

STRIKE CRIPPLES PHONE SYSTEM

MEDFORD MAIL TRIBUNE

United Press—Full Leased Wire

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MEDFORD, OREGON, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 9, 1946.

NO. 246.

Weather

FORECAST: Increasing high cloudiness tonight. Generally cloudy Thursday with scattered rain showers. Slightly warmer tonight and Thursday.

Highest Yesterday 43
Lowest this Morning 26

Fortieth Year

CORONER WEEPS AT INQUEST IN KIDNAP MURDER

Father Describes Last Time He Saw Little Girl Alive—Janitor Main Suspect.

Chicago, Jan. 9.—(U.P.)—Even the coroner wept today as the father of six-year-old Suzanne Degnan appeared at an inquest into the sadistic murder of the child.

Tears trickled down the cheeks of coroner A. L. Brodie while the father, James Degnan, 38, described the last time he saw his golden-haired little girl alive.

After Degnan left the packed and stuffy hearing room, Brodie wiped his eyes with the back of his hand, and murmured: "This is tough to take."

Testimony Brief

The father, an OPA executive, was at the inquest for only a few moments.

"When was the last time you saw Suzanne alive?" Brodie asked in almost a whisper.

"It was about midnight Sunday," Degnan said firmly. "I got up to take her to the bathroom."

A few hours later, a kidnaper broke into the child's bedroom, strangled her, carried her from the house, attempted to attack her, and then viciously cut up her tiny body.

Continue Case

Brodie, regaining his composure, then continued the inquest until Jan. 30. Capt. John L. Sullivan, of the Sumnerdale police district, said authorities need the additional time for investigation and the search for the child's slayer.

Veteran attaches of the coroner's office said that today was the first time they had seen him shed a tear at an inquest.

Meanwhile, police began questioning every person known to have a key to the "murder basement" where a sex fiend dismembered the child's body.

The number one subject of the police examination was the 65-year-old janitor of the north-side apartment building where authorities said the body of the kidnapped girl was dissected. He is Hector Verburgh, a greying grandfather, who stolidly maintained his innocence.

Friend Grilled

Next to Verburgh, detectives concentrated on Desere Smet, 35, who was reported to be a close friend of Verburgh and a janitor in three apartment buildings near the murder scene. Smet denied he knew Verburgh.

Authorities learned that all tenants of the 12-apartment building had keys to the laundry room where, detectives said, the girl was butchered, shortly after she was taken from her bedroom early Monday.

An attorney for the Flat Janitor Union appeared before Chief Justice Harold G. Ward of criminal court today to ask for the release of Verburgh, his wife, Mary, and Smet on habeas corpus writs.

Atty. Joseph Ricker told the court the three should be released because no charges had been placed against them.

"The Verburghs are old people," he said, "and we know what they go through when they are grilled by the police."

Newcomer Praises Local Climate At Kiwanis Meeting
Pointing out Medford's suitable climate and favorable location for raw materials for his business, Cecil Ray More, who established a display manufacturing firm here early this month, addressed local Kiwanians at the hotel luncheon meeting at the Ho-lan' hotel tonight.

More showed samples of his firm's work which included preserved artichokes, palm fronds and manzanita bouquets.

A highlight of the meeting occurred when Lyall Fielder removed Carey Thompson's shirt and contributed it for the old clothing drive. Thompson is county chairman of the drive.

Yanks Mass in Protest Against Slow Demobilization



Portion of the more than 20,000 soldiers who gathered near City Hall in Manila, P. I., in mass protest of announcement of demobilization slow down. Lieut. Gen. W. D. Styer told a delegation from the army through that the U. S. Army will keep a garrison of 375,000 in the Pacific to protect American interests.

Eisenhower Tells Truman Clamoring GIs "Good Men" - Denies Discipline Breached

Washington, Jan. 9.—(U.P.)—Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, army chief of staff, told President Truman today that GIs clamoring to be sent home from Manila "are good men" and in no way guilty of breaches of discipline.

He also told the president that, despite the current criticism at home and abroad, the army must not be permitted to demobilize at a rate that would shrink it below minimum requirements.

Report Requested
The staff chief's statement was in response to a presidential request for a report on the recent Manila demonstrations.

It came at a time when the army was attempting to speed up its process of combing out non-essential personnel and cutting its strength to absolute minimum needs. Theater commanders are being asked to send home all men who can be spared, regardless of whether they have enough points for discharge.

Eisenhower presented Mr. Truman with information supplied by Gen. Douglas MacArthur and Lt. Gen. William D. Styer, commanding general of western Pacific army forces. He quoted MacArthur as saying:

"These are good men who have performed magnificently under campaign conditions and inherently are not challenging discipline or authority."

MacArthur attributed their discontent primarily to "acute homesickness aggravated by the termination of hostilities."

Eisenhower said Styer had reported to MacArthur that "no mass disciplinary action" had been undertaken "by responsible commanders" against the complaining soldiers because there had been no acts of violence or disorder.

