

U. S. Considers Army as Strip Mine Operators

Repercussion Fears Slow Decision

By PAUL R. LEACH

Times Special Writer
WASHINGTON, Dec. 6.—Government heads are considering having the army operate strip coal mines, but only as an absolute last resort.

Army engineers could keep the strip mines going, as do the present owners, by using larger power scoops and beam breakers. Strip mines are those in which coal is close to the surface. Shafts, tunnels, deep mining experience, are not essential.

The big question back of any such employment of government operation is whether it would provoke a sympathetic transportation strike, if not a general walkout of organized labor.

Combined with coal from strip mines that are not struck, it is estimated that with army strip mining help, 550,000 tons a day, much of it low grade, could be produced.

The pre-strike average of soft coal production was about two million tons daily.

Hair Turns Grey

This emergency coal would, with the help of oil and gas, give the coal-using parts of the country minimum relief from freezing, but there would be little left for industry.

There is where the government hair begins to turn grey. The problems are physical as well as political.

Some of the strip-mined coal could be hauled by army trucks. But the army lacks sufficient drivers and maintenance mechanics for any long range or sustained hauling.

Would union truck drivers haul the army-mined coal, or walk off their jobs?

Rumors of Help

A. F. Whitney, president of the brotherhood of railway trainmen, is a sworn enemy of the Truman administration.

It is doubtful Mr. Whitney would permit his railroaders to haul army-mined coal.

There have rumors here that Philip Murray's C. I. O. unions might try to clear up the coal strike, thereby aiding the government. In the recent C. I. O. convention, Mr. Murray's people joined the A. F. of L. and the mine workers in condemning court injunctions.

The C. I. O. also is seeking to join in Mr. Lewis' appeal against the injunction, but that is as far as the C. I. O. has gone in backing up the strike.

Workers Laid Off

Meanwhile, during the 14-day coal strike, C. I. O. workers in big and little industries have been laid off in increasingly large numbers. They are being hurt individually, because steel and automobiles cannot be made without coal. Their unions are losing dues and revenue.

But would the C. I. O. unions support the government if it sought to break the U. M. W. by using the army?

Another angle of worry for the government, in considering army mining, is the possibility of sympathetic strikes by oil field and refinery workers.

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Minnesota Double Slaying Bared

NEW ULM, Minn., Dec. 6 (U. P.)—Watoway County Sheriff I. M. Berg has returned to St. James, Minn., with Edgerton Johnson, 38, who, police said, admitted the shotgun slayings of his brother and 75-year-old aunt.

The bodies of Mrs. Mary Uhlhorn and John Johnson, 37, were found earlier today on the Uhlhorn farm, after Keith Thompson, a neighbor, investigated the lack of activity around the place.

Mr. Thompson found the body of John in a milkhouse, and called Constable William Juhnke of Darfur to investigate with him. They entered the farmhouse and found the body of Mrs. Uhlhorn.

Both had been shot with a shotgun.

U. S.-Australia Flights Planned

SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 6 (U. P.)—Pan-American World Airways announced today it is drawing up tentative schedules, fares and flight frequencies for direct, one-carrier service between the United States and Australia.

The new service will operate between San Francisco and Sydney via Honolulu.

1948 ORDERS CANCELLED

CINCINNATI, O., Dec. 6 (U. P.)—Charles E. Wilson, president of General Motors, said today he was "fed up with Reuther-Lewis Christmases" and announced cancellation of G. M. orders for dies for 1948 Chevrolets, Oldsmobiles and Pontiac models.

WISCONSIN BANK ROBBED

WITCHEE, Wis., Dec. 6 (U. P.)—A gunman with his face swathed in bandages held up the state bank of Witchee during the lunch hour yesterday, and bank officials said he escaped with at least \$3000 in cash.

Griffith Urges U. S. 'Realism'

National Commander Paul Griffith of the American Legion said today that America must permanently rid itself of its "traditional innocence in international affairs."

In a statement issued from American Legion national headquarters as the fifth anniversary of Pearl Harbor neared, Mr. Griffith attacked what he called America's strength.

"Innocent belief that goodness begets goodness."

"From now on we must be grimly realistic," the Legion commander said. "We must never again be naive enough not to be prepared for the worst. Just because we never plot to attack other nations is no guarantee that others are filled with this same spirit of good neighborliness."

Mr. Griffith said young American men must be trained for defense in advance and that the nation must hold on to strategic defense bases.

"Until a world security organization has proved itself effective in preventing major wars, we must

place our dependence in our own

clean laundry. When the boy's body

was recovered three weeks later she

told reporters it proved she "wasn't a liar."

Justice Samuel Hayden dismissed the charges after hearing a witness testify that strong currents would have prevented Katherine from leading the boy into the river and getting out safely herself, as she related. Other witnesses told of being with Katherine, far from the river, at the time the boy disappeared.

"I feel like I inherited five million dollars," she said after hearing the judge's decision. She had pleaded innocent. She said she might enroll in a school and continue her education which was interrupted

Girl, 17, Freed In Boy's Death

KANSAS CITY, Mo., Dec. 6 (U. P.)—Katherine Wanstreet, 17, considered re-enrolling in school today after being freed of murder charges in connection with the drowning of an 8-year-old crippled boy.

The girl originally told police that she pulled Ross Key Jr., a neighbor, into the Blue River Nov. 4 and drowned him after he had thrown rocks into her basket of clean laundry. When the boy's body

was recovered three weeks later she

after the seventh grade.

Vincennes Teachers Promised \$50 Bonus Friends Respond In Fire Tragedy

VINCENNES, Ind., Dec. 6 (U. P.)—School teachers in Vincennes public schools will receive a \$50 bonus in lieu of immediate salary increases.

The teachers petitioned the city school board to put salary boosts which are scheduled to go into effect next year into their checks Jan. 1, 1947.

Supt. Ralph Banks said it was impossible to make sudden pay increases. He said the \$50 bonus at the end of the school year would be given each teacher instead.

levelled the tar-paper shack in which they lived.

Only the selection of a site and materials holds up the building program. Everett McClain, chairman of the arrangements committee, said yesterday.

More than \$800 in cash has been donated for the Abney's use, plus numerous gifts of furniture and clothing. The Kokomo Building Trades Council and the Fraternal Order of Police have volunteered their services for the construction work.

Mr. Abney, a foundry worker, and his wife now are living with his two children, Sandra Lee, 2, and Paul Jr., one month, in a fire Tuesday which

destroyed their four-room bungalow.

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