

Dunbar - Feb. 15, 1951

President Truman got riled up about the strike that had tied up the country's railroads, and when Mr. Truman gets riled up, he can do some pretty straight talking. He can act tough, too. As you know, the railroads are now being operated, technically speaking, by the United States Army, having been seized by the government last fall to put an end to a strike that then tied up our rail ~~trans~~^{roads.} ~~portation system.~~ *The Army, then, is in effect the employer or boss of the railroads.* So President Truman told the Army to tell the striking trainmen to return to work by four o'clock last Saturday or they would be fired and thereby lose all of their seniority rights and other benefits. Whether this order broke the strike, I do not know, because a great many of the men were already returning to their jobs and many railroads had resumed normal service before the order came out. In any event, the men returned to their jobs in ~~even greater numbers~~ after this order was issued. *Some said they were returning in spite of rather than because of the order.* According to ~~Members~~^{a member of} of Congress who have talked to Mr. Truman about the railroad strike, the President has his neck bowed, ~~on the matter~~, and when this Missouri gentleman gets his neck bowed, he can be as stubborn as the proverbial Missouri Mule. It is understood here that he intends to see to it that strict legal action be pressed against the Union, itself. It may be, however, that this intention will be mitigated by the fact that the men have now returned to work and normal operations ^{are} restored.

You will recall that this is not the first time that President Truman has become riled at a rail strike crisis and resorted to drastic action. In the spring of 1946, the President went on the radio and denounced ~~the~~ strike leaders and went so far as to ask Congress to draft the strikers. In fact, this bill passed the House of Representatives but ~~did not pass~~ ^{got stalled in} the Senate.

In all events, it is a good thing for the country that the strike has ^{now} ended. It had already thrown many thousands of people out of jobs and was beginning to do considerable harm to the national defense production program. Now that it's over, this railway strike should serve to give the government two serious notices; (1) that unless a real check is placed on the disastrous rise in the cost of living, ^{dis}content ^{must} will spread among other worker groups to such an extent that many of them ^{also} may be driven to drastic and irrational action, perhaps beyond the control of ~~the~~ ^{their} leaders; (2) the railroad workers have legitimate grievances and a just claim for higher wages. Many other groups, notably the United Mine Workers and, I believe, the Automobile Workers, have received large pay increases since the rail workers have had a material increase. Meanwhile, ^{their} ~~the~~ cost of living, like yours and mine, has been going up and up. Government machinery and conciliation and adjustment for the differences between the ^{workers} ~~government~~ and the railroads should get busy. In the meantime, the workers should realize that they cannot afford to strike against the government, which, as I said, is now the operator of the railroads. ^{The r.r. were} ~~The railroads were~~

seized ^{for the reason that} ~~because~~ this nation cannot afford to permit its rail transportation system to be paralyzed in this hour of emergency.

These fundamental facts, ~~must be borne in mind~~ as well as some tolerance and understanding of the human needs and passions involved, must be borne in mind by all parties to the controversy.

Last Wednesday, the House of Representatives dealt a stinging blow to the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Program. This program, as you know, was thought out, worked out, and wrought out by that imminent statesman, Cordell Hull. It has proved imminently successful, standing the test of time. The opponents of the program, however, seemed immune from these facts. Perhaps you will recall that when the Republicans took control of the 80th Congress, they proceeded to hamstring this program. President Truman accepted the challenge and made that an issue in the campaign of 1948. ^{and won.} The 81st Congress ~~proceeded to~~ remove the restrictions which the 80th Congress had placed upon it. Now, the 82nd House of Representatives has again hamstrung the program. I do not know what the Senate will do, but I surely hope it will correct the mistake that the House has made.

The Democratic Floor Leader, John McCormick of Massachusetts, spoke eloquently of the Hon. Cordell Hull - affectionately called Judge Hull by many Tennesseans. Here are some of the things that Mr. McCormick said:

Senator Robert A. Taft, often called Mr. Republican, made another Foreign Policy speech during the week. In this speech, he seemed to attack the statement of General Eisenhower as vigorously as President Truman's position. Even so, Senator Taft ~~was~~ again modified some of his earlier statements on foreign policy, as, indeed, did former President Hoover in his most recent speech.

Meanwhile, Democratic leaders of the United States Senate have decided to have a showdown on the question of sending additional troops to Europe. At first, Mr. Hoover and other Administration critics opposed sending any additional ~~man~~ or dollars or materials to Western Europe until Western Europe was able to defend herself without our aid. *which*

Now, however, this extreme opposition has been so modified during the so-called Great Debate that has raged, not only in Congress, but all over America, that the controversy has boiled down to how many ^{*not whether*} troops will

be sent to Europe, ~~rather than whether we will send~~. I think the debate has been a wonderful thing for America. I believe the people

have already rendered their own verdict; indeed, the fact that Senators are now ^{*contending*} ~~quarreling~~ about the exact number and ~~the~~ ratio of contribution

~~of various countries other~~ ^{*to the*} unified North Atlantic Pact Military forces

indicates that, ~~and~~ ^{*too,*} in the Congress, the fundamental issue of actual

American participation in defense of Western Europe has already been

decided, ~~to~~