

L.T. - SUNOCO. FRIDAY, MAY 24, 1946

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

The great railroad strike is fast bringing on a condition of national paralysis. Except for a mere nominal service on various lines, railroad transportation all over the country was at a standstill. In a late announcement the railroads say they tried to run trains, and did operate a hundred passenger trains today -- a tiny fraction of normal service. From one end of the nation to the other, industries were shut down or were shutting down -- because the strike was cutting off their needed supplies.

At South Bend, Indiana, Studebaker was ready to close. General Motors announced that the cutting off of coal shipments would cause the giant General Motors Empire of industry to halt operations. Republic Steel closed eleven blast furnaces at Cleveland. And even Canada reported officially that the Dominion faced industrial collapse if the railroad strike in the United States

continues.

Food shortages were threatening in large cities. In New York, Governor Dewey today placed the Empire State -- "On the alert." He announced that he is ready to declare a condition of emergency - the State to seize all buses, trucks, ~~bages~~ and boats, for vitally necessary supplies.

Governor Dewey appointed an emergency director, and under him a special director for every important problem facing the state: one for food supplies, another to handle the farm situation, another for power, and so on. He also sent wires to the mayors of all cities and towns asking them to direct their people to turn off all display lighting, also to cut down on street lighting as much as possible, and urging the people to turn off every light they can spare inside homes and office buildings and plants -- and be ready to cut all power if he finds it necessary to declare a full emergency.

Governor Dewey says that in New York State, which probably is typical of most states, there is only a fifteen

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day supply of coal on hand. At the end of that time, public utilities will have to close down, subways, radio plants, motion picture theatres, virtually everything.

That three or four men not elected by the citizens of the country, should have the power to put the nation in such a predicament is unthinkable, no matter how just the cause of the strikers.

The Governors of New York and New Jersey are making special arrangements for handling everything shipped into New York City, and they themselves are cancelling the ^{trip}~~trip~~ they had intended to make to the Governor's conference in Oklahoma, as did many other Governors.

Mercy supplies of food for Europe have been stopped, the railroad strike bringing to an abrupt halt our national effort against world famine.

Generally, the strike has been peaceful -- though there have been hints of violence. The Union of Railroad Yard Masters charged the strikers were using threats. The Yard Masters are not on strike, and the threats were

made to bring pressure on them to go out. But that Union urged its members to stay on the job.

In Connecticut -- the State Guard is arranging to distribute food, if necessary. In Rhode Island -- voluntary rationing.

In Knoxville, Tennessee, a yard master reported what looked like an attempt to wreck a train. Somebody placed a spoke on the tracks. The train passed over the spoke, but it was going at such slow speed nothing happened.

At Philadelphia, two railroad strikers were arrested charged with attempting to tamper with a switch.

In a hotel suite in Washington, conferences were held all afternoon, men talking arguing, wrangling, United States Conciliator Steelman, representing President Truman, was hammering away at Representatives of the railroads and the Unions, trying to get them into an agreement. Steelman talked to each side separately. He discussed the deadlock with the railroad managers. Then

he pressed his point with the Presidents of the two Unions that are in the strike, Johnston of the Locomotive Engineers and Whitney of the railroad trainment. The word was that the strategy of the Federal Conciliator was to keep them negotiating until a settlement was reached - and the strike was called off.

At first, there was a hint of possible optimism, a guarded statement that some possible ground for a compromise had been reached. Later dispatches from Washington were less hopeful, picturing Johnston of the Engineers and Whitney of the Trainmen as standing pat on the bitter stalemate, Steelman said: "The situation looks dark."

The key to the deadlock was a matter of rules. President Truman had offered a wage increase of eighteen per cent, which was higher than the recommendation made by his fact-finding panel. Johnston and Whitney were said to be willing to accept the pay boost - if some rule changes were granted, the changes that they wanted

the most urgently.

The controversy can be expressed in terms of money, the wage boost proposed by the President would cost the railroads about seven hundred and fifty million dollars a year. The original union demands called for forty-five changes of rule, and these, it is estimated, would cost the railroads another eight hundred million dollars a year. Some changes were recommended by the fact-finding board, and these would cost thirty million a year. So the question at the issue was -- how many millions of dollars would be granted in the form of changes of rules?

The emergency is such that tonight Federal action is indicated on an imposing scale. President Truman called an emergency session at the White House, a meeting of top Government Officials and Cabinet Members. And tonight the President will address the Nation by radio, with an appeal in the railroad crisis. Tomorrow Congress will hold a joint session to consider the strike emergency.

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The Government is trying to keep essential goods moving by train and truck. The Navy, has ordered its Commanding Officers to make a survey of sailors and officers with experience in railroad work. The Marines have notified leatherneck Reservists to be ready for a call. Chief of Staff General Eisenhower cut short a vacation in Georgia today and flew to Washington for a special conference with the President. The Army showed signs of considering a possible plan for military operation of trains. It is to be noted, technically, the war isn't over -- and the Government still has war emergency powers. And these might be used for a program of running the railroads, with military cooperation - and in spite of the strike. The Government has that possible card to play - the American Forces operating the railroads.

