

Incident Closed In Apologetic Draw

WASHINGTON—(AP)—Words of apology, solemnly voted to an attentive membership, today closed the Washington Birthday fist-fight incident in the House.

Rep. Frank E. Hook, Michigan Democrat who set off the flurry of fistfists by using the word "liar" in an exchange with Representative John Rankin, Democrat, Mississippi, once shortly after the House convened to apologize.

A few minutes later, Rankin followed suit in these words: "If I have offended the membership of this House I am sorry."

Hook offered his regrets after Representative Cox, Democrat, Georgia, called upon the two men to beg the pardon of the membership for their brief but lively scuffle on the House floor during a discussion of the CIO's Political Action Committee.

After Hook completed his apology—in his words "just as broad as any member would desire Rankin took the floor and said: "Mr. Speaker, I merely desire to make a statement."

With that he talked at length about his part in the fight, insisting he did not violate the House rules when he clashed with Hook and said: "I merely did what any gentleman would do."

"If I were to apologize it would be for the disturbance caused members of this body. I didn't violate the rules for what I said."

Indications were that the membership—particularly Democratic leaders—were willing to let the matter drop.

Republicans sat in silence, apparently regarding the proceedings as a family matter among the Democrats.

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Rep. Hoffman, Republican, Michigan, had the floor yesterday when the fight started. He was attacking the CIO-Political Action Committee, as he does frequently. Hook arose to defend the CIO and then Rankin got into it.

Hook shouted something about Rankin's "raving and ranting." Rankin shouted back that Hook was mixed up with the Communist party. That's when Hook called him a liar.

You pretty nearly have to smile when you talk to John Rankin like that. Hook didn't smile. The 63-year old Rankin (weight 140) tore across the floor, pulled off Hook's glasses, climbed up Hook like a ladder and pummeled him.

The Michigan Congressman, husky former wrestler now weighs 145 at 105 and is 52, clinched with the Mississippi and they pulled and heaved at one another for several seconds.

It was a full minute before either Congressman—about 100 feet on hand—realized what was going on. Then they rushed to the floor to tug the battlers apart. A group grabbed Rankin and another group grabbed Hook. They propelled them to chairs a safe 10 yards apart.

It threw the House into a tremendous uproar. Washington never had a birthday like this before.

Three Sons Killed
News Held
Back From
The Mother

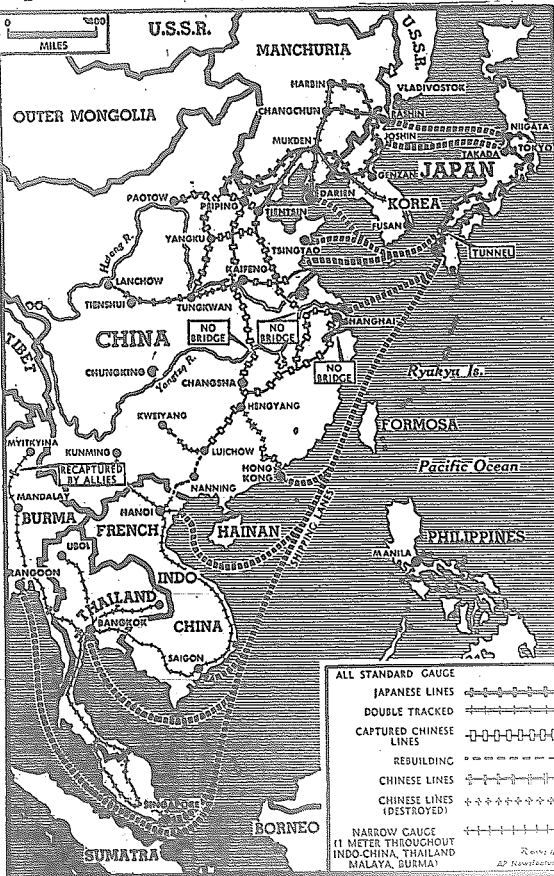
CLEARWATER, Fla.—(AP)—Mrs. P. J. Murphy, 42, learned for the first time today that her three sons in the service had been killed in action last Summer.

It from the effects of a nervous breakdown, the news was kept from her by relatives and friends. The father twice went to Washington to see that no official announcements be made of the deaths.

