CURRENCY C.T. P+B Wednesday, July 6, 1949. (Sustaining)

In London, the House of Commons had a cheerless, grim session today - with Chancellor of the Exchequer Sir Stafford Cripps, disclosing that Britain's gold and dollar reserves have fallen far below the safety mark. The figure that Cripps gave was - One Billion Six Hundred and Twenty-Four Million. Which is four hundred million short of safety.

What to do about it? The United States wants the London Government to devalue the pound. But today the Chancellor of the Exchequer said - no. Cripps repeated that Britain would not cut the value of the pound sterling. Instead, he disclosed that he has ordered a drastic cut of imports from the United States, the buying of American goods reduced to an absolute minimum. - so as to check the flow of dollar reserves out of Britain.

All of which means more of that British austerity - so announced by Sir Stafford Cripps, the non-drinking, non-smoking vegetarian, who looks like a lean and hungry picture of austerity.

In Washington, a tone more optimistic than in London. Secretary of State Acheson saying that the British financial difficulties are being exaggerated in the news. He said that John Bull's money troubles are serious - but nothing like desperate.

All this, said he, has been expected for some time, as part of the worldwide changeover from a seller to a buyer market. Hitherto, in that seller market, the British have been able to do business well enough, exporting goods. But now they have to look for buyers. Any businessman will recognize the difference - when customers come looking for you, or you have to go looking for customers. The Secretary of State said he was sure the British will be able to make adjustments, and meet the situation.

FOLLOW CURRENCY

The Labor Government, meanwhile, is bedeviled by a plague of strikes - right in the middle of Britain's economic emergency. The Port of London is tied up by a walkout of Eight Thousand dock workers, and today the Labor Ministers called out the troops to unload cargoes from ~~N~~inety-~~F~~ive ships tied up at the docks - ninety-five vessels loaded with vital supplies of food for the British population. Five Hundred Thousand tons of it.

PACT

In the Senate today, the decision on the North Atlantic Security Pact was as good as expressed - by a standing ovation, a chorus of applause. The acclaim was for a one-time isolationist, Vandenberg of Michigan - who, having become a champion for international cooperation, leads the Republican forces in favor of the treaty. He told the Senate that the Security Pact, in his words - "Crystalizes the most practical deterrent and discouragement to war which the wit of man has yet devised." He said that, for cooling the ardor of a would-be aggressor, the alliance of the free nations is as powerful as an atomic bomb.

The cheers the Michigan Senator got might as well be counted as votes, and Democratic leader Senator Connally told newsmen that only eight senators will go on record against the pact. Milliken of Colorado disagreed - doubting there will be as many as a mere six. The belief is that the treaty may be okayed by Friday, with much more than the necessary two-thirds majority.

Eight votes in opposition, according to Connally. Six, according to Milliken - and take your pick.

TOKYO ROSE

The trial of Tokyo Rose today featured an incident of an upset lady - and it was not Tokyo Rose. No -- one of the jurors. Yesterday Lucille Irvine, pretty San Francisco stenographer, was inducted as one of the twelve men good and true. Today, as the second day of the trial began, she told the court -- it was all too much for her. She said she did not sleep all night and had been unable to eat. The tension and responsibility was making her -- a nervous wreck. So Lucille was excused, her place taken by an alternative -- Mrs. Ival Long, a San Francisco housewife.

HAWAII

In Washington legislation is being drafted to enable President Truman to take action in Hawaii. The Pacific Islands are paralysed by a dock strike that has lasted for sixty-seven days and threatens to cause a collapse of Hawaiian economy. To make matters worse, the boss of the strike is Harry Bridges, long-denounced as a Communist or fellow traveller.

Senator Knowland of California states that the type of legislation planned will enable President Truman to invoke the national emergency provisions of the Taft-Hartley Act.

JAPAN

In Tokyo - urgent conferences at General MacArthur's headquarters. Likewise - anxious meetings by the heads of the Japanese government. All reflecting concern over rising discontent in Japan, following the mysterious death of the head of the state-owned Japanese railroad.

Shimoyama by name, he had the task of discharging ninety thousand railroad workers. Which was in accord with instructions from the American occupation authorities - telling the Japanese government to slash expenses, so as to balance the budget.

Shimoyama is said to have been depressed by the necessity, but sent out dismissal notices to thirty thousand. Then, yesterday, he disappeared - and was later found on railroad tracks - where he had been run over by a train. There was some suspicion of suicide. but today the Japanese Police declared they were virtually convinced that the head of the railroads was murdered. His death is attributed to elements

opposed to the discharge of the railroad employees - and today there was a surge of popular discontent in Japan. Hence those top level emergency meetings in Tokyo.

