

RAILROADS

C.I. - Sunoco. Wed., May 22, 1946.

In the White House, during the past couple of hours, President Truman has been playing ~~an~~ his ace in the hole. That's what the news from Washington has been calling the final proposal that the President has drawn up for a settlement of the Railroad-Labor dispute.

TP Earlier in the day, the Unions, the Railroad Brotherhoods, announced that they had presented to the Companies their final offer. This, we may surmise, was rejected by the Railroads. If it had been accepted, there'd be no need for the ace in the hole - which the President ^{now has} proceeded to play. He called conferences at the White House beginning late this afternoon, conferences with representatives of the Companies and the Unions. And ~~he~~ presented to them his proposal for averting the strike - set for tomorrow afternoon.

We are not told the nature of the presidential ace in the hole. But, obviously, it must include a wage

increase better than the boost of sixteen cents an hour recommended by a White House Fact Finding Board - a recommendation which the Unions turned down.

The government, of course, has taken over the Railroads, and it remains to be seen whether the trainmen will go on strike tomorrow afternoon. That would bring about a nationwide crisis - which will happen or be averted, according to the issue of the White House conferences right now, the playing of the ace in the hole.

COAL

There's busy negotiation in the coal dispute, John L. Lewis conferring with Secretary of the Interior Krug this morning and again this afternoon. Secretary Krug ^{now} ~~is, of course,~~ in control of the Government-seized mines -- and he's the one to make an arrangement with Lewis, if any can be made, before the end of the strike truce, which expires Saturday night. ^R ~~The word in Washington is that~~ ^{the} ~~Secretary of~~

~~the Interior and the boss of the mine workers are trying to work a compromise on the question of the welfare fund that Lewis demands -- a fund to be paid to the Union by the companies in the form of a sort of payroll tax. We hear ~~that~~ there ^{is} to be a welfare fund, Lewis ^{ing} ~~gained~~ that point. The question, is -- how would such a fund be administered? John L. Lewis wants the huge sum of money to be under the control of the Union. And a compromise might be along the line of having the fund managed jointly by the Union, the companies, and representatives of the Federal Government.~~

FOOD

President Truman has made another appeal to Stalin - once again asking the Soviet leader to contribute some amount of Russian grain to the world battle against famine. The President had made this same personal request of Stalin before, and had been rejected. Now ~~he is~~ trying again - still hoping to get the Soviets to join the international effort to send food to the starving.

This White House announcement coincides with a statement made by the Moscow Radio today. It is not clear whether this newest Moscow declaration applies to the Stalin answer to the first Truman note or to whatever the Soviet Premier may have to say to the second appeal. The Moscow Radio merely states that Stalin informed the President that Russia has no grain to export, no surplus to send. Stalin agrees in principle, that there should be international cooperation

DANUBE

The River Danube is one of the great waterways of Europe, the greatest of all lines of communications for such nations as Austria, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria.

The Danube rises in the Alps, and is navigable all the way up into Germany, ^{into} Bavaria. And there today the American military authorities ^{are} ~~are~~ in possession of ^{that} a fleet of three hundred and seventy-two river craft, seized yesterday. The boats were of all sorts for navigation on the Danube, and include some vessels of the Hungarian Navy.

The word yesterday was that the boats had been seized in a raid to stop black market activities ~~by~~ the smuggling out of escaping Nazis. That kind of police action by the American military authorities is going on all the time over there, just routine. Today's news, however, puts a very different interpretation on the matter. ~~The xxxxxxxx and xxxxxxxx~~

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~~XX~~

~~XX~~ In Germany, an official of the American State Department declares that the vessels, having been seized, will be held - until and unless.

~~XX~~ He put it in these words: "Unless the great powers agree to free navigation of the Danube, we are not going to release the boats."

That problem of "the free navigation of the Danube" has been one of the major causes of disagreement between the Western democracies and Soviet Russia. It was one of the principal reasons for the break-up in failure of the conference of the Foreign Ministers in Paris.

Part of the Danube is in territory occupied by the Americans. The remainder of the great stream flows through countries under the domination of the Soviets.