MacArthur, the staff chief said, approved the decisions made by Styer.

Meanwhile, congressional criticism of the demonstration program persisted. Rep. Clarence J. Brown, O. member of the house republican policy committee, was not impressed by the strong defense of the program which President Truman made yesterday. He said a congressional investigation was necessary.

These developments occurred as the war department reported that the 5,000,000th soldier to be discharged since V-E day would be released today.

In response to world-wide clamor of GIs to be sent home, the army was accelerating its efforts to release all men who could be spared.

Manila, Jan. 9.—(U.P.)—U. S. military police announced today that they were holding 80 negro soldiers during investigation into a wild hour of gunfire which followed the fatal shooting of a negro soldier by a white sentry.

The riot occurred Monday night at the 10th quartermaster depot in suburban Quezon City. An unidentified negro soldier from an adjacent camp broke into the quartermaster compound, emerged with a bundle, and was killed by the sentry after refusing to halt, army headquarters said.

Negro troops from the dead man's camp seized weapons from their supply room and fired them for an hour as a demonstration against his death.

Lieut. Col. T. R. Little, Cape Girardeau, Mo., commander of the military police battalion which broke up the shooting fray, said nobody was killed except the man shot by the sentry.

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CHINESE FACTIONS FAIL TO AGREE ON CEASE FIRE ORDER

Prospects Not Bad But Difficult, Government Representative Tells Reporters.

Chungking, Jan. 9.—(U.P.)—Chinese nationalist and communist representatives meeting with Gen. George C. Marshall adjourned today without agreeing on an expected cease-fire order in China's civil war.

Following their fourth conference, Gen. Chang Chun, government representative, told reporters that details had not yet been settled.

"The prospects are not bad but difficult," he added. Asked if he was still hopeful, Gen. Marshall said:

"Oh, yes. My gracious, yes." He said no unforeseen difficulties had arisen.

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Truman's Message Scheduled Jan. 17

Washington, Jan. 9.—(U.P.)—The White House announced today that President Truman's state-of-the-union message will be sent to congress on Jan. 17. This will be two days after the new session begins.

On Jan. 21, the president will send his budget message to the house and senate.

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STEEL WORKERS AND CORPORATION TO RESUME TALK

Decision To Renew Negotiations Boisters Hope For Averting Monday Walkout

Washington, Jan. 9.—(U.P.)—The United Steel Workers (CIO) and the U. S. Steel Corp. agreed today to resume wage negotiations. The agreement immediately raised hope here that the nation-wide steel strike scheduled for next Monday can be averted.

The decision to resume bargaining was announced by President Truman's fact-finding board. The board thus far has deferred hearings on the union's \$2-a-day wage demand hoping that a settlement could be reached through direct negotiations.

Panel Chairman Nathan P. Feinsinger released a statement at a press conference announcing that the board was "ready to do everything possible to facilitate the final settlement of this dispute through collective bargaining."

Local President Dan Harris said about 250 members of his union in Oregon and Washington would join the walkout. He said installers in Grants Pass, Eugene and Dallas, all in Oregon, left their jobs a short time before the Portland workers struck at 11 a. m.

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NATIONAL TIE-UP IS THREATENED BY INSTALLING CREW

Portland, Grants Pass, Eugene, Dallas Workers Out; Dial Service Unaffected.

All long-distance calls placed through the Medford office today were being completed without delay. It was stated by the chief operator at noon. No news concerning the tie-up of Portland because of the walk-off of Communications Equipment workers had been received at the local office, it was said.

Telephone installation workers left their jobs in 14 cities today, threatening a nationwide communications tie-up and bringing the number of American workers idled by strikes to 388,000.

Threatened stoppages in the steel, meat, electrical and communications industries, plus a possible New York City CIO walkout, would add approximately 2,000,000 other workers to the nation's strike total.

Portland, Ore., Jan. 9.—(U.P.)—Long distance telephone facilities in Portland were partially tied up today when local 75 of the Association of Communications Equipment Workers walked off the job in sympathy for the Western Electric company strike.

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PLAYMATE KILLED IN SUICIDE PACT

Eureka, Cal., Jan. 9.—(U.P.)—District Attorney Jeremiah Scott said today a murder charge may be filed against Glenn Griffith, 13, of Carlotta, Cal., who admitted killing a playmate as part of a "suicide pact."

The boy told sheriff's deputies that he and Albert Westcott, 13, also of Carlotta, agreed to kill themselves Monday and went to Griffith's barn with their 22 caliber rifles.

Griffith said he shot himself in the stomach, and lost consciousness. When he regained consciousness, he told the officers, he found that Westcott had not attempted to commit suicide so he shot his friend three times and then killed Westcott's dog.

Relatives heard the shots and rushed to the barn to find the Westcott boy dead. Griffith was taken to the Scotia hospital, 30 miles south of here. He was reported to be recovering.

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