

L.T. - SUNOCO. FRIDAY, APRIL 30, 1943.

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

Five hours and fourteen minutes from now will bring an important moment for wartime America - midnight and zero hour in the coal mine labor controversy. This applies not only to the soft coal mines, which have held the headlines, but also to the black pits of anthracite. The contract between the soft coal operators and the United Mine workers expired a month ago. It was extended tentatively for a month, and now the extension expires at midnight. The anthracite contract ends at midnight, and there is no sign of an extension.

Today, in the soft coal strike threat, John L. Lewis gave answer to the stern declaration made by ~~them~~ President Roosevelt. The President told Lewis of the

United Mine Workers that no such wartime menace as a coal strike could be tolerated - and the government would take action. ^R Lewis was silent for a day, but now his mine-work~~ing~~ committee has answered. ~~They issued~~ No ~~direct~~ ^{direct} strike, defiance to the President; ~~and~~ ^{and} did not repeat No outright threat of a strike. ~~Lewis's reply to the President's ultimatum was to~~ ^{they} demand that negotiations be resumed between the coal operators and the union - collective bargaining. Meaning - Lewis wants the dispute taken out of the hands of the War Labor Board. ~~So~~ ^{That's} the point at issue - whether the President's War Labor Board shall make the decision. Lewis is against it. And the Union statement today says: "We have good reason to feel that the War Labor Board has pre-judged the case of the American coal miners."

^{TR} The Union complaint is that the Board is sticking to what is called "the Little Steel Formula" concerning

wage increases, and this formula precludes the granting of the pay boost that the miners demand - an increase of two dollars a day.

The Lewis reply to the President simply restates the Union decision all along, and therefore changes nothing. ~~So the implication is that the stand taken by John L. Lewis remains the same - the declaration~~

And unless the contract between the operators and the mine workers is renewed, the miners will not go to work when it expires. It does expire at midnight tonight.-

So, the implication is clear, a general strike of ^{four}~~forty~~ ^{hundred + fifty} thousand soft coal miners.

In the case of hard coal, Pennsylvania anthracite, the mine operators and the Union were in conference today, but got nowhere. They recessed their negotiations until tomorrow, when these will be resumed - in an attempt to renew the contract between

the Company and eighty thousand ^{hard coal} Pennsylvania miners.

~~MEANWHILE~~ The contract meanwhile expires at midnight, and a shut-down of the mines is taken for granted. Today, in fact, the operators and the Union signed an agreement whereby maintenance workers will stay in the mines and look after them during the period of the shut-down. —

~~This is~~ a move usually taken just before a strike is called. So it looks as if eighty thousand Pennsylvania anthracite miners would join ^{four hundred fifty} ~~forty~~ thousand soft coal

miners in a strike at midnight. *The latest is that the Sec. of Labor has just certified the Hard Coal Dispute over to the War Labor Board.*
We hear that the Government is ready to take

over the mines - the Army prepared to move in. The word from Washington points out of course that soldiers cannot mine coal, ~~and cannot compel the workers to mine~~

~~coal~~ It is believed that the Army will simply call upon the miners to return and work for the Government.

This sort of thing has been done in the case of previous

walkouts, when strike-bound industrial plants were taken
over. In the case of coal, *this would make the*
~~it would mean that the~~
Government *the employer,*
~~would deal with the miners and their union~~
~~as an employer.~~

TUNISIA

In northern Tunisia where the American^s are, the focus of battle is a mountain that towers high above the surrounding hills. The summits are not lofty in Tunisia, not compared to the great mountains of the world or even with our own American Adirondacks; - but, they are steep and rugged enough to make the going tough for mechanized warfare. ^π The mountain in question has two names. Locally it is called Djebel Tahent. On military maps it is marked down as Hill Number Six-Hundred-and-Nine, and that gives the clue to its height - six-hundred-and-nine-meters tall, about two thousand feet. ^π The summit, with a flat top, overlooks the whole Tunisian panorama. From the topmost point you can see ~~clearly~~ Bizerte and its great naval base -
 — see it clearly.
 only twenty miles away. The manner in which Djebel Tahent or Hill Number Six Hundred and Nine dominates the surrounding country is shown by the fact that

American forces have flanked the mountain on both sides, pushing to the north and to the south of it -

reconnaissance parties by-passing it to the north and artillery companies, ~~stringing~~ ^{skirting} it to the south. But the German garrison on top of the hill is able to rake the two sides with so much gunfire that a real advance around the north or the south cannot be made. And the order is - capture Djebel Tahent. Storm Hill Six Hundred and Nine.

