

REPORTS FROM THE FRONT

Mine Disaster Scene

Women Wait Stoically For Rescue Of Their 'Menfolk'

By KYLE WHITEHEAD
(Managing Editor of The Harlan (Ky.) Daily Enterprise)

PINEVILLE, Ky.—Six coal and wood bonfires burned vigilantly on the slope of Black Mountain last night, lending flickering shadows to a cold watch by relatives and friends of 50 to 60 miners trapped by an underground explosion yesterday.

The scene near the draft-mouth of the mine of the Kentucky Straight Coal Co. in Four Miles Hollow—four miles from this Bell County seat—was unfamiliar in this rural mining country. It was a reencounter of a display of calmness that will be shattered only when tired and dirty rescue squads reveal the fate of the "menfolk."

There was not a sob to break the heavy night as mothers, wives and sisters huddled close to the fires in close view of the darker-than-night hole through which the living or dead eventually will be brought out.

There were no libbers to the seemingly slow but methodical rescue crews that, related in a number of six men under the direction of the state's most experienced mine safety leaders.

There was stoicism on the mountain side and that fortitude who live close to coal mines will not falter. It is much like a code. There were solemn-faced children among the mourners and some of the faces turned toward the frozen ground with their faces turned toward the

fire. They, too, realized what was happening. The voices that rose above the crackling of bonfires were those of rescue leaders. There were sharp orders for limbers, orders for telephone wires, and there was the calling of names of the men who were next to go underground in the fight to penetrate smoldering flames, gas and debris for the lives of other miners.

A string of electric lights running parallel to the electric mine trill wire and the flashing of mine safety lamps from the workers' camp made the same picture seen before at other places along the mountain range when men dig for men.

At one of the bonfires, William Leath waited for word from the trapped men. His father, McKinley Leath, 45-year-old coal leader, was among them.

"I'd always took the day off after a holiday," the twenty-year-old youth said, "but he decided on Christmas day that he would work Wednesday."

And there was Bob Whitney, 50-year-old Negro miner who missed the entrapment by fate. He was late for the markup that he worked on their working places. It left as he heard the pulse.

There were other stories of how the remainder or the nearly 100-man mining force missed their shift after Christmas. Some had been "celebrated."

See WOMEN on Page 9-A

Start In Mid-January

Merger Proposal Hearings Slated

By CLAIR JOHNSON
WASHINGTON—(AP)—The Congressional controversy over merger of the armed forces will be resumed in mid-January before the House Committee on Armed Forces.

Trouble On Fuel Faced

WASHINGTON—(AP)—A "fuel stringency" is facing the country, Secretary of Interior Ickes said today.

Ickes told a news conference that fuel oil is "tightening up" and that coal production is insufficient to meet all needs.

"As far as coal is concerned," he said, "we're paying for Mr. Lewis' latest strike. It's not the amount of the strike, it's the fact that it is remembered," he said, "that means so much to them and he has always demanded that the coal strike should not be left out. Last year he had done over a ton of coal. This year he has nothing—they'd be pleased with clothing. We're not going to give anybody a good dinner, candy, nuts, and fruit—gifts are not going to be given as an outing for himself and wife, just as they used to have before he was here."

He pooped Tuesday's demonstration as a "collected rally," and said that demonstrations had been staged at both the 21st and 29th Replacement when ships were transferred from one to the other.

No further protest reported, despite the fact that spokesmen for the 21st Depot GI's had announced that they would be at a meeting yesterday.

In the current depot atmosphere of kiss-and-make-up, officials in charge of the men that complaints arose originally because officers had failed to keep the men supplied with available shipping and schedules.

It was announced today that ten more men would be sent to Manila area between now and Dec. 31, with space for 31,300 men—sufficient to clear both depots.

'Foreign Pope' Speculated On

ROME—(AP)—The newspaper L'Espresso, commenting on the new Stamps, commencing with the membership of 42 non-Italians, speculated today on a "foreign" successor to Pope Pius XII.

"In all probability," said the newspaper, "we will have a foreign pope—an event which has not occurred since the election of Adrian VI of Utrecht, in 1522.

Meanwhile, an anonymous book entitled "Will We Have an American Pope?" has been circulated in Italy, with a picture of Cardinal Spellman of New York being named as one of the candidates for the papacy.

Massacre was one of the atrocities which figured in the trial of Lt. Gen. Tomoyuki Yamashita, former Japanese Commander in the Philippines, presently under sentence of hanging.

Truman Will Wage Fight

By ERNEST B. VACCARO
KANSAS CITY—(AP)—President Truman, preparing to put his struggle with Congress over labor and other legislative proposals squarely up to the people, might his Christmas holiday at home toward a close today with a final round of informal visiting with old friends.

