

CONFERENCE C.I. - P+S. Friday, May 20, 1949.

There was a ceremony of departure in Washington today, when Secretary of State Dean Acheson took a plane to fly to Paris. With Acheson was a staff of State Department experts - and John Foster Dulles, the Republican Foreign Policy

Adviser. President Truman was at the airport to see them off - the ceremony of departure being a measure of the importance attached to the parley in Paris.

Optimism is expressed, but it's cautiously, guarded - President Truman, at the airport, sounding the keynote when he was asked if he thought the outlook was bright. "That remains to be seen," said he. "We can tell more after the conference has been in session for a while."

All of which is echoed by comment in Paris, as the diplomatic assemblage gathers. Actually,

the statecraft of the West begins in the dark - the darkness of not knowing what's in the Russian mind. On the Soviet side - the usual secrecy. We

only know that Moscow, rather suddenly, went into

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the business of agreeing to lift the Berlin blockade. Which has been followed by sundry other Russian gestures of mollifying appearance.

Today, for example, the Moscow radio tossed out suggestions that settlements might be had in questions concerning Japan and Greece. The broadcasts intimated that the Soviets are willing to send home the Japanese war prisoners they still hold - a great host of these, for the return of which Japan has been clamoring.

In the matter of Greece, the Moscow radio suggested a settlement for the end of the Greek Civil War - and this was followed today by an official disclosure that the Soviet Government has approached the western powers with an offer for an amnesty, immediate elections, Communist participation in a new Greek Government, and the withdrawal of American and British aid.

The reply to this, revealed simultaneously in Washington and London, is - a rejection. But not on the grounds that the Soviet conditions are

unacceptable. Washington and London unite in saying that the problem of Greece already is up before the United Nations, therefore all ideas for a settlement should go through the U.N. Moreover, Washington and London refuse to negotiate on Greece behind the back of the government at Athens.

Nobody knows what the Soviets, at the conference, will have to say about Germany, though there are surmises. One belief is that the Reds will propose the withdrawal of all foreign troops, Soviet and Western. This will be rejected - the Western Allies have noted that the Russians have built up powerful Red police forces in Eastern Germany, which might well be strong enough to take over and establish a police state, if permitted to do so.

Moscow is also expected to talk up the idea of a unified Germany - end the division between the Eastern and Western zones. Which talk about Germany unity is likely to have a strong propaganda effect on

the German people. This the Western Allies will counteract by offering all sorts of German unity - on the basis of a free, liberal democracy, constitutional government along Western lines, nothing totalitarian. But, actually, nothing is really known about what the Soviets will say or do - blank secrecy.

The Western delegations admit that they are walking into the dark - but they've done their best to be prepared for any kind of Russian strategy, surprises, diplomatic twisters. Today's dispatch from Paris represents the state of mind in these words: "The West is not in a compromising mood. For the first time since the war, the West - with the signing of the Atlantic Pact, increasing economic recovery under the Marshall Plan, and general agreement on policy matters - is beginning to feel strong."

Such is the diplomatic picture as the conference of the foreign ministers of the Big Four prepares to meet. The personal picture is interesting,

because it is so different from the last time - only one face that was to be seen there.

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At midnight, Berlin time, twelve thousand railroad workers walked out on strike. So nine days after the lifting of the blockade, a labor dispute may, in effect, impose a railroad blockade all over again. At first the strike leaders declared that trains supplying the western section of the city would continue to run. But, later they took that back.

The strike is against railroads under Soviet control. The demand - more pay. Or rather - western pay. The railroad workers have been ~~xxxx~~ receiving their wages in Soviet marks, which are about one-quarter the value of the currency backed by the western powers. They want their pay in the form of western marks.