American troops have been trying to do that all day, and it ~~is~~ ^{is still} their major task for tomorrow. Today's dispatch from Allied headquarters in North Africa states that the key summit is held by only a hundred and eighty German soldiers, but they are so powerfully fortified that American guns cannot reach them, and they are putting up a bitter fight. Yesterday a United States combat team captured three small hills

approaching Djebel Tahent, and they went on to storm
halfway up the main slope of Hill Number Six Hundred
and Nine. ^{TP} At Midday it looked as if they might
capture the dominating mountain, but the Germans opened
such a blasting fire ^{with} machine guns and mortars, that
the Americans had to withdraw - not only from ~~the~~
half-a-mile-up ~~of~~ Djebel Tahent but also from the three
small hills in front of it. They were under a hail,
not only of machine gun bullets and mortar shells, but
also fragments of rock chipped off by explosions. And
that's a cue to the tough kind of warfare our soldiers
are facing in the ~~stone~~ hills, where shattered rock
is hurled by the bursting shells to form ~~the~~ kind of
barrage of ^{fragments} ~~chunks~~ and splinters ^{of granite.}

Today's account from Allied headquarters ~~is~~
an example of the way we are given plain facts - facts
about a repulse that our troops have sustained at that

dominating peak called Djebel Tahent. And the dispatch adds the comment that the fighting at Hill Six Hundred and Nine is an indication that our final victory at the tip of Tunisia will not be a push-over. A spokesman for the United States Second Corps put it in these words: "It's a slug fest, and it's going to be a knockdown and ~~xxxxxxx~~ drag-out business from now on."

At the center of the line, the Germans are still counter-attacking the British. Today they ~~xxxxxxx~~ launched assaults down the slopes of an important hill from which they drove troops of the British First Army yesterday. The latest tells of a push spearheaded by tanks - giant Mark Sixes, land battleships virtually. At one point the monsters got through and the British withdrew slightly. But, the main enemy thrust today was beaten back in what the dispatch calls - "extremely violent fighting." ^{TR} The general picture along the whole

battlefront is one of - siege. We knew it would be that, from the moment the Nazi forces pulled back into their mountain stronghold. The conflict is like a prolonged and violent deadlock ⁱⁿ which ^{we} will keep the pressure on until the defense exhausts and gives way - siege operations.

Meanwhile, in the nearby Mediterranean, Allied air forces are still scoring victories against Axis transport. Today's dispatch tells of the sinking of two enemy ships and the damaging of eight others. The Germans have changed their transportation tactics, and are now dispersing their cargo vessels - instead of concentrating them in convoys. The ships proceed singly, and are scattered - as they try to make the run from Sicily to Tunisia. The fact that the enemy continues to send reinforcements and equipment is an indication only too clear that he intends to continue the battle as long as possible at the Tunisian tip.

MARTINIQUE

3
The State Department today took action in the case of Martinique, with Secretary Hull sending a stiff note to Admiral Robert - Governor of that French owned island. The Admiral down there insists on maintaining his allegiance to the Vichy regime in France. This is stated by today's stern diplomatic note, which points out that the Vichy crowd is completely subservient to Nazi Germany. Therefore, Secretary Hull calls off all agreements made with the Martinique outfit headed by Admiral Robert. ~~We have been trying to deal with them, in an effort to get the French West Indian islands out of the orbit of Nazi hands, but these transactions have failed to swerve Admiral Robert away from Vichy. So now, the dealings have discontinued, and the American Consul General at Martinique is recalled. Only a Vice Consul remains, and he, in the words of today's note will not be authorized to enter into or conduct~~

~~any negotiations of a political character. In other words, we won't try to do business with Admiral Robert any longer.~~

Among the agreements cancelled today, there was one that immobilized French warships at Martinique and adjacent islands, a guarantee by Admiral Robert that these ^{vessels} would be kept idle in port. ~~The vessels~~ ^{These} include the twenty-five thousand ton aircraft carrier BERN and a six thousand ton cruiser - not counting some lesser craft. Admiral Robert may now feel entitled to do what he likes with his vessels of war - which, however, are said to be in no condition for any kind of action. They have been laid up for a long time, and are not in trim for anything ~~which~~ much in the way of duty at sea.

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One immediate surmise is that the severance of relations today may be a prelude to something more important - the seizure of Martinique by the United

States. We cannot very well afford anyone to have a
Vichy Hitler tie so close to us as islands in the West
Indias.

