

Showdown Near On Passage Of 'Big Truck' Bill

Report Expected Monday; Leaders Aver 'No Change'; Gas, Oil Shortage Stressed

By STEPHEN C. MERGLER

The 1943 legislature's "big truck" bill, HB220, appeared headed for an early and violent showdown in the house Friday night following a joint house-senate hearing at which army, navy and interstate commerce commission representatives urged removal by statute of normal length and weight restrictions in Oregon.

It is not satisfactory that these restrictions remain lifted only by the present temporary order which was put into effect last year after the governor had conferred with army and navy officials as to their requirements, F. E. Landsburg, principal spokesman at the hearing, declared.

Under the existing condition, with only a temporary relaxation of length-weight limitations in effect, Oregon operators decline to make the expenditure required to increase to maximum the capacity of their trucks and trailers, Landsburg asserted. They would convert their equipment to greater carrying capacity if expanded weight-length regulations were made "permanent" by adoption of HB220, he said.

Declaring they were not interested in the political side of the state's perennial argument between the truckers and the railroads, the army and navy spokesmen urged that by one means or another the way be cleared for lengthening of trucks in Oregon to help eliminate increasingly difficult tieups in transportation.

Probability of an acute shortage of gasoline, fuel oil and other petroleum products in the Pacific northwest due to switching of railroad tank cars to the Atlantic seaboard and the likelihood that Pacific coast ocean tanker service may be sharply curtailed was emphasized.

Speaker William M. McAllister said the disputed bill probably would be reported out of committee a second time today in the house and put up for final consideration Monday.

While the hearing was closed to all but members of the legislature and of the press, few of the witnesses' remarks were requested to be withheld from publication and these dealt with military information.

Obvious opponents of the truck bill and other questioners directed most of their attention at Landsburg, who, it was brought out, formerly was an NRA truck inspector in the state of Washington and prior to that service was at various times employed by truck agencies and motor car companies.

"If I had it in my power, I'd change things over immediately," Landsburg said in answer to one question, and, to another, he denied that any bottlenecks in shipping were being created by federal regulations.

The ICC officer, who is also district allocation officer for the office of defense transportation, said Oregon truck line operators would order and could obtain 30 oil trucks and 35 trailers under a special war production authorization just made, if the legislature passed the truck bill. Otherwise, he said, the allocation would go elsewhere. No new trucks that meet Oregon's peacetime regulations are available, he added.

The state's present emergency order allows truck and trailer combinations up to 60 feet long and 17,000 pounds gross weight, approximately the specifications that would be authorized by the bill in dispute. The present statutory limits are 50 feet and 54,000 pounds.

Leaders in both houses expressed the opinion after the hearing that "no votes have been changed." Speaker William M. McAllister mustered a bare majority last Tuesday when he asked that the bill be referred back to committee for Friday night's hearing. He said at that time that he had just received a telephone call from the Los Angeles office of the petroleum administration for war saying that that agency and others wished to be heard.