Last October, Mrs. Murphy found a letter in which friends sympathized with the family, but relatives talked her into believing the news was not true. Then she found another letter—from the government—and the tragedy no longer could be concealed.

"I am not bitter about them not telling me, as I felt all along that my boys were dead," she said.

There are 244,533 possible bridge hands for every possible poker hand.



To get away from what it calls "enemy sea guerrilla power," Tokyo is talking about developing an overland railway line to Singapore.

The total length, says Tokyo, would be 6,753 miles.

Japanese troops made such a thing possible last month when they succeeded in cutting a corridor across South China to the border of French Indo-China.

Japanese railway experts are quoted as saying the blank spot in the line can be finished within a year. If Japan wants to spend the materials and the manpower, it probably can be done sooner.

The line begins at Pusan on the eastern coast of Korea, and goes through Manchuria and down through North China to Hankow in Central China. From Hankow it passes through terrain which the Japanese have captured only this year through such cities as Changchun, Hsuyang, Kailin, to Lanchow. If the Chinese were able to destroy all this stretch as they retreated, it is probable that the Japanese have rebuilt much of it by this time.

Reports from Chungking say the Japanese intend to lay track on the Luchow-Indo-China section with rails they captured last month when they made a 250-mile raid up along the Chinese Kwachow railway.

At the French Indo-China border, the line becomes 1-meter narrow gauge all the way to Singapore through Thailand and Malaya. A new line, of the same narrow gauge, completed with captive Allied prisoners of labor, runs northwest to Burma from the Thai capital Bangkok.

American military observers doubt the military value of this new patchwork line or supply. The recent extensive Japanese campaigns in China have not been able to stop American attacks by air far beyond the enormous groups of Chinese soldiers remain to the

War Writers Awarded
Medals, 1 Posthumously
LOS ANGELES—(AP)—The Navy, in a special ceremony, has awarded the order of the Purple Heart to two war correspondents, one posthumously.

Joe James Guster of the United Press, who lost the sight of an eye in the battle of Iwo Jima, received one award last night while the posthumous medal was given to Jack Singer, International Service writer who was killed Sept. 15, 1942. Miss Ruth Singer, his sister, received the award.

Jobe Funeral Set For
Monday In Greensboro
RALEIGH—(AP)—Funeral services for George Henry Jobe of Raleigh, who died of infection in a room at the Kansas City Club, Kansas City, Mo., Wednesday, will be held at 2:30 P. M. Monday at the Presbyterian Church of the Covenant in Greensboro. Interment will follow in Forest Lawn Cemetery.

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cast of it in South China. However, the Japanese army traditionally thinks in terms of rail supply lines and has proved itself very adept at keeping harassed lines open and going. With their sea lane down along the Chinese coast gravely threatened by American air power based on the Philippines, the Japanese appear to be overlooking no bet, however far-fetched, to keep supplies moving.

Imperial headquarters thought enough of the prospective railway to announce it as "further strengthening" Japan's "advantageous strategic position in China."

As the map shows, the Japanese frequently have more than one route to choose from in the long haul between Singapore and Pusan. One of these has just been improved by a tunnel between Kyushu and Honshu linking the cities of Moji and Suwayama to al-

low diversion of traffic southward through NAGASAKI, hence by sea to Shanghai. The latter, too, is an under-sea route, between Kyushu and Pusan. Korea remains uninvolved.

Biggest bottlenecks in the long-tortuous line are at the stretch gate between the Philippines and China, constantly exposed to air attack and ground attack by guerrillas.

There has been a theory that the Japanese aim was to consolidate a line of retreat for use when the time comes. But a Chungking spokesman said the other day that it seemed more likely the real Japanese purpose would be to put up very stubborn fighting in China, French Indo-China and Malaya.

Experts at keeping railroads going in adversity, the Japanese may be able to build and use this new line for a while.

—JAMES D. WHITT

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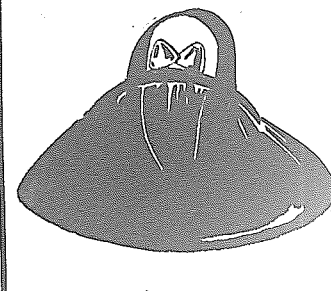
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