So they are striking against the Soviets, which may not sound healthy. But they live in the western zone, which protects them. The Russian authorities are bringing in strike breakers. The German workers insist that they will oppose the strike breakers. Which leaves the western authorities

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facing a complicated picture - the proletarian Soviets, so ~~xxx~~ strong for labor, employing strike breakers in the face of opposition by the strikers - the western authorities trying to keep the peace in such an intricate situation.

Tonight Brigadier General Frank Howley, U.S. Commandant in Berlin, said: "There will be no lawlessness in the American sector." But the latest tells of immediate clashes. In one place a battle between strikers and strike breakers, both sides armed with clubs.

MALMEDY

In Washington, an order was issued tonight staying the execution of six former Nazi storm troopers convicted, in the Malmedy massacre of American prisoners of war. Likewise, postponement of the executions of eight other Germans condemned for war crimes. This, as a result of the charges that confessions were extorted from the former Nazis by ~~xxx~~ brutal and unfair methods. There was a rumpus about this, today, when Senator MacCarthy of Wisconsin walked out of the Congressional investigation, making the angry charges of an attempt to "whitewash" the Army prosecutors.

SOVIET MARRIAGE

Royal marriages are always news, dynastic unions. But I don't know what you'd call this - Stalin's son marrying Molotov's daughter. The report is from London, which states that the Soviet top level wedding is scheduled to occur. Stalin's son *is an officer* ~~is a major~~ in the Red Air Force. Molotov's daughter is named Svetlana - twenty years old, and described as dark and plump, with a round face, like her father's.

No, not a royal wedding exactly, but maybe more important, the matrimonial alliance away up in top of the politburo. Stalin's son marrying Molotov's daughter.

COMMUNISTS

A formal Communist declaration - that the Reds will go underground, if the Mundt-Nixon Bill is passed. The statement was made by Arnold Johnson, legislative Secretary of the American Communist party. The Senate is holding hearings on that bill ~~to~~ ^{to} control the activities of the Reds; and one provision is that Communist party members would be required to register. - ~~Important~~ ^{that,} because of the ⁱⁿ habit of having secret party members.

Today the Red Secretary was asked - would the Communists abide by the law, if the law required them to register? *they would they are*

He replied: "We would not register."

He indicated that if the Mundt-Nixon bill is passed, the Reds will go on as an illegal party, defying the law, carrying on in secret, underground.

SOCIALIZED MEDICINE

Over in Britain, socialized medicine is running into a difficulty doctors had predicted - the problem, not only of curing the sick, but keeping the healthy from imagining they are sick. With people going to the doctor or the hospital, free, as much as they like, under socialized medicine, there's a tendency for some to develop imaginary illness. The old pleasure of - "doctoring."

Warning of this was given in London today by Aneurin Bevan, Minister of Health, who sent out a memorandum to the nationalized British hospitals. He said that large numbers of patients have what he called - "Prolonged and ill-directed convalescence after minor disorders." *In other words they are* ~~that~~ hypochondriacs who like to linger under the doctor's care in the hospital.

The minister of health said that this is causing much - "Absenteeism." People staying away from jobs. To which he adds that this fondness for doctoring and hospital care may bring about what

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he calls - "A permanent disability neurosis."

The physicians, who know their patients, have long surmised that free medical service would have a lot of hypochondriacs running to the doctor or the hospital, with imaginary illness - people who like to talk about their symptoms, and enjoy telling it to the doctor. So now we find this to have become something of an industrial probelm under socialized medicine in Britain. Today the minister of health ordered the nationalized hospitals to do a rehabilitation job, and get patients with imaginary ailments back to their jobs with as little delay as possible.

ANGEL FALLS

Word from the dim distant jungle of inner Venezuela seems to indicate that **Angel Falls** is not the highest in the world. *H*itherto, the intimations have been that the stupendous cataract, discovered only a little while ago, might be loftier than Tugela Falls in Africa - where the water drops for a distance of two-thousand,-eight-hundred-and-ten feet.