The President disclosed at an informal conference here that he plans to speak to the people in a nation-wide radio address right after the holidays, probably the first week in January, on his overall legislative program, including labor and universal training.

This speech will be followed by a formal message to the new session of Congress on the state of the union which White House officials said likely will be delivered in person. If he goes to Capitol Hill they said, the message may be broadcast by television, marking the first use of that medium by a Chief Executive.

In his speech to the nation, he likely will review the proposals he submitted to Congress during the last several months for easing the nation's transition from a war to a peace economy.

High up on the list is his plan for statutory authority for the re-establishment of fact-finding boards and other fixing of 30-day "cooling-off" periods in labor disputes. As a means of ending strikes in important nationwide industries.

Meanwhile, the President asserted he will fly back to Washington at 9:30 A. M. Eastern Standard time tomorrow. The weather is no worse than that which his big C-54, "The Sacred Cow," encountered on the return from Washington Christmas Day.

At the same time, Lieut. Col. Henry T. Myers, pilot of the four-engine transport, told the President that "no undue risk" in flying here. The plane took off in a gusty wind and the four-passenger plane was covered runway after bad weather had delayed an after-breakfast start for the Christmas present.

The President remarked that use of the plane makes the trip from Washington much shorter, adding that, "I'd like to see you in the house. It should fly back to the White House in about three hours and 45 minutes."

All Is Forgiven

PEKIN, Chi.—(AP)—A fourteen-year-old runaway and his "part" Angola, cat frolicked belatedly today after a five-day, \$500 spree in Chicago.

Dickie Mason and his cat, Cookie, returned to Pekin to find that Dickie's mother, Mrs. Mabel Mason, Dickie, was welcomed by Henry Gleich, his grandfather, who had been on his trip. When Chicago police picked him up for questioning, he was at a hotel manager's tip, Dickie had approximately \$1,000 left.

The boy told police he, left home because of Cookie. The family, he said, stepped on her tail too frequently for it to be accidental. He was in bed today, however, his mother said. Dickie left home because she "didn't like me."

When he arrived at Gleich's home, he said, "I was in a hospital with hip and shoulder injuries. Three other bus passengers suffered minor injuries."

Union Will Send Group To Capital

Company Will Announce Plans

DETROIT—(AP)—Interest in the General Motors strike shifted back to Washington today after another company-union conference at which the fundamental wage issue was sidetracked.

Chief remaining point of attention on the Detroit scene was GM's promised announcement this afternoon as to whether the corporation would send a fact-finding board to resume its hearings in the dispute at the capital tomorrow.

Vice-President Walter R. Reuther of the CIO United Automobile Workers made it plain that the union would send a delegation and said insufficient progress was made at yesterday's negotiating session here to justify postponement of the Government's panel meeting Friday.

Agreement was reached, Reuther said, on procedure for handling such issues as picketing, seniority and other matters which are gaining on a local basis in the absence of a contract. GM terms of its contract with the union Dec. 10, four months in advance of its expiration date.

The Presidential fact-finders had said they proceed with their study even if either party should bolt.

GM POSITION
General Motors' position on attending further conference here remained problematical since last week, when President Truman told the board's three members they have an "unquestionable" right to consider a company's ability to pay as an important factor in drawing up recommendations for setting a wage dispute.

The CIO-UAW at first opposed the fact-finding panel in the strike of 175,000 of its members at 70-odd GM plants, preferring to fight its own battle for a 30 per cent wage increase.

Reuther said yesterday, however, "We do not say it is up to the Government to settle this strike, but we do say that the machinery has been set up and it is up to us to cooperate."

The board's authorization by the President to delve into the company's books—something the union has been denied in wage conferences—was believed to have made the intervention more palatable to the union.

Structure the 30 per cent demand within the present price levels, "reasonably" and consider its profits and car prices are not proper subjects for wage bargaining.

One Dead, Five Hurt In Crash

SPARTANBURG, S. C.—(AP)—Roy E. Garner, Spartanburg Boy Co. salesman, was killed instantly and five persons were injured here today in the head-on collision of a DuPont sedan to street bus and an automobile.

Wilson T. Scott of Union, driver of the sedan, was hospitalized with hip and shoulder injuries. Three other bus passengers suffered minor injuries.

South Loses Round

Rails Permitted To Delay Freight Rate Adjustment

WASHINGTON—(AP)—The Interstate Commerce Commission today authorized the nation's railroads to postpone indefinitely the class rate adjustments ordered in the Big 15 freight rate decision.

