

AT SLAVE LABOR CAMP

Soviets to Set Free 5-Year U.S. Prisoner

WASHINGTON (AP)—Pvt. William Verdine, a prisoner of the Russians for five years, may soon be back in Starks, La., with the "happiest mother there ever was."

The State Department announced late Tuesday that the Soviet government had agreed to turn over the 28-year-old soldier to U. S. authorities in Berlin. The date for Verdine's repatriation will be set later.

Less than two weeks ago, the Russians said blandly Verdine's whereabouts were not known. But since that time, two other Americans freed by the Soviets after years in captivity have reported seeing Verdine at the notorious Vorkuta slave labor camp in arctic Russia.

Chessman Gets 5th Stay Of Execution

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The judge who originally sentenced Caryl Chessman to die in the state gas chamber was "more baffled than ever" Wednesday over the latest stay of execution.

Superior Judge Charles W. Fricke, hearing that Chessman had been granted his fifth stay since July 3, 1948, said, "I have been a member of the bar for 50 years and a judge for 27 years. . . I am wholly unable to understand it."

Fricke said that even under Federal Judge William Denman's ruling that Chessman has "probable cause for appeal," there is sufficient time between now and Friday to hear and decide on the appeal. Chessman had been scheduled to die Friday.

TO KEEP ON

Meanwhile, Los Angeles District Attorney S. Ernest Holl said he would continue to seek prosecution. "There has to be an end to all this litigation," he said. "We're going to keep right on fighting."

Roll added that "it is indicative of a breakdown in our entire system of criminal justice, that there is something wrong with our laws when a man can so thwart punishment imposed after a fair trial."

Informed of the ruling, Chessman said: "Well, it could have gone either way."

Chessman, known as the "Red Light Bandit," was convicted in 1948 of multiple counts of robbery, rape and kidnaping in Los Angeles.

WRIT OF REVIEW

When the appeals court does consider his case, it will decide whether to uphold or reverse a ruling made on Jan. 4 by Federal District Judge Louis E. Goodman, who dismissed Chessman's petition for a writ of habeas corpus.

If the appeals court reverses the ruling, Chessman will be given a full scale hearing. If it upholds the ruling, Chessman's attorneys can still ask the U. S. Supreme Court for a writ of review. These procedures will require several months.

The basis of Chessman's appeals lay in his claim that the transcript of his original Los Angeles trial was faulty. The court reporter who recorded the trial died before he could transcribe his shorthand notes. Chessman's attorneys claim the job was eventually done by an "incompetent" reporter.

Strong Quake Felt

TOKYO (AP)—A rather strong earthquake was felt in the Tokyo-Yokohama area and parts of central Japan Tuesday, but no damage was reported.



VACATIONING PREMIER—French Premier Mendès-France (left) walks through the fishing village of Positano, Italy, South of Naples during brief vacation with his wife. Sources in Rome said Mendès-France thinks this is just the right moment for the West to propose Big Four talks with Russia, and they add that he will press this point in talks with Italian leaders.

Premier Seeks Mushroom by Any Name Isn't a Rose to The FCC

ROME (AP)—French Premier Pierre Mendès-France kept up his whirlwind round of calls and conferences with Italian officials Wednesday in his campaign to win support for the West European arms pool he has proposed.

Both French and Italian participants in the talks said they were "keenly satisfied" with their progress, but French sources cautioned that "no major decisions can be expected right now."

Responsible sources said Premier Mario Scelba and his Cabinet approve in principle Mendès-France's proposal to form an international agency within the projected seven-nation Western European Union to control the countries' production and distribution of arms.

But a highly placed source said no "off-the-cuff acceptance of such a complicated question as this" could be given now, nor was such expected.

The French and Italian officials at their final meetings Wednesday planned to wind up agreements on what were described as "problems of a strictly neighborhood nature." These include increased emigration of Italian agricultural labor to France, improved rail and road communications between the two nations, removal of some trade barriers and related problems.

Relations Established

BELGRADE, Yugoslavia (AP)—Communist Yugoslavia and Communist China have established full diplomatic relations and agreed to exchange ambassadors, the Yugoslav Foreign Ministry announced this week.

WASHINGTON (AP)—Mushroom raising is no bed of roses, says the Federal Trade Commission, and it doesn't smell like one either.

The commission filed false advertising charges Wednesday against the Washington Mushroom Industries, Inc., of Seattle, a firm which sells mushroom spawn and fertilizer.

The FTC challenged the company's claim that mushroom beds have no odor and can be placed satisfactorily in a spare room. These beds produce "a very disagreeable odor," in the view of the FTC lawyers.