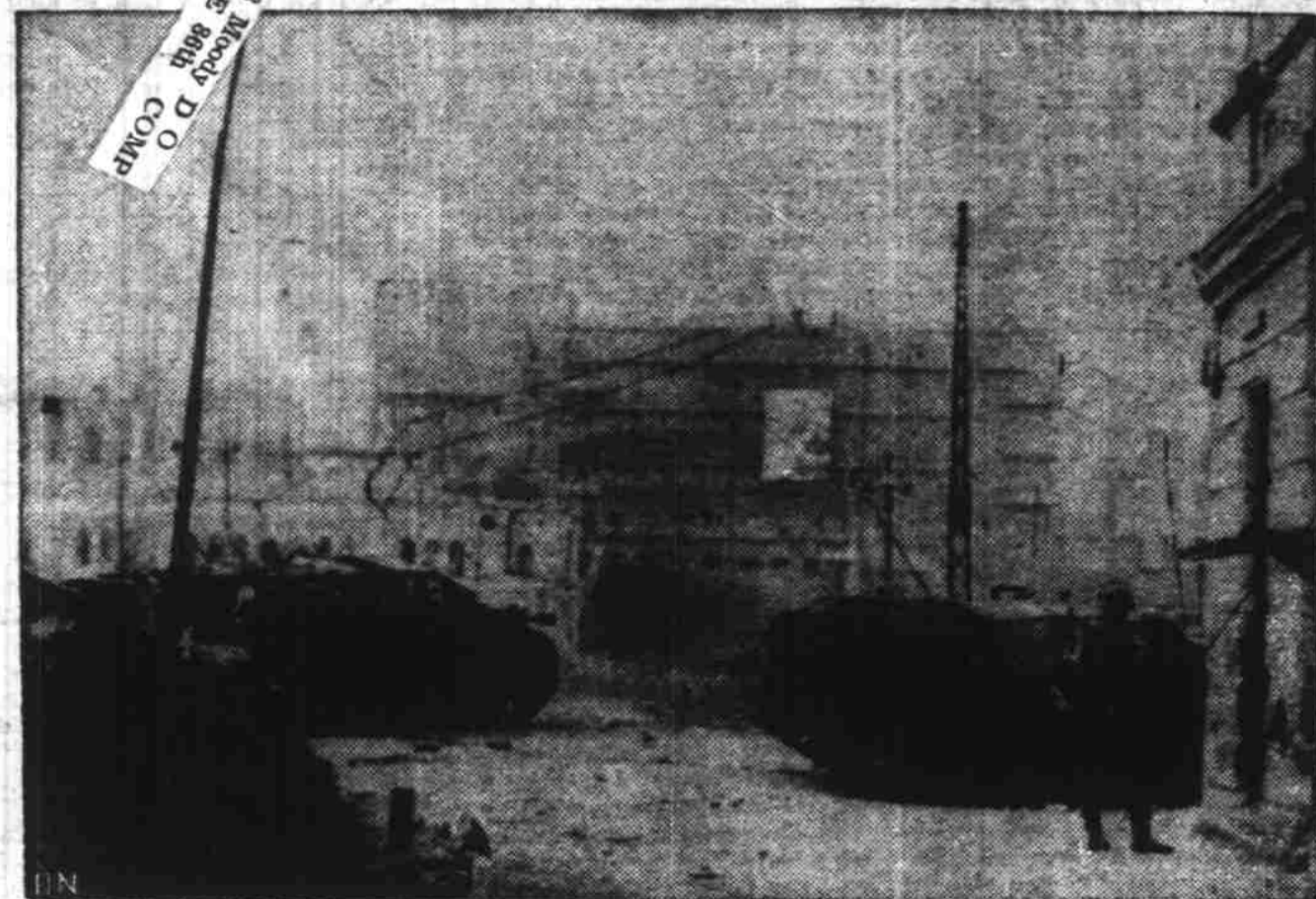
The army plea Friday night was keynoted by Col. Clarence E. Talbot, assistant chief of staff, Fourth air force, San Francisco, who said all the army asked was that the legislature guarantee "to make necessary transportation available."

"If you will assure us of the gas we need some other way, I'll be satisfied," the colonel added.

Warning that coastwise tanker (Turn to Page 2—Story C)

Yanks Halt Rommel, Form Line

Scene Erased From Kharkov



Canned Goods off Shelf Tonight; Florida Freeze Hits Fresh Food Supply

WASHINGTON, Feb. 19.—(AP)—Housewives, confronted by a twin freeze, have their last chance Saturday to stock up on canned fruits and vegetables in advance of rationing. Officials said Friday that stocking up is approved so long as it stays within reasonable family needs.

A government "freeze" will take these canned goods off the grocery shelves for one week after Saturday midnight in preparation for the start of point rationing March 1.

At the same time a freeze of nature was reported by the agriculture department Friday to have damaged severely the Florida winter crops of fresh vegetables counted upon heavily to supplement the rationed canned supplies.

Officials said the situation was not serious enough, however, to interfere with the canned goods rationing, and they proceeded with the program. The point values of the rationed articles will be announced Sunday and published in the Monday morning newspapers. The public will register for the new ration books starting Monday.

The Saturday midnight sales suspension will affect all canned and frozen fruits and vegetables, dried fruits, canned baby foods and canned soups.

In the following eight days, people are expected to live on their accumulated stocks of these foods plus the unrationed foods which will remain on sale, including fresh fruits and vegetables, cereals, bread, milk and meat. Meat is to be rationed later but for the present may be sold without restriction.

The cold spell in Florida was reported to have virtually wiped out the crop of snap beans and to have caused varying degrees of damage to celery, cabbage, lettuce, lima beans, peas, tomatoes, eggplant, early potatoes, berries and citrus fruits except grapefruit.

Coupled with the fact that rationing of canned goods is expected to shift considerable consumer (Turn to Page 2—Story A)

Food production was understood to have figured in a conference which the chief executive's top economic advisers held during the day, but if any decisions were reached they were not disclosed.