In other words, that iron curtain of Soviet secrecy cuts across the Danube. The iron curtain is like a dam, blocking

navigation along that all-important waterway - so vital to the economic life of southeastern Europe. ~~They want~~ ~~free navigation~~ ~~of the Danube~~ ~~as an international~~ ~~waterway~~ ~~and~~ ~~that~~ ~~the~~ ~~Soviets~~ ~~will~~ ~~not~~ ~~allow.~~ ~~They~~ ~~want~~ ~~Soviet~~ ~~controlled~~ ~~navigation~~ ~~behind~~ ~~the~~ ~~iron~~ ~~curtain.~~ ~~But~~ ~~any~~ ~~navigation~~ ~~takes~~ ~~boats,~~ ~~and~~ ~~that's~~ ~~the~~ ~~clue~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~meaning~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~news~~ ~~today.~~

As the Red Army swept across the Balkan countries into Austria, the river boats of the Danube fled upstream - one phase of the great exodus of peoples and things as the Russian armies rolled forward. The boats kept going as far as they could, which took them to the ~~the~~ upper reaches of the Danube - in American controlled territory, Bavaria. ~~And~~ They've been there ~~ever since,~~ and now the American military authorities have seized ~~ever since~~ ~~the~~ ~~bulk~~ ~~of~~ ~~them,~~ three hundred and seventy-two craft.

Most of the Danube is dominated by the Soviets, but it's a waterway without shipping. One American official puts it in these words: "They've got the river, and we've got the boats." So now there's a new angle of international drama -- the river fleet of the Danube.

BROWDER

A dispatch from Moscow takes time on the news wire to state that an American today made a courtesy call to the U.S. Embassy, and had a chat with some of the secretaries there. Which might not seem worth a dispatch, except for the fact that the American was ^{a chap named} - Browder. This is the first factual word we've had that Earl Browder was really in the Soviet capital.

There has been every sort of surmise - ever since Browder left this country for foreign parts. Browder, as we know, had been ousted ignominiously from his post as head of the American Communist Party, his former Red co-workers overwhelming him with abuse. When he left the country, there were rumors that he was on his way to Moscow, and the big question was- why? There were guesses that he might be going to appeal to Stalin, ~~x~~ because of the way the big-shot comrades over here had treated him. Maybe, he would get into the good graces of the Kremlin,

and he might even return to America with a new party line - which would be a soul sickening blow to the comrades over here. Browder was reported in Sweden, and next in Finland - then vanished in the direction of Soviet Russia.

Well, he's now in Moscow, with today's dispatch saying he is living at a Moscow hotel, which, of course, means that he is over there with the approval of the Soviet government - very much so, getting a hotel room

The suspense is nerve-tingling
in Moscow. ~~And the indications are that his trip across~~
to the comrades over here.
~~Finland had been pre-arranged, from the way he traveled~~
~~by railroad and by automobile, pre-arranged by Moscow -~~
~~that's the inevitable surmise, the whole story adding a~~
~~new dramatic suspense to the presence in Moscow of~~
~~Earl Browder, the ousted leader of the American Communist~~
~~Party. The suspense is nerve tingling the comrades~~
~~over here.~~

TRIAL

There's a grotesque turn in the news about the brutality trial over in Europe - the proceedings against half a dozen American officers and soldiers for the mistreatment of G.I. prisoners at Lichfield, in England.

The trial has been dragging on and on, first in London and now at Bad Nauheim, in Germany. There have been rows and arguments, with charges and counter-charges, and today's news gives us a surprising fact. This concerns G.I. witnesses sent from the United States to testify about beatings and other cruelties inflicted at the Lichfield Camp. They are, presumably, soldiers who were in prison at the camp. ^R Eight of ^{the witnesses} ~~them~~ are in the guardhouse right now - arrested and hurled into the military hoosegow. ^{and} there is ~~nothing~~ unusual about that as we are now informed. Today's dispatch relates that in the brutality trial, thirty-five G.I. witnesses were brought to the court proceedings to testify. Of these, twenty ¹ ended in the guardhouse for one misdemeanor or another!

Of the eight reported in the news today, six are in the jug because of a trip they tried to take to London. They were fed up with things in Germany, and thought a vacation in the British capital would be a pleasant interlude - and no doubt it would have been, the only trouble being that the orders under which they were traveling were forged. So their trip ended in the guardhouse.

Of the other two G.I. witnesses, one is awaiting court-martial for shooting a fellow witness. And the other was arrested for refusing to obey orders, threatening an officer, and taking narcotics.

The misadventures of the witnesses might shed some revealing light on the brutalities at Lichfield Camp, about which they were called to testify.

