

BERLIN

L.T.-KAISER. WEDNESDAY, Feb. 3, 1954
(Given by L.T.Jr.)

Molotov threw a fast one - at the Berlin Conference today. He proposed - that the question of Germany should be left to the German people themselves. Hold a referendum, and let the Germans decide - in ^{an} ~~their~~ election. It sounds good - but wait. The Soviet Foreign Minister framed the question - to be put to the Germans, in these words:

"Do you prefer a peace treaty - or the European defense community, and peace accords between West Germany and the Western powers?"

That was denounced immediately as a - "loaded question." Which it was - with a sneaky angle. ["Peace treaty" in the question means - unified Germany signing a peace treaty. Then the words "peace accords between West Germany and the Western powers" would mean - West Germany, separate from East Germany. In other words, the Germans would be asked, in a national referendum,] "Do you want to be united, or - do you want to stay divided?" It sure was loaded.

This was immediately pointed out by the Western

Foreign Ministers, who called the Molotov proposal "absurd."

It had all the sound of a propaganda maneuver, trying to tell the Germans - they had only one choice. Unity - bybreaking with the West. Or otherwise - remain divided.

SOVIET PRESS OFFICER

The Berlin Conference has produced a surprise. —

The "coffee and cake man." He's the Soviet press officer, who conducts the news interviews with reporters from the Western countries.

In the past, the Russians have scorned the Western newsmen. Giving them - little or nothing. But now it's different - that Soviet "new look." They've assigned an amiable, intelligent individual to provide information. *And* *He* does it - with a cup of coffee and a plate of cake in front of him.

[F.L. Ilichev, a former editor of Pravda, presents the Russian side - naturally, — But - no blasts of Red propaganda. He's good-natured, even with the West German reporters, who try to get into political arguments with him.]

Today's dispatch from Berlin tells how, on one occasion, Ilichev ended a news conference - with a courteous little speech:—"I would like," said he, "to continue the sitting. I've had my coffee and cake, as you have seen.

But I'm sure you are hungry, as you have done nothing except take notes. Therefore, despite my own desires, I will end this briefing now."

~~There is~~ a "new sound", - accompanying the "new look" of coffee and cake.

EISENHOWER - AMENDMENT

Now, ~~let's take~~^{for} a look at President Eisenhower's news conference today. First of all, his ~~stiff~~ attitude is - "no compromise" on the Bricker Amendment. Suggesting - the whole question be laid aside, for long and careful study. He prefers - no action at all, right now, in the matter of regulating the president's authority in making treaties with foreign countries.

In Congress, meanwhile, administration leaders were pressing a substitute for the Bricker Amendment. A measure which President Eisenhower has said - he'll accept. This would merely provide that no foreign treaty may violate the Constitution of the United States.

Democratic Senator George of Georgia proposes the same thing - but with an addition. His compromise provides that international agreements, as opposed to treaties, would require special legislation in Congress, before taking effect as domestic law. Meaning, of course, those foreign agreements which an administration often makes, though

they're not regular treaties. Senator Bricker says - he'll support the substitute proposed by Senator George.

The President is against the George proposal, as well as the Bricker Amendment. ^{And} He told the White House news conference, today, that he will not compromise the right of the President to direct the U.S. foreign policy. He'll agree that no treaty should overrule the Constitution - but that's all.

EISENHOWER - ECONOMICS

The subject of our national economics was discussed by President Eisenhower today - in two ways. He took it up at the White House news conference, and also wrote a letter to Walter Reuther, President of the C.I.O.

Reuther had written to the White House, proposing a - national unemployment conference. He's afraid of a - recession.

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President Eisenhower does not reject the proposal made by the C.I.O. President. But says - he believes the best way to tackle the unemployment problem is to continue the work of his "Council of Economic Advisers." The Council is consulting with interested groups, like the C.I.O.

The White House view is that, at present, we are having a "readjustment" from wartime to peacetime economy. Today, the President said - he is "well aware" that some areas are suffering from "certain economic hardships." ^{But} he believes the current "readjustment" will pass without a serious crisis.

At the same time, he disagreed with some Republicans who dislike the word - "recession," - Saying - the talk about a "recession" helps the Communists. The President says this is a free country, and you can make your own choice of words.

TIDELANDS

The states of Alabama and Rhode Island began the legal attack on the "Tidelands" law, today. Asking - the Supreme Court to consider their complaint against legislation - which gives the states the ownership of oil resources off their shores. Neither Alabama nor Rhode Island have any Tidelands oil. They're being opposed before the Supreme Court, by Texas, Louisiana, Florida and California, the states who stand to benefit by the law.

No doubt, there is a principle involved, but the line-up would seem to suggest the question - Who has Tidelands oil?

VATICAN

comes

From the Vatican ^{comes} an official report on the condition of Pope Pius the Twelfth. Concerning which - there has been a wave of rumors.