Angel Falls was discovered several years ago by an American flyer, *Jimmy Angel,* who spotted it from the air. The only observation that could be made was from the air - the waterfall being that remote and inaccessible. But recently an expedition set out through the jungle, a party of Americans and Venezuelans, with engineers, to do an accurate job of measurement.

They reached Angel Falls, and now one member of the party has returned to Caracas - a woman, Ruth Robertson, the photographer. She says that only preliminary calculations show Angel Falls to be two-thousand,-six-hundred-and-thirty-one feet high.

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Which would make it a hundred and seventy-nine feet lower than Tugela. - The African waterfall still the highest.

Photographer Ruth Robertson says that Angel Falls is two-hundred-and-sixty feet wide, the water making a sheer unbroken drop from the edge of a lofty mesa, down into a huge basin - spectacular beyond all description.

SHIP

At Miami, some slight international perplexity - and a story of the sea. So light your pipes, mates, and yo-ho for the voyage of the - "Genius." From the name, it sounds like some argosy of intellect and inspiration. But the "Genius" is a British oil tanker, just put into port after a riotous, uproarious crossing of the Atlantic. Storm and tempest? The age-old peril of the deep? No - a young woman.

Today at Miami the story was related by Captain Herbert Scott, skipper of the grimy, smelly oil tanker. He tells how, just before the "Genius" put out from the Port of Southampton, four of the sailors had an inspiration. In a pub they found Lavinia Ross, twenty-two years old, and took her aboard for the voyage to Miami. They sneaked Lavinia into a rope locker, and kept her there until the tanker was on the high seas - after which they found a vacant cabin for her, and there installed Lavinia in secret.

The skipper says he might never have known anything about it, if the usual thing hadn't happened - Lavinia's four maritime boy friends getting into an argument about her. Jealousy on the high seas - which can cause storm and mutiny, and even shipwreck. In fact, it did, or almost ^{cause} the wreck of the "Genius."

One of Lavinia's quarreling boy friends went to the captain - and snitched. He told about Lavinia ensconced in the cabin. So down to the cabin the skipper went storming, and confronted Lavinia. She made what excuses she could, saying that she didn't remember anything about leaving the Southampton pub, and being taken aboard the vessel. The first thing she knew was when she woke up in the rope locker. Those four jacktars must have ~~hypnotized~~ hypnotized her, or something.

But now - what to do with Lavinia? The skipper couldn't very well put her off the ship, not in the middle of the Atlantic - he couldn't

toss her overboard. So he locked her up in the medical cabin, the sick bay - Lavinia held in captivity. After which the skipper told those four sailors a few things in the salty language of the sea.

Everything seemed to be going all right - until the "Genius" was approaching Miami harbor - the skipper using his veteran seamanship, navigating among the shoals. Then it was that all hades broke loose. Lavinia's four boy friends had a real battle - and, they had to stage it while the tanker was navigating among the sand bars.

The skipper was exercising his most skillful seamanship, when - bang! The four sailors went for each other, in one of the wildest brawls ever seen on a deck. They fought with fists, and buckets - slamming each other with buckets. One of them was hit so hard in the face, that he may lose an eye.

In the wild fracas, with the skipper trying to stop it, the tanker ran aground. The "Genius" went on a shoal. If a tempest had been raging,

"ship wreck" would have been the word. As it was - by the time Lavinia's four boy friends were subdued, the tanker was firmly aground, and a tug had to be summoned to pull the "Genius" off the reef.

This accomplished, the bedeviled skipper threw the four sailors in the brig, and put the whole sea story up to the Chief of the United States Immigration Authorities at Miami - Francis Dever. Handing over the four sailors - and Lavinia. What the U.S. authorities want with them is a question, and at last reports the problem was being passed along to the British Consulate at Jacksonville. Poor consul!

Meanwhile, the four jack tars are still in the brig - Lavinia is being taken to Ellis Island, to be sent back to England.

Now, Nelson, will you man the f'ocsle?