Some members of this group, the economic stabilization board headed by James F. Byrnes, hinted that protracted discussion of the 48-hour week had prevented them from going deeply into the farm problem.

The house defeated by a tie vote, 109 to 109, a motion by Rep. Dirksen (R-Ill) to instruct the agriculture committee to draft a measure scrapping the administration's entire farm program and substituting a new one.

Lone Enemy Over Sydney

SYDNEY, Australia, Saturday, Feb. 20.—(AP)—An enemy plane which, the government said, apparently came from a submarine was fired on Friday night by anti-aircraft batteries and chased out to sea.

A blackout was ordered in Sydney. The plane first flew over the Kembla area.

"As planes from submarines can carry bombs, it was decided not to lift the blackout until a later hour," said Maj. Gen. A. C. Fretwell, commander of the New South Wales lines of communication area.

The alert Thursday night was the first in Sydney since last June when an enemy submarine shelled the city.

RAF slashes Coast, Ships

LONDON, Feb. 19.—(AP)—The RAF delivered a heavy cargo of blockbusters on the Wilhelmshaven U-boat base and shipyards Thursday night while other British squadrons shot up shipping along the Dutch and French coasts and inland communications across France and Belgium.

The Wilhelmshaven raid was a repeat performance of the heavy assault a week earlier and the 72nd attack of the war on the sprawling port which has produced a great number of Atlantic raiders.

Good weather favored the attack, officially designated as heavy one in which four bombers were lost. The Germans conceded casualties were suffered "particularly in the surrounding localities" and claimed nine planes were downed.

Strong intruder squadrons bombed railways and shipping in the Dunkerque area and hit a convoy between Calais and Cap Gris Nez, where results were difficult to observe. Two fighters and a coastal command plane failed to return.

When Russian troops swarmed into the Ukraine steel center of Kharkov last Tuesday, they ended the Nazi hold that had lasted since the fall of 1941. This photo shows German tanks entering Kharkov in 1941.—IN Photo.

Bombers Smash Ships

Four Ships Struck; Two Left Blazing; Airdrome Raided

By MURLIN SPENCER

ALLIED HEADQUARTERS IN AUSTRALIA, Saturday, Feb. 20.—(AP)—Striking at Japan's vital merchant marine off Buin in the Solomon islands, Gen. Douglas MacArthur's heavy bombers Friday damaged four cargo ships aggregating 27,000 tons.

Two of the vessels, one of 9000 tons and the other of 7000 tons, were left blazing from the shattering force of 500-pound bombs.

Two other Japanese ships, a 3000-ton merchantman and a small troop transport, were attacked off Gasmata and Cape Gloucester, New Britain, in the face of a Japanese fighter escort and the results of the attack were not observed.

The Fortresses dropped down to a low altitude despite heavy fire to carry through their daring attack on the ships.

A Consolidated B-25 heavy bomber stirred up a hornet's nest in the attack on Gasmata, but returned without getting stung. It found a 5000-ton merchantman in the harbor and attacked in the face of heavy ack-ack fire from the ship. Then 12 Zeros suddenly jumped on it and a vicious fight ensued.

With the result that two Zeros were seen falling in flames into the sea and a third was claimed downed. The bomber returned safely.

"Our heavy and medium bombers struck in a coordinated night attack on enemy shipping and airdromes," said the MacArthur's headquarters.

"Attacking from extremely low altitudes in the face of strong anti-aircraft fire, our heavy units scored direct hits with 500-pound bombs on four enemy cargo ships aggregating 27,000 tons. One vessel of 9000 tons received two direct hits and was left burning from bow to stern; another of 7000 tons was struck twice, resulting in fire and heavy smoke pouring from the side; a third of 8000 tons was attacked twice, a bomb entering the side and another exploding 10 feet away; a fourth of 3000 tons had a direct hit and was damaged by other bomb explosions within ten feet of the hull."

In addition, ships and searchlight positions were heavily strafed. Our medium units bombed the airdrome supply dumps and dispersal bays at Kahili and the balance of the island and the sea-plane base, causing heavy explosions and fires visible for 30 miles. There was no attempt at interception. All our planes returned.

Lack of aerial opposition possibly could be explained by the fact that prior to Friday night's raid, Catalina bombers were over the Kahili airdrome on Thursday for more than two hours in a heavy raid which started fires that leaped 500 feet high and could be seen from 50 miles away.