JAPANESE PLAY

The Japanese are an ingenious people, and the finance minister in Tokyo has turned - play producer. Staging a two-act melodrama that is being played to packed houses throughout Japan. But why the sudden enthusiasm for art, the drama? Same old explanation - income tax, how to make people pay up, how to keep them from trying to cheat.

The hero of the melodrama is a young income tax collector, who falls in love with the daughter of a wealthy merchant. She returns his affection. But what about her father, rich and proud? The surprise is that he approved of the marriage, which would seem to make everything end happily - early in act one. But the dark truth comes out. Papa is all for the wedding - because he figures that - with the tax collector as a son-in-law, he can beat the income tax, You can see the possibilities of tense, if not violent, complication.

But the Tokyo dispatch states that the melodrama ends with the following climax:- The young tax collector, discovering the devious, dark scheme,

preaches an eloquent sermon to his father-in-law-to-be - and, in the words of the Tokyo dispatch, "Convinces him that Japan cannot recover economically and culturally, unless everybody pays his income tax."

So all ends happily - with wedding and taxes.

WEATHER

Now about the weather - in Portugal. Yes, I know we've been having a heat wave of our own to talk about, and Portugal is a long distance away. But along a section of the Portuguese coast today, the temperature rose to One Hundred and Fifty-Eight. That's only about Fifty Degrees lower than boiling point. But, a spokesman for the Portuguese Navy states that a Hundred and Fifty-Eight Degrees was registered today.

Western Europe is getting the blast of a heat wave, with Portugal bearing the brunt of it. Also violent electrical storms. - In one town the people ran in panic with blue flames streaming from their bodies. That much static and electricity in the atmosphere. At another town, the lightning killed thousands of chickens, ducks and geese.

In Northern Portugal, there was a hurricane today, and on the edge of the big wind came that blast of heat - temperature, one hundred and fifty-eight in the sun. They say the wind felt like - tongues of fire. People were afraid the end of the world had come - and

they fell on their knees and prayed. The fiery blast killed thousands of barnyard fowl, and a river dried up suddenly, leaving myriads of fish on a sandy bed. The wave of inferno lasted only two minutes, and passed on - the thermometer then dropping to a mere hundred or so.

This Portuguese account was taken today to weather experts over here. In New York, a meteorologist was doubtful, although he said that heat blasts often follow hurricanes in tropical countries. He pointed out that the highest official temperature in the United States was recorded in Death Valley, California - a hundred-and-thirty four degrees.

The National Geographic Society in Washington says the highest official temperature anywhere in the world was recorded in North Africa, Tripoli, a hundred and thirty-four and four-tenths degrees. But there was an unofficial reading at Abadan, ~~Persia~~ on the Persian Gulf - the highest unofficial report anywhere - One Hundred and Eighty-Nine Degrees. In 1946, I spent a day in Abadan and was told it was above 130.

EDUCATION

The National Education Association has voted - keep Communists out of classrooms. Today in Boston, the organization that represents the nation's teachers, adopted a resolution by a nearly unanimous vote - calling for the exclusion of Communists from posts as teachers.

LABOR

United States Steel has turned down the C.I.O. demand for a fourth round of wage increases. Company President Benjamin H. Fairless declares: "U.S. Steel firmly believes there is no sound or proper justification for granting such a wage increase at this time."

To which C.I.O. President Philip Murray promptly retorts: "There is no hope of reaching mutual satisfaction on any issue."

Which might look like a steel strike - the deadline for a walkout being ten days away.

TRUMAN

From the White House - word that President Truman will keep hands off Missouri politics next year. Of course, Harry Truman, who grew up in the middle of Missouri politics, will not be able to restrain a certain interest. But - no intervention.

That was stated today by James Pendergast, the Kansas City Democratic leader - nephew of the late Boss Pendergast, who commanded the Democratic organization in which Harry Truman rose, on his way to the White House. Today, nephew James Pendergast paid a visit to the President - and, upon emerging, said that he and the chief magistrate had discussed the political situation in their own state, "~~In~~ a general way." To which the statement was added that the President would, in Pendergast's words - "Keep hands off Missouri politics, with reference to the Democratic primary in August next year."

Well, the last time the President put his hands into a Missouri Democratic primary was in Nineteen Forty-Six -- the "Purge" of Congressman

Slaughter, which resulted in an uproar of charge and counter-charge.

