever had - instead of the absolute power of the despots of old. But, with constitution and all, the ceremony was enacted under the royal umbrella with nine tiers. That's the Siamese emblem of sovereignty, an equivalent of crown and throne . ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ the nine-storey umbrella.

BEGUM

In Washington, the wife of the Prime Minister of Pakistan held a press conference - with the newspaper women. That Moslem state in India presents important international problems - and these could have been the topic. But, would you believe it - the newspaper women turned to another subject altogether. Polygamy! The wife of the Prime Minister said that polygamy is dying out gradually in Pakistan - for economic and social reasons.

But she was asked - why would a Moslem husband want many wives anyway?

The Begum explained, in a scientific way that, under Mohammedan polygamy, plural marriages were arranged for reasons of economic necessity or a desire for heirs - motives connected with the family.

This rational, philosophic explanation of polygamy made some of the girl reporters look doubtful - not quite convinced.

Whereupon the Begum, admitted in her best English:

"Some husbands, of course," she exclaimed, "will have more than one wife just for the fun of it. You get that type everywhere," she added.

Polygamy - for the fun of it. What do you think of that, Nelson?