

TAFT

L.S. - P. & G. Fri. Jan. 5 - '51.

The national debate is on all right - with Taft of Ohio today making a full scale foreign policy address in the Senate. He represents one powerful faction of the Republican party, which agrees closely with the foreign policy declarations made by former President Hoover several weeks ago.

(Senator Taft told the Senate that President Truman had no right to send American forces into Korea -- no authority to go into what the Senator called an "undeclared war." At the same time, he denounced the Administration for its refusal to bomb Red China.

"We might as well have a declared war," said he.)

Meaning, an all-out conflict with ^{the} Chinese Communists.

Taft assailed, likewise, the sending of U.S. troops to Europe - for the army commanded by General Eisenhower. Says it risks war with Soviet Russia. He declares we made what he calls, "a tremendous mistake" when we joined the Atlantic Security Pact - and an even greater mistake when we promised American troops for a unified West European defense. An attempt

to build up a great land army in Western Europe might provoke Russia to attack before that army is ready.

His belief is that we should confine ourselves mostly to sea and air power, and not assemble huge land forces. That, he argues, would wreck our economy - without much avail. Because we can't compete with Soviet Russia in power on land. The best for us would be to defend oceans, and island areas, with sea power and air power. In this, the Senator from Ohio agrees generally with ideas propounded by Former President Hoover.

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Senator Taft denied that he advocates an abandonment of the free countries of Western Europe - arguing that we can best protect them by ships and plane^s. He says they've been protected ~~in~~ that way, since the end of the Second World War - Soviet Russia kept in check by fear of the sea and air power of the west.

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FRANCE

The French government stakes everything on a vote in the French National Assembly tonight - demanding a final confirmation on the huge military budget of more than Two ~~M~~ Billion Dollars. Of which more than a billion would go to support General Eisenhower's West European Army.

Today the French Senate blocked approval of the budget - not because of its magnitude, or purpose. But because they thought there should be less taxation and more economy. So now Premier Pleven demands a show-down.

Meanwhile, the French Communists have opened a bitter attack on General Eisenhower - charging him with being a Wall Street warmonger. Demonstrations are threatened, as a welcome to General Ike - soon to arrive at his headquarters in Paris.

ITALY

Italy will have three ~~xx~~ divisions ready for General Eisenhower - placed at his command. This was stated today by the Minister of Defense in Rome. Who adds - that by the middle of this year, eleven Italian divisions will be ready for the West European army - between a hundred and fifty and two hundred thousand soldiers. Which means nearly all the military power that Italy is permitted to have under the peace treaty - which limits the Italian army to ~~xx~~ two hundred and fifty thousand.

SUB LEAD KOREA

Late news from Korea states that the Reds have laid siege to the town of Wonju; in the mountains of Central Korea, a transport hub - from which the Communists could attempt a swing to the West, trying to cut behind the retreating Eighth Army near the East Coast. At last reports, the defenders of Wonju were nearly encircled - but they had beat off a red attempt for a breakthrough.

KOREA

The critical area in Korea tonight is in the central mountains, where a corridor through a valley connects two vital traffic points - Hongchon and Wonju. U.N. troops are defending this corridor, which leads to roads - by which the masses of Chinese and Korean Reds might cut around South behind the retreating Eighth Army near the East Coast.

At last reports, the defenders had blocked the corridor so well, that the Communists were having to take by-paths among the mountains, trying to get through. Hongchon, at the northern end of the valley, is dangerously menaced, and may have already fallen to the Reds - as they try to swarm down to Wonju.

The retreat of the Eighth Army goes on in methodical fashion. Again we are given the insistent statement at the Pentagon Building in Washington that the retirement is all according to plan pre-arranged -- mapped out before the Reds launched their offensive in the Seoul area.

Today the Air Force ^{in Korea} was out in full ~~force~~

force - the fifth day of the greatest continuous air offensive in the Korean war. They are slashing at the hordes of Reds everywhere, and one dispatch tells of F-80 shooting Stars blowing up a long ammunition train. One car after another, hit and blowing up - the entire train left in flames.

Today our field commander, General Ridgeway, ~~xxxxx~~ stated that the military situation of the Eighth Army is satisfactory. But the general, in a news conference, gave most of his attention to the plight of the Korean refugees, tens of thousands that are streaming south, as the Communists advance. "Everything else" said the General, "is ~~as~~ dwarfed by the pathos of this tragedy."

Then he pointed to the larger moral: "The issue" he said, "is whether some day the same thing goes ~~as~~ on in America or the western world, or whether we can keep it away.

V.C.

In London, the First Victoria Cross in the Korean War was granted today - to a Scotch ^{tish} Major, whose heroism was displayed when his unit was bombed by mistake. This goes back to the story of weeks ago - when we heard how British troops on a hill called for American planes to blast the Reds on another hill. There was a blunder, a bad mix-up and the wrong hill was bombed, the one held by the British.

The commander there was Major Kenneth Muir of the Argyle and Southerland ^s Highlanders. By the time the mistaken bombing was over, Major Muir had only three officers and thirty men left ~~of~~ of his Argyle and Southerland ^s Highlanders. Today the London War Office points out how demoralizing it is for the troops to be blasted by their own side, through an error. -nothing could be worse.