In the primary next year, the Democrats will pick a candidate to run for the Senate seat now held by Senator Donnell, a Republican. Pendergast intimated today that he tended to favor Governor Donnelly. So maybe it will turn out to be a battle of Donnell versus Donnelly.

BOY

At Oakland, California, they are hailing Norman Lawrence as the hottest kid ball player in town - crackling hot, an explosive ball player. Norman, who is thirteen, was running to ~~xx~~ catch a fly on the outfield, and he was going so fast that friction ignited a book of matches in his hip pocket. Which was bad enough. But, also in that hip ~~xxxxx~~ pocket Norman had some firecrackers left over from the Fourth of July.

The explosions began just as Norman was reaching for the ball. Did he miss the catch? Not at all. He caught the fly, with the seat of his pants exploding. Norman was uninjured, but the game had to be called ~~off~~ -- because the other players, the coaches and the umpires were paralyzed with laughter.

FOOTBALL

Football is going the way of baseball - in the matter of being sued by players. Today in San Francisco, the National Football League was taken to court by William Radovich, former star of the Detroit Lions. He charges that he was black-listed, and that professional football is a monopoly.

This is a close parallel to the ~~baseball~~ baseball suits entered by the players who jumped to the Mexican League. (They were black-listed, and went to court - the result being that most of them have been taken back, and are now playing on the teams they deserted to go to Mexico. One, however, is still suing - Danny Gardella, formerly an outfielder with the New York Giants.)

In the San Francisco football suit - Radovich, one-time star for the University of California, declares that, as a professional player with the Detroit Lions, he had to sign a contract with a reserve clause - same as in baseball. Then, because of the illness of his father, he wanted to be transferred to the Los Angeles Rams of the National Football League. That was

refused, and he jumped the team signing with the Los Angeles Dons, in the rival league, of the All-American Conference. Whereupon he was black-listed, and since then the teams of the National League have been forbidden to employ him although the San Francisco Clippers wanted to give him a five-thousand-dollar-a-year contract. So now he has entered suit for a-hundred-and-five-thousand dollars, charging violation of the Anti-Trust Law.

GOLF

In the game of golf - there's action against gambling. Today the U. S. Golf Association adopted a resolution to crack down on betting, auction pools, and sweepstakes, in its tournaments. They're afraid of the gamblers, afraid of the fix. Seems hard to think of golfers throwing games, slicing a drive deliberately into the rough, or crookedly missing a putt. But today golf official James W. Walker states that big auction pools might well, in his words - "Be the means for proffesional gamblers to take over and attempt to influence the players, just as they have done in other sports."

He goes on to point out another danger. This in mere informal betting by amateur golfers on their game. He says: "Unfortunately, some golfers are suspected of making a business of gambling on their golfing skill. Much of their income," he goes on "is apparently dependent on their winnings and, in my opinion, such individuals violate the essence of amateur rules."

Well, it would seem that, every time the gambler steps in, there is a cloud - and it's not a cloud of sweet scented perfune either.

WHALE

At Marineland, Florida, Herman-the-whale is dead - a victim of what would seem to be the jealousy of the porpoises. Herman was the last survivor of forty-four pilot-whales driven ashore on the Florida coast last October. A mere younster, only eight feet long, he was taken into the Marineland exhibit of life in the ocean. There they placed Herman in a huge tank among the porpoises, and for months he thrived - fed on forty pounds of squid a day.

The whale got along with the porpoises okay - until a couple of months ago. That was in the spring, when the mating season of the porpoises began - and the females of that species, sad to say, took too much interest in the big handsome young whale. I don't know what could have happened - not being such an expert in the ways that nature has of taking it' course. But the word is that the bull porpoises became jealous, and made life miserable for Herman-the-whale. They'd bite him and butt him, gang up on him and drive him around - smack into the walls of the aquarium tank.

Some of the porpoises were so mean with Herman, that the marineland people had to let the ornery critters out - releasing them back into the ocean.

Poor Herman just couldn't take it. He was a whale of an example of the handsome fellow that attracts admiring looks from girls, but not so popular with the men.

The demise of Herman-the-Whale, however, removes a problem - a growing problem. He was growing up, and presently would have become a giant thirty feet long, weighing three of four thousand pounds. I wonder what those lady porpoises would have thought of Herman - then?

If Nelson Case were not off duty tonite, he'd have something profound to say about that! What about you, Olin Tice, and so long until tomorrow!