The Berlin radio in a broadcast recorded by the Associated Press said that reports of clashes in Toulon where the French navy scuttled its ships last November were "devoid of any foundation."

The Germans presumably were taking measures at Toulon similar to those taken at Marseille recently.

Amos, Andy Leave Air

HOLLYWOOD, Feb. 19.—(AP)—Amos and Andy quit the air Friday night after 16 years of continuous broadcasting with the promise to their listeners that they will be back again later this year in the same characters.

Since March, 1928, when they broadcast their first program as Sam and Henry from Chicago, Freeman F. Gosden, 43, and Charles J. Correll, 52, had appeared in some 4000 programs, five nights a week.

Correll, a one-time bricklayer, wrote all their sketches on his typewriter. Gosden formerly was a tobacco and later an automobile salesman. Their radio audiences were estimated at high as 40,000,000 persons weekly.

Camelback Ration To Close Today

CLEVELAND, Feb. 19.—(AP)—Rationing of grade E camelback for recapping passenger car and light truck tires will be discontinued Saturday, the regional office of price administration announced Friday night.

Clifford J. Houser, regional OPA executive, said elimination of rationing, originally scheduled for March, would not permit motorists to exchange a recappable tire for one already recapped, except on a certificate issued by a national board.

Eclipse of Moon Slated—Well?

SEATTLE, Feb. 19.—(AP)—Astronomers said an eclipse of the moon over the Pacific Northwest Friday night was to blot out 77 per cent of its face, but whether or not it was visible is something you will have to ask your neighbor, in case you didn't take a look yourself.

Any report of whether or not the moon was visible would involve military information about atmospheric conditions.

Ship Survivors Drift 81 Days

RECIFE, Brazil, Feb. 19.—(AP)—One American and two Dutch survivors of an allied ship were reached here, weak and thin, after 81 days in a lifeboat from which two of their shipmates were washed to their deaths by waves.

The boat contained a few rusted fish-hooks they had used with strips of their clothing as lines to catch enough fish to prevent starvation.

When rescued by a warship they had gone five days without water. One of the Dutchmen had lost 70 pounds in weight.

The amazing story of the survival of this trio for 81 days in an open lifeboat surpasses that of two British seamen who were rescued in the Bahamas in November, 1940, after being adrift for 70 days.

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Death Toll 29 In Bomber's Crash, Fire

SEATTLE, Feb. 19.—(AP)—As the probable death toll in the Pacific northwest's worst aerial disaster rose Friday to 29—possibly 30—Boeing field officials told of the tragic suspense that gripped the tower control room Thursday as a burning Boeing four-motored bomber tried desperately to reach the field for an emergency landing.

There were a tense 10 minutes after the bomber radio operator first coolly reported trouble with fire in one motor.

Then came a final, cryptic warning of impending disaster: "We're coming in with a wing on fire!"

As that last sentence of doom went through the air, the faltering aerial giant was dropping toward house-top level over Seattle's south end.

Suddenly the tower's radio went dead in a mute warning that the worst had happened. The big ship had sheared through two high tension wires.

A moment later the tensely-awaiting field attendants heard the distant explosion as the bomber crashed into the five-story Frye & company packing house to shower flaming death and destruction.

Twenty six bodies have been recovered at the scene late Friday, most of them burned beyond recognition in the holocaust that followed the crash. Eleven of the bodies were those of the ship's crew members on the test flight. Twenty three of them had been identified.

An army air force board of inquiry opened an inquiry into the disaster Friday at the scene.

Another casualty was added when a fireman was asphyxiated while fighting a fresh outbreak of the fire during the night.

A spur railroad southwest of Oboyan, a spur rail-

8th Army Advances In South

60-Mile Loss Ends In Light Skirmish; Losses Diminished

By DANIEL DE LUCE

ALLIED HEADQUARTERS IN NORTH AFRICA, Feb. 19.—(AP)—American armored forces stabilized their new line on the Tunisian mountains near the Algerian frontier Friday while the violent drive by Marshal Erwin Rommel that had carried him more than 60 miles slacked off to mere skirmishing.

The announced withdrawal of French troops from Pichon, about 40 miles north of the Faid pass area where Rommel began his thrust on Sunday, indicated that the central section of the allied front was being moved back to stronger defensive positions on the west side of the Ouesseltia valley. This would deprive Rommel of opportunity for a quick thrust northwest behind the allied forward units.

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