But ~~K~~ Major Muir rallied his men, and ordered a charge. He led them forward, and they captured the hill occupied by the enemy - the hill that should have been bombed. In that hour of

almost incredible victory, the hero commander lost his life - and now is granted a posthumous Victoria Cross.

In Washington today, our own Congressional Medal was awarded to three enlisted men, G I's - Sergeant Travis Wakins of Clearwater, Texas, Sergeant Charles Turner of Boston, both killed in action. And - Private Melton Brown, who is missing. President Truman will present the medals to the families of the heroes on Tuesday, together with two other awards previously announced. One, to Lieutenant Frederick Henry of Clinton, Oklahoma. The other, to Major General William Dean - who was first to be named for the Congressional medal in the Korean war.

CANADA

In British Columbia the police don't know what to do about a religious group, waiting for - the end of the world. Ever since the day after Christmas, thirty members have shut themselves up in their church, and won't leave. The authorities are afraid of sanitary conditions. But of what importance is that to people who think - the end of the world is at hand?

They are an unorthodox faction, which broke away from the Pentecostal tabernacle a year ago. Now, at the town of Keremeos they are a problem to the civic officials -- as they wait for -- doomsday.

CONTROLS

A big price freeze is coming. All along the line ~~is~~ ceilings will be placed on the money charged for many kinds of goods. This is ~~is~~ planned by ^{the} Price Administrator, ~~Michael Disalle,~~ and the date for the price freeze is expected to be about March First. The word is that President Truman in his message to Congress on the State of the Union. will ask for authority to keep ~~down~~ food prices down - which are now soaring to an all-time high. —————→

ADD CONTROLS

Late news tonight states that the steel industry has agreed to consider a government proposal for a voluntary ~~XXXXX~~ freezing of steel prices at the present levels.

SUBSTITUTE_OIL

Surprising news from Cabot, Arkansas, the faucets tonight are spouting water. Which may seem to be what would be expected. But today, all day long, it was - gas and oil.

The local water supply comes from a well -- which turned suddenly into an oil well. So there wasn't any water for drinking. Let alone bathing or shaving. Okay for heating - because all they had to do was turn on a faucet and strike a match, and they got a streak of blue flame. They had to import water from Middle Rock.

The town seemed in a bad fix. But then, tonight, came a sudden change. The well for the water-supply reversed itself, and changed around - from oil and gas back to water.

WILDCAT

At Coral Gables, Florida, they've identified - the "grey thing that hisses." That's the description given by terrified children, who spotted the ferocious critter, which also - kills cats. But all was cleared up today, when Harold Marks reported the disappearance of his - jaquarondi.

This, it seems, is a kind of wildcat from South America, a species of lynx. Harold says he got the animal at Maracaibo, Venezuela, buying it from a hunter: ~~an~~ who had captured it in the jungle. Harold brought the jaquarondi home for a pet - and several days ago it escaped.

He says the strange wildcat lives by catching birds, and has a ferocious peculiarity - it likes to kill other cats. But its harmless to human beings - and when frightened, the jaquarondi hisses. So that's the grey cat-killing thing that hisses.

FIRE

Today at New Haven, Connecticut, two women were about to fling their children out of the window, for a drop of three floors. But policeman Raymond Eagan did a lot of talking - begging them not to toss the youngsters down into the street.

The building was on fire - and, with smoke billowing around them, the two mothers were in terror. Their only thought was to get their children away from the flames - ~~and~~ ^{but} the youngsters would likely have been killed by the drop of three floors.

Policeman Raymond Eagan couldn't get near ~~th~~^e two distracted women. All he could do was shout to them, begging them to wait. They did, and within mere moments, the firemen were up a ~~knif~~ ladder. The mothers handed them the children, after which the two women were taken down safely from the burning building.

MESSAGE

One of the strangest of messages has driven the people of Kannarock, Virginia, on a mountain search - a hunt for gold and a lonely grave. A message and a map - found in a shotgun.

County Sheriff Pat Jennings tells the story - how a family named Brown had an old shotgun, of Italian make. For years it lay around, and recently they decided to clean it. So they took the shotgun ~~apart~~ apart, and inside found a wadded piece of brown wrapping paper. On this the message was scrawled.

Dated Nineteen Twenty-three, the note said: "I accidentally killed Jim with this gun. He's buried on graves mountains. I am burying gold with him in the grave, because I won't live to use it." ~~am~~ The amount of gold was written down originally, but the figure has been blotted out. Which leaves a fascinating mystery - how much gold?

The message ends by saying: "I am drawing a map ~~XXXXXX~~ of his grave on the back - and if you follow it you can get the gold. Signed "Rusty". Nobody seems to know about Rusty, the accidental killer, or Jim, who

was killed with the shotgun.

On the other side of the brown ^(wrapping) ~~XXXXXXXX~~ paper
is a map sketched out. That's what they^Rre using, down
in those Virginia mountains, trying to find the lonely
grave of twenty-eight years ago. And - the gold.

AD

At Bismarck, North Dakota, a rooming house today inserted an advertisement in a newspaper. The North Dakota legislature is in session, and the ad reads: "sleeping room for gentleman -- also room for legislator." The difference between a legislator and a gentleman.

RIDER

Here's a dispatch from Italy, which reads:

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"Police on the Swiss-Italian border are looking for a man who rides the snow-covered-roads - naked, on a bicycle at night. Sounds like a cross between a masculine Lady Godiva and a polar bear. don't you think, Nelson?"