IRAN

Yesterday the Iranian government announce^d that all Soviet troops had ~~got out~~^{left} of Persia - according to schedule. Yet, today, the Security Council of the United Nations refused to remove the case of Iran from its agenda. Why? Because the statesmen of the U.N. are not accepting yesterday's Iranian declaration with too much confident belief and unquestioning trust. There is some surmise that the official statement made at Teheran may not square with the facts.

This element of doubt was expressed today by the Iranian delegate to the Security Council, Ambassador Hussein Ala. He said that, in spite of yesterday's announcement by his own government, he wasn't any too sure that all Red Army troops had left Iran. This is a sharper example than ever of the fact that time and again there has been a conflict of opinion and statement between the Iranian government and its delegate to the

United Nations. The echo of doubt was continued by American delegate Stettinius, who said that the Iranian statement was not, in his words - "conclusive evidence."

~~The vote thereupon taken decided that, in spite of the objections of Soviet Russia, the Iranian dispute should remain on the agenda. The count was nine to one, the dissenting ballot being cast by Poland, the Soviet supporter on the Security Council. There was no Soviet² vote, because Gomyko was not there - still boycotting the Council in the business of Iran.~~

CHINA

In Washington, the War Department challenges the Soviet story about American Army bombers fighting against the Communist forces in China. A story to that effect comes from Moscow, which states that seven American bombers, piloted by American airmen, have been shot down in Manchuria while engaged in bombing operations against the Chinese Red Army.

To this the War Department responds - "There are no United States bombers in China." And further - "The War Department has not received any word of any such incident."

However, it is pointed out that the Chinese Army has a number of American built warplanes. ~~They were given~~ Lend-Lease ~~in~~ ^{given} equipment, during the war - the same sort of aid being given to the Soviets. ~~And, after the conclusion of hostilities with Japan, some surplus American planes were turned over to the Chiang Kai-shek government.~~ So it's possible that

American ^{built} bombers may be in action against the Reds.

As for the Moscow claim that the pilots of the planes shot down were Americans, it is possible, of course,

that the Chinese government may have ^{some} enlisted American airmen in its army - just as those famous Flying Tigers

of General Claire Chennault were engaged by China to fight against the Japs at a time when this country was

not yet in the war. However, the War Department, in the words of a spokesman - "does not know of any

recruiting of American pilots by Chinese forces."

MEDAL

Well, Sergeant Mayfield is going to keep his Congressional Medal of Honor. He threatened to turn back to the government that highest military decoration - if the Federal authorities went through with the plans for building a dam in Ohio. The Sergeant had ~~talk~~ ^{a chat} with President Truman today -- and the President gave him a sales talk. He sold the Sergeant on the idea of keeping his Congressional Medal of Honor.

Melvin Mayfield, an Ohio farmer, wiped out four Jap machine gun nests in the Philippine campaign, was awarded the Congressional Medal, and returned to his Ohio farm. He got married, and was all set to build a cottage for his bride.

Then, to his indignation, he learned about ten million dollar flood control project, ^{the} ~~a~~ Licking Vx Valley Dam - which would inundate his farm, including the site for his projected honeymoon cottage. Not only that, but seven-hundred-and-fifty other farmers would be washed out. Of course, they'd get compensation, but

they didn't want to leave their old homes -- that was when Sergeant Mayfield announced that he would send back his Congressional Medal of Honor.

He went to Washington as a one-man army of protest, and today he saw President Truman - who gave him that sales talk.

What ^{was the sales talk?} ~~did the presidential eloquence consist of?~~

Well, it was typical Truman. The President told the Sergeant a story about his mother's farm back in Missouri, at Independence. The county planned to build a road across the farm -- much to the inconvenience of the Truman family. At that time, the President ~~was~~ was a Jackson County judge -- which post had a lot to do with roads. Today he told the Sergeant: "I could have done something about it." ^{TR} He could have stopped ~~the~~ the building of the road across his mother's farm -- but, as he explained to the Sergeant today, the road was badly needed by the community, and he felt the public interest should predominate over private ^{inconvenience.} ~~inconvenience.~~

After which he explained the vital importance of the Licking Valley Dam for flood control -- protection for thousands of farms.

The President's story about his mother's farm, convinced the Sergeant, who thereupon decided that he would look for other acres to cultivate, and another place to build his honeymoon cottage. And he'd keep his Congressional Medal of Honor.

And now Hugh,