Such was the situation as the day ended - with talks continuing stubbornly in the Hotel Suite in Washington.

CHINA

The news from China pictures a sudden turn for the better in the affairs of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek. In Manchuria, where civil war has been raging, the Nationalist Armies, have captured the Capital City of Changchun, and at last reports were sweeping ahead everywhere, driving the Communists before them. So triumphant is the situation of the Nationalists, at the moment, that today Chiang Kai-Shek flew to newly captured Changchun. He rode, in a private plane with American Ambassador, General Marshall.

The word from China is that things are now more favorable for a truce in the civil war -- Chiang Kai-Shek more likely to agree on cessation of ~~hostilities~~ hostilities. There is something distinctly Chinese about that -- the notion that a victory is calculated to make the victor more willing to call an armistice. Usually, it's the beaten side that wants a truce.

The explanation is that Chiang Kai-Shek,

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until now, has been in no position to consider any agreement -- because that would have meant a loss of face. By capturing the Manchurian Capital of Changchun, however, he has gained new prestige, and can now negotiate a truce, with plenty of that Chinese commodity, called face.

We hear that Communist Leader General Chou En-Lai has offered a peace proposal, and that the Generalissimo is likely to give it favorable consideration.

NUREMBERG

It was officially stated by the Soviets that an accident caused the death by shooting of the Assistant Russian Chief Prosecutor at the ~~Nurem~~ Nuremberg trials. He was General N.D. Zorya, who played a prominent part in drawing up indictments against the Nazi war criminals. He prepared one of the most important of the Soviet documents of accusation -- evidence of how defendants at Nuremberg took part in the plotting of war against the Soviets. The status of General Zorya was ^{such} ~~as high~~ that he was expected to become Chief Soviet Prosecutor in future war crimes.

He was found shot to death in his quarters, and immediately there were fears of international repercussions -- if there was any suspicion of assassination. Soviet officials, themselves investigated, and they report that General Zorya was the victim of an accident, while cleaning his pistol. The official Russian report is as follows: "Today, owing to the incautious usage of a firearm, an

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accident has happened -- as a result of which the Assistant Chief Prosecutor for the Soviet Union, N.D. Zorya, perished."

GERMAN WOMEN

In Germany, the United States Army discloses the deaths of two more women in billets of Officers. Right now, the Military Authorities are investigating the death of an American woman typist who fell to her death from the window of an officer's apartment. These other two cases, now revealed, are of German women, who committed suicide. In the case of one, the story presents a sombre, dramatic scene.

There was a party in the apartment of an American Warrant Officer, and the German woman was a guest. During the gayety and laughter, she told another guest that she was, in the words of that other guest -- "Blue about her past." Which may well tie in with prevailing reports of a breakdown of morality and family ties among the people of Germany.

Having talked along in that melancholy way -- blue about her past -- the German woman was leaving, the party breaking up. On her way out she noticed an American Army ^Spistol on a table. She picked
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it up, as if in a merely casual way -- and shot herself.

Such stories represent what is perhaps an inevitable dislocation of human relations and personalities -- in a conquered and occupied nation.

ATOMIC ACCIDENT

Here's the latest about an accident at the atomic bomb laboratories, Los Alamos, New Mexico. Word of the mishap came ^{earlier} today, and raised apprehension of something serious - possibly an accidental atomic explosion. Now we are told -there ~~was~~ was no explosion.

The mishap was such that eight technicians were exposed to radiation from atomic products. Of the eight, six are leading scientists, and one is considered to have sustained injuries that are possibly serious. He is Dr. Louis Slotin, who was in the middle of things when the ~~xxxxxx~~ exposure to radiation happened. His quick action is said to have saved the other scientists from serious harm -- they being injured only in a minor way.

ATOMIC FREAKS

Fan mail is a familiar thing around a radio shop, but nobody here at N.B.C. ever dreamed of anything like the fan mail that is pouring in on an Admiral. He's Vice Admiral Blandy, who is in command of operations ~~xxxxxx~~ crossroads -- the Atomic Bomb experiment to be staged at Bikini Atol. One thing about the fan mail pouring in on the Atom Commander is that -- it's ninety-nine per cent unfavorable. Not praise and hurrah -- but a bawling out. Admiral Blandy is accused of being about to perpetrate the most appalling ~~xx~~ things.

Many of his fans inform him the atomic explosions will set off earthquakes and tidal waves. One letter states that the blast of the atom may push up new mountain ranges. Another expresses the fear that, when the atomic explosion is touched off under water, it will turn the ocean into gas, and the seven seas will rise up into the clouds in the form of gaseous vapor. That really would be something.

One of the most ominous of all predictions

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is that the burst of the bomb will blow a hole in the bottom of the ocean and let all the water run out -- as if the ocean were a leaky bathtub.

And still another communication gives the opinion that the atomic detonation will destroy gravity -- and everything will go up in the air.

~~Which leads me to believe that on the evening of the atomic experiment, I may see Hugh James suddenly rise off the floor and go floating around the studio here.~~

And now: Hugh, instead of going up in the air its time for you to go on the air.