SOUTH PACIFIC

Here is something that sounds like ancient history - fighting on Guadalcanal, a party of Japs wiped out on that island. (We thought that hostilities on Guadalcanal were a thing of the past - the Jap enemy extirpated. Which is all true nough - with a minor exception of the fact that, ~~the~~ jungle war, stragglng parties may stay out for a long time in the thickness of the equatorial forest. So it ^{is} not surprising that a few Japs may have been left wandering about, in the green tropical depths on Guadalcanal. It is possible, of course, that the Japs may have landed a few men since their final defeat on the island, but the best guess is that a small number of fugitives were left. - ~~xxxx and were trying to~~
~~get away.~~

Today's Navy bulletin merely states: "On April Twenty-Eighth, during the morning, a Japanese patrol of one officer and eight men, attempting to escape from

Guadalcanal - was intercepted and wiped out by American troops."

They were trying to get away across the water to

some
~~to the~~ Jap controlled islands, and were caught -

and went, what should be the way of all Japs.

SOLDIERS

Here's a bit of information that should be told and repeated to four soldiers at Santa Monica, California -- information that should make them grow mighty red in the face and start ~~tearing~~ ^{weeping} in their beer. These four soldiers today beat up two civilians, a couple of husky young men who were not in the armed forces of the nation. The four soldiers shouted -- slackers. And, before anything more could be said, they proceeded to give the two civilians a beating -- punching and kicking them.

Now, -- here's telling the four soldiers who their battered victims were:- One -- Joseph Lellis, a sailor of the Merchant Marine ^{who} has been serving in the South Pacific on a ship evacuating wounded soldiers through dangerous waters. And on one trip alone his ship brought back five thousand wounded from battle areas.

The other civilian beaten by the soldiers is Edward Nostrand -- eighteen years old ^{who} fought on

Guadalcanal -- a Marine so badly done up in the bitter fighting against the Japs that he was in the Naval hospital at ~~Marine~~ Island for six months, under treatment. Two weeks ago he was honorably discharged from the Marines -- as a disabled war hero.

All of which should ~~bring plenty of remorse~~
~~to those~~ ^{bring plenty of remorse} ~~four soldiers. and cause them to repress their excess~~
~~energy in the future.~~

MOTHER

Today at Flint, Michigan an honor was conferred on a forty-six year old woman -- and here's how well she deserves that honor. Mrs. John A. Deavers who used to be a bare-back rider in the circus, was made an honorary life member of the Blue Star Mothers of America. Mrs. Deavers has twenty-two children -- two sets of triplets and eight sets of twins. She has nine sons in the armed forces and eight of them are in service overseas.

This Blue Star Mother ran away from home ~~at~~ when she was twelve and joined the Ringling Brothers Circus ^{as a bareback rider.} She was married when she was fifteen and had her first set of twins when she was sixteen.

She certainly does deserve the maternal honor, doubly, triply -- with twins and triplets. -- 22 children in all -- 9 sons in service.

ALICE FAYE

And now we may reflect -- what could be more wonderful than a devoted wife and a loving mother? There's Alice Faye -- Alice, the film star, so smart and sophisticated in the movies! Alice today reveals herself as thinking only of hubby and the baby. She is quitting the screen, and is retiring to happy home and domestic bliss.

Alice, for one thing, doesn't like the kind of pictures they compel her to play in. She is tired of the hoopla musicals -- because they have no plot, says she. "I know I am no great actress," she explains, "but at least I could play in a movie with a plot."

All of which comes under the heading of art, but it is followed by the strains of "Home Sweet Home." Alice has a little girl, a year old, and says her baby is the cutest thing. "She deserves to know her mother," says Alice, "and I think her mother deserves to know her." Yes, they might get acquainted, and not be perfect strangers who haven't met before. "What I have in mind,"

Mama,
says ~~Alice~~ "is just staying at home and minding the baby."

Alice also thinks of her husband -- Phil Harris, the band leader. She explains that, working so hard all day in the film studio, she is sometimes not in such perfectly good humor when she gets up in the morning, not so completely sweet and smiling. And she snaps at hubby. Which is all wrong, says she. To which I say: "Hurray for Alice." When a fellow is grumpy and growling in the morning, he doesn't want his wife to snap at him.

Alice Faye puts it all in these affecting words: "When a woman loves her husband and child, she ought to spend some time with them, *and she adds,* and I think I'll enjoy being a housewife."

Yes, as I've always said, there is nothing like a good woman, is there Hugh?