



SOVIET-EAST GERMAN ECONOMIC PACT SIGNED—Soviet Premier Georgi Malenkov (second from left) witnesses Otto Grotewohl's signing of the East German-Russian agreement in Moscow. The pact granted the Communist East Zone of Germany seven major economic concessions, including an end to reparations after January 1. Left to right: Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov, Malenkov, Gen. Kliment Voroshilov, Nikita Khrushchev, Nicolai Bulganin and Grotewohl (seated). To the right of Grotewohl are members of the East German mission.

10,000th Allied POW Released By Reds; General May Be Last

Panmunjom, Korea —(U.P.)—The Communists released their 10,000th prisoner Saturday and among the 145 Americans freed was possibly the first U.S. soldier captured in the Korean War.

In addition to the Americans,

the Reds turned loose 250 South Koreans, three Turks and two Australians in the 25th day of "operation Big Switch."

The Allies, in turn, repatriated 2,400 Communist prisoners.

Near Completion

If the Communists continue releasing prisoners at the present rate, the last man will walk through Freedom Gate next Friday. He probably will be Major Gen. William F. Dean, their highest-ranking captive.

Prisoners returning to freedom Friday reported that Dean was being held at nearby Kaesong. It was believed that Dean asked to be repatriated last in a gesture toward prisoners of lesser rank.

Master Sgt. Martin Strahan of Pontiac, Mich., climbed down from a Russian truck and told

newsmen at Freedom Gate he believed he was the first American taken prisoner by the North Koreans.

Taken July 6, 1950
Strahan said he was captured July 5, 1950 at 4:30 p.m., four days after the first ground forces landed in Korea.

He said the North Koreans took the first group of captives to Seoul and then marched them north to Pyongyang where more prisoners were picked up.

"We had G.I.'s and civilians by then," Strahan said. "There were Russian, Turkish, German and Irish civilians with us. We even had four French nuns along."

Sugar Beet Hearing Slated for Oakland

Washington —(U.P.)—The Agriculture Department has announced a public hearing for Oct. 6 in Oakland, Calif., on wage rates and prices for the 1954 sugar beet crop in California, Southwestern Arizona, Western Nevada, and Southern Oregon.

Under the federal sugar act, growers must pay "fair" wages set by the secretary of agriculture to qualify for subsidy payments. Processors, to qualify for subsidies, must pay growers "fair and reasonable" prices set by the secretary.

The 1954 rates, which will be set after official study testimony delivered at the hearing, probably will be announced before Jan. 1, a department spokesman said.

Indian Troops Move To Guard Prisoners

Panmunjom, Korea —(U.P.)—The first contingent of Indian troops moved into the Korean demilitarization zone Friday to take charge of war prisoners refusing to go home.

They were soldiers from the Indian hospital unit which has been attached to the First British Commonwealth division since the early part of the war.

Guards from India proper have not yet arrived. The Indians still guard the reluctant prisoners while interrogators on both sides attempt to persuade the captives to change their minds.

Mercy Flights Has Subscribers Due For Plan Renewals

Officers of Mercy Flights, Inc., this week end reminded pre-paid subscribers to the firm's subscription plan that nearly 900 subscriptions expire this week.

The plan, originated some two years ago, enables residents of southern Oregon to insure free air ambulance service in a medical emergency, the same service at greatly reduced rates in non-emergency cases. Some 4,000 county residents are subscribers.

The subscription costs \$2 per year for a family. Those whose subscriptions expire August 31 have already received their renewal notices in the mail, and all they need to do to continue their subscription is to mail \$2 to Mercy Flights, Inc., PO Box 522, Medford.

The mechanical and ground equipment of the non-profit corporation is in the best condition it has ever been, according to a report given to the board of directors at a meeting last week. The hangar, built for the firm by Contractor Bill Brooks and volunteer workmen, has been in service for several months. The twin-engine Cessna ambulance plane recently underwent an overhaul, and is in excellent condition, and the single-engine Stinson Reliant recently was completely rebuilt, recovered and overhauled, and is in top condition.

Volunteer pilots have flown nearly 200 patients since the non-profit service was put in operation more than 3½ years ago. Many have been polio patients, while others have been accident victims, or patients suffering other illnesses. Planes are completely fumigated after each flight where a communicable disease patient is carried.

The 4,000-year-old palace of King Minos at Knossos, Crete, was as large as London's Buckingham Palace.

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