The action was taken, ICC said, to conform with a Federal court injunction restraining the commission from enforcing a 10 per cent increase in class rates in Northern and Eastern states and a corresponding decrease in the South and West.

The injunction was granted last Friday by three-judge Federal court at U.S. N.Y. at the request of five Northern states.

The commission's order had been scheduled to go into effect Jan. 1, responding decrease in the South and West.

Truce Proposed By Chinese Reds

By SPENCER MOOSA
CHUNGKING—(AP)—Chinese Communists announced today that they presented a formal written proposal to the Government for a truce on all fronts of China.

The proposal, they said, was delivered at a two-hour meeting with three Government representatives. The meeting, the first formal session since the policy recommendations of the National Military Council in December, was held in Chungking.

Communists said that their proposal was, first, an unconditional "cease fire" order by each side; second, an orderly withdrawal of all troops relating to the civil war; third, sending of inter-party and non-partisan groups to various fronts to observe the situation.

Government representatives at today's session promised to deliver the truce proposal to Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek for consideration, the Communists said.

Preliminary arrangements for the January meeting of China's Political Council and the National Inter-party, non-partisan conference which will strive to end civil war—were discussed.

Date of the Political Consultative Council session was not set, but several Chinese newspapers have predicted that it would not meet before Jan. 10.

Gen. Chou En-Lai, top Communist official, said that the proposal was a "concrete step" by the National Inter-party, non-partisan conference which will strive to end civil war—were discussed.

Establishment of the council was regarded as a "major step" by the Far Eastern Commission on which they are now represented.

Princess Masuko, wife of Emperor of New Zealand and Foreign Minister Herbert Ewart of Australia, have been named as the most outspoken opponents of what they regard as big-power domination of Far Eastern Affairs.

Greeks Turn Down Award

ATHENS—(AP)—Greece announced today rejection of the war reparations award proposed for her by the Inter-Allied reparations conference as inadequate and unjust.

The figure was reported here to be \$10,500,000 from Germany alone, against \$14,000,000 Greece has claimed from Germany, Italy and Bulgaria.

The Inter-Allied Conference on reparations, which opened here last Friday a division of German assets among 18 nations, subject to the approval of the United States Government, but did not place a money value upon them, Greece was allocated 10 per cent of the category "A," including foreign assets, current production and stocks, and other goods taken from Western Germany.

Byrnes Off For Home As Moscow Talks End

Trusteeship For Korea Reported

LONDON—(AP)—Secretary of State Byrnes said in Moscow today that the Big Three foreign ministers had agreed on the handling of the atomic conference, and a reliable informant in London said the foreign ministers also approved four-power rule for Japan.

The London source said the Foreign Ministers of the United States, Russia and Great Britain agreed also to a five-year trusteeship of Korea, suggesting that independence would come to the Asiatic Peninsula after 1950.

The informant, who is in a position to know what is going on at the atomic conference, and a reliable informant in London said the foreign ministers also approved four-power rule for Japan.

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Father Of Famed Actresses Dies

ROSEMART, Calif.—(AP)—Samuel Rosenbaum 84, father of "Topsy and Eva," died last night in a sanitarium where he had been under treatment for two years.

His daughters, Topsy and Eva, actresses, were among the most successful stage actresses came as the musical comedy "The Sign of the Cross" with him. They arrived from Hollywood, Ore., last week for a holiday visit.

Rioting Breaks Out In Suburbs Of Greek City

ATHENS—(AP)—Rioting broke out today in the suburbs of Piraeus when a mob attempted to free two members of the extreme leftwing organization KKE who had been arrested for allegedly disarming a policeman.

The crowd fought its way to the cells where the men were held captive. They were freed by police. Greek reinforcements later were dispatched from Piraeus, the port of Athens, to preserve order.

Jap North China Puppet Is Dead

PEIPING—(AP)—Wang Kuo-min, former Japanese puppet ruler in North China, died in the military prison here Christmas day.

Wang was 58 or 70 years old, an official biography gave his birth date as either 1875 or 1878 in Hangchow.

30 U. S. Troops Badly Injured In Hurricane

LONDON—(AP)—Thirty American troops were severely injured aboard the French liner Albatros II, damaged by hurricane in mid-Atlantic last Sunday. Lloyd's reported that the liner is carrying 3,000 U. S. service men to New York.

A radio message to Lloyd's from the battered ship, broadcast in London, said the ship was heading for the Azores at reduced speed due to engine trouble.

PHILIPPINES' PIED PIPER GIVEN DEATH

MANILA, Thursday—(AP)—Clark Mason was sentenced to death today by a People's Court in the Pied Piper who led almost 1,000 Filipinos to Communist rule in the Philippines.

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