

PARIS

Mon. May 13-68

Springtime in Paris -- a Paris beset by general strike -- the setting today for that historic first meeting -- between U.S. and North Vietnamese negotiators.

As you may have heard by now -- North Vietnam's ~~Xuan Thuy~~ ^{what might be thought} -- first up. Asserting that the U.S. and its South Vietnamese allies -- have already been ~~defeated~~ ⁹ defeated. Adding that the U.S. was guilty of "monstrous crimes" -- including bombing attacks on the North; which must be stopped -- said he -- before there can be real talk of peace.

U.S. Ambassador Averell Harriman -- next up, ~~saying~~ ⁷ that he "disagreed with and completely rejected" -- most of Thuy's charges. Also calling for restoration of that demilitarized zone -- between the two Vietnams; ^{this} to permit a "pulling apart" of opposing forces -- as a first step toward de-escalating the war.

In the end -- both sides agreeing to meet again

Wednesday. ^{This} Amid growing opinion the talks would be long
and difficult -- but, not hopeless. Averell Harriman, for
one, observing that opening statements were predictably
tough -- yet ^{what might be termed} diplomatically "correct." ~~A good sign.~~

LEW RANCH

Here at home -- at the LEW Ranch in Texas -- President Johnson later received a first-hand report from Ambassador Harriman. The two ~~were~~ conferring by telephone ~~and~~ immediately following first-round talks. Foreign policy adviser Walt Rostow -- who is also at the ranch -- also joining in consultations with the Paris delegation.

As for reaction though -- none. White House Press Secretary George Christian saying ~~was~~ "anything along those lines -- will have to come from the people in Paris."

SAIGON

On the other side of the globe -- Hanoi was claiming victory today in Saigon. ^{right at the} ~~At the same time that~~ U.S. and South Vietnamese defenders of the city -- were mopping up the last of the Red invaders. U.S. generals later ^{calling it --} ~~claiming~~ a smashing Allied triumph; ⁹ costing the enemy more than five thousand men -- killed or captured.

If the capital was once again secure though -- not so the Central Highlands, ^{where} ~~where~~ an estimated force of about three thousand Viet Cong -- today attacked an isolated "Green Beret" camp. Allied losses including a giant C-One-Thirty ^{that was} ~~--~~ flying out wounded from the battle when it went down.

OMAHA

Showdown in Nebraska. Senators Robert Kennedy and Eugene McCarthy -- in their first head-on clash; battling down to the wire today -- in Omaha. Each hoping for an impressive victory -- in tomorrow's Presidential primary. Each hoping that the people's choice will be a lot clearer in Nebraska -- than it was a week ago in Indiana.

On the Republican side ^{— this time} Richard Nixon is opposed by Governor Reagan of California. ^{with} ~~However~~, Nixon ~~remains~~ ^{the} ~~a prohibitive~~ ^{— Nebraska is called} favorite, ~~-- this being~~ "Nixon country."

Indeed, the former Vice President was campaigning today in Oregon -- where he faces a stiffer test two weeks hence.

LONDON

In London -- the British pound dropped today to its lowest price ever. Leaving British Prime Minister Harold Wilson -- in a fight for his political life.

Wilson meeting tonight -- with critics from his own party. Attempting to win support for new price and wage controls -- he considers essential to saving the pound. Chancellor of the Exchequer Roy Jenkins -- also there; -- asserting that prospects for improvement in Britain's financial picture -- "are now stronger than they have been for a long time past."

Be that as it may -- Wilson's critics remain ~~ing~~ unconvinced. ~~with~~ ^{party} another caucus ^{is} set for Wednesday ^{— and it} ~~that~~ may tell the tale.

WASHINGTON

On the Mall in Washington -- halfway between the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial -- a ceremonial stake was driven into the ground today. The Reverend Ralph Abernathy signaling start of construction on a canvas and plywood encampment -- to be called "Resurrection City" *and is*
soon
Expected [^] to be home ~~soon~~ for an estimated three thousand demonstrators -- taking part in that "Poor People's March" on Washington.

CONGRESS

President Johnson's first annual auto safety report -- submitted today to Congress. ~~Disclosing two hundred cases -- where the nation's automakers recalled cars for safety inspections, in the brief time since the new Highway Safety Act went into effect~~ ^(SUSP) ~~a year ago last September.~~

According to LBJ

~~Better still -- said the President,~~ Federal safety efforts "are beginning to tell; the rate of increase in traffic deaths ~~has~~ slowed somewhat." ^{with} ~~But still~~ ~~and yet~~ -- a long way to go -- said he. Adding that "the destruction wrought by Americans on themselves, their fellow-citizens and their property -- is still of tragic proportions."

MANILA

President Marcos of the Phillipines -- finds himself on the pan today in Manila, following publiation of a love poem to his wife -- who is currently in Washington for a medical check-up.

Marcos's poem containing fourteen stanzas -- one for each year of the couple's marriage. The next to last, for example, reading:

How can I think?

How shall I say "I worship you"?

Fourteen times a thousand cannot convey

The depth of my love to you

First reaction from a Manila political writer -- hoping that Marcos proves "a better President than a poet". The writer further suggesting that chief executives -- should not "double as darlings of the muse."

Warren - wouldn't you think
~~But~~ But the writer's wife? -- she probably loved it?

~~as I'm sure~~ - Mrs. Marcos. ~~and~~

HARRIMAN

With peace talks temporarily in abeyance in Paris -- time out for a look at personalities. Averell Harriman -- age seventy-six -- explaining the secret of his long success as a U.S. trouble-shooter; the same secret -- said he -- as that of another famous but unnamed personality; who always explained his own success -- in three words: "My good judgement."

Question: "But where do you get good judgment?"

Answer: "From experience." Next question: "Where do you get experience?" Answer: "From bad judgment."