The newspaper of the Vatican states that the Pontiff is improving steadily, and is working with his aides. His illness - a gastric ailment, - Brought about by nervous strain from over-work. The gastric ailment caused attacks of hiccupping - which ~~symptoms~~ are steadily declining.

The Vatican paper denies a report that a British specialist had been called in - a doctor from London who had treated the late King George. Other alarming rumors about the Pope's malady are described as - fantasy.

INDIA

History of horror from India

Here's the background of a story of horror, that comes from India. Five hundred lives lost, two thousand injured - in a mad stampede of tens of thousands of pilgrims, rushing to bathe in the holy water of the Ganges. ~~The news-dispatch tells of several millions of pilgrims thronging into the city of Alahabad.~~

It's the feast of Kumbh Mela. Which means - the bathing rite. The feast occurs every twelve years, and this is the year of years. That's because of astrological reasons --- the heavenly bodies play a large part in Hindu mysticism. This year, the sun, the moon, and the Planet Jupiter are in a most favorable position - the most auspicious in one hundred years. So, the present feast of Kumbh Mela is - the time of times for bathing in the holy Ganges. At Alahabad, where the ~~Jumla~~ ^{today,} flows into the Ganges, the pilgrims ~~wasxxxx~~ are numbered in the millions. The greatest number in Indian history - we are told.

The horror ~~today~~ began with an enormous mass of people pushing to the sacred river. Police were opening a way

for a throng of Sadhus, holy men. They had had the privilege of bathing in the Ganges first, and were returning - the police trying to make way for them. The Sadhus, according to ancient custom, carried tridents -- three-pointed spears, which made the tragedy ghastly, when the stampede began. Overrunning the Sadhus - people impaled on the spears.

[To us of the West, this hardly seems like a

- Twentieth Century disaster. But India, now a republic of modern style, adheres to its ancient ways, the strange fantasies of old.

AGA KHAN

Now let's take a look at the Aga Khan, who was weighed today - and what do you think his poundage was?

He's famous for his ponderous bulk - tall, broad and fat.

A normal guess would be - a good two hundred and fifty pounds.

The Aga Khan has been on a diet. On this program, several weeks ago, the news was that he was ill, and his doctors had put him on a diet of stewed prunes. But you'd never think he'd have reduced so much. Today the scales showed that the Aga Khan weighed - about an ounce and a half.

The weighing-in at Karachi was a stately ceremony.

The Aga Khan, descendant of the Prophet Mohammed, is the head of the Ismaeli sect of Moslems - and each year his religious followers give him his weight in gold, or jewels. This year - platinum. At his normal weight, this would have come to a quarter of a million dollars' worth.

But the Aga Khan wouldn't accept so large a gift.

He resorted to a trick. He made them rig the scales, so that one ounce of platinum would equal fourteen pounds of his own

weight. So the scales registered an ounce or two - fourteen hundred dollars' worth of platinum.

[Actually, the Aga Khan's correct weight was two hundred and fifteen pounds - after dieting.]

HOLLYWOOD - BURGLAR

Here's one from Hollywood - the screen-writer-burglar. An ex-convict, Kenneth Darling, who made a specialty of robbing the studio dressing rooms of stars. The police caught him - thanks to the alertness of Lucille Ball, star of "I love Lucy."

[You'd never have suspected anything - seeing a screen writer with a script under his arm, walking along in a studio. But it was the burglar - who had been looting dressing rooms for months. Robbing stars - like Joan Davis and Harriet Hilliard.]

A month ago he raided the quarters of Desi Arnaz, of "I Love Lucy." ^{That was his undoing,} ~~But that was not the reason~~ / Because Lucille Ball caught a glimpse of him, as he came out of her husband's dressing room.

She gave the police an accurate description, and today - the phoney script writer was arrested. Confessing - that he had committed five hundred burglaries in studio dressing rooms.

MONTREAL

Here's the verdict of a Montreal judge - who, today, stated: "It was an extraordinary, but possible, mistake."

Well, it ^{sure} was, according to the story told by Jacques Quesnel.

Jacques, a shoemaker, attended one of those French-Canadian parties - then went home. He took off his trousers and shoes, stretched out on a bed, and then - the realization.

"Suddenly," Jacques told the judge today, "I woke up and realized - I was in the wrong house."

He was terrified. There might be a lady, there might be a husband. So he left in a hurry. "I ran into the street," he relates - "without pants or shoes."

Jacques hailed a cab, and an astonished taxi driver took him home.

But he was still in a quandary. His pants and shoes were in that other house, and would be discovered - and he'd be identified.

Poor Jacques was in a puzzle - but he did the best

thing, I suppose: - He put on another pair of pants, and another pair of shoes, and returned to the house where he had been. There, he banged on the door, and aroused the householder - Georges Castonguay, - explaining - what had happened. But Georges had Jacques arrested on suspicion of burglary.

All of which ended before Judge Omer Lagrand today. His Honor - sympathetic, declared "It was an extraordinary, but possible, mistake."

Mike, what do you know about such things?