Neither is it true, said FTC, that mushroom growing is a "pleasant, easy occupation," providing a substantial income even to those without experience; nor that the firm's mushroom spawn will produce "extraordinary financial returns" to buyers.

On the contrary, the commission said, successful mushroom operations require a high degree of skill and amateurs "cannot earn extraordinary profits, particularly in view of the company's charges for spawn and fertilizer."

The company and its president, Arthur T. Lelles, were given 20 days to answer the complaint. A hearing was scheduled for March 1 in Seattle.

Humphrey Gets Check

WASHINGTON (AP)—Secretary of the Treasury Humphrey received from the Government Printing Office a check for three million dollars which Public Printer Raymond Blattenberger said represented savings in GPO operations during 1954.

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Mendes Foe New President Of Assembly

PARIS (AP)—Pierre Schneider, a member of the opposition to Premier Mendès-France, is the new president of the French National Assembly. Though his election Tuesday night was considered a slap at the Premier, Communist voting tactics put him into office.

Schneider defeated the incumbent Assembly president, Socialist Andre le Troquer, on the third ballot because the Communists withheld from Le Troquer the support they had given him a year ago. Instead, the Reds voted throughout for their party's elder statesman, 65-year-old Marcel Cachin.

The decisive vote was Schneider 232, Le Troquer 188 and Cachin 88. Schneider, 49-year-old Champagne region, is a member of the Popular Republican Movement (MRP), which has opposed the Premier since he refused to fight last summer for ratification of the European Defense Community.

His election, however, is not likely to affect the Premier's legislative program. The Assembly president is a neutral officer who does not even take part in voting.

Division to Return

CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. (AP)—The 1st Marine Division will return here when it is withdrawn from Korea within the next few months, Maj. Gen. John T. Selden, camp commander, announced.

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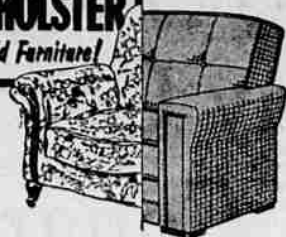
German Trains Ram

VERDEN, Germany (AP)—A packed commuter train rammed into a freight train on a 30-foot high trestle near here Tuesday. First reports said at least two persons were killed.

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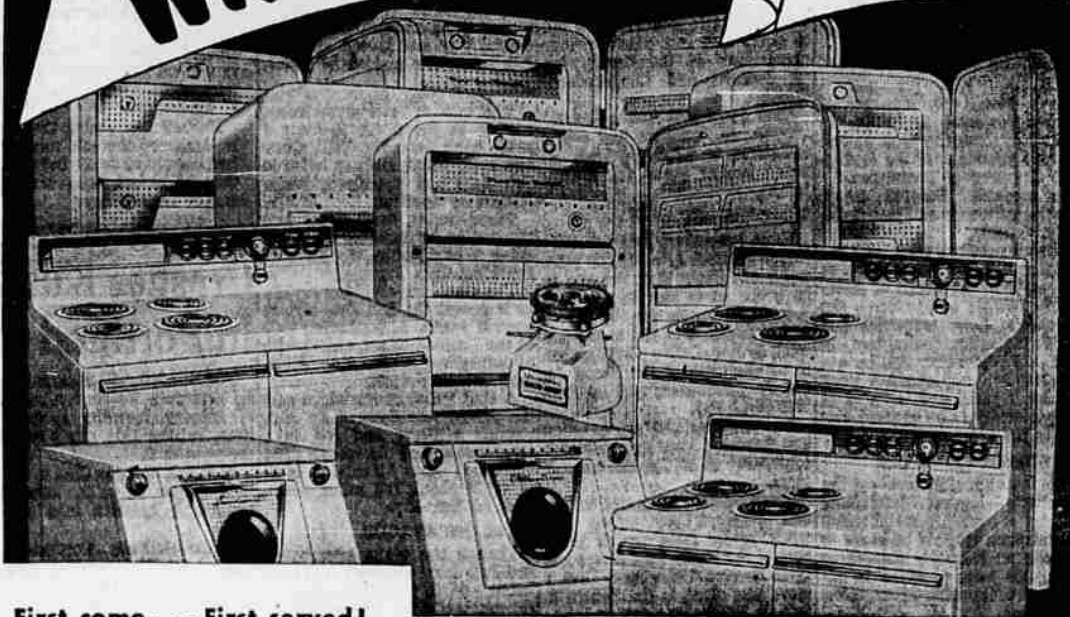
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