

IT SEEMS TO ME

By Charles A. Sprague

Because there was such a swarm of persons who wanted to get in to witness the execution of Robert E. Lee Folkes, negro murderer, there has been some agitation for legislation to limit the admissions to the scene of executions. Reference to the present law shows that the restrictions are narrow. Sec. 26-1249, OCLA, requires that executions take place within the enclosure of the penitentiary.

The prison superintendent must be there; and he is required to invite one or more physicians, the attorney general, the sheriff in the county in which judgment was rendered. He may permit not to exceed two ministers of the gospel to attend, and not to exceed five "relatives and friends" of the condemned person, "together with such peace officers as such superintendent may think expedient."

Then come the restricting words: "but no other persons than those mentioned in this section can be present at the execution, nor can any person under the age of 21 years be allowed to witness the same."

It is hard to see how this law can be improved upon. Certainly it is necessary to have witnesses who can certify that the execution was duly performed.

Executions are gruesome business, and there still are many folk with morbid curiosity who like to see a criminal expire. But public taste has shown improvement, and executions are no longer

(Continued on editorial page)

Peter Agrees To Transfer Ruling Power

LONDON, Jan. 29. (AP)—King Peter of Yugoslavia agreed tonight to transfer his powers to a regency council to be chosen by himself and appointed Premier Ivan Subasic to put into effect an agreement with Marshal Tito for a coalition government.

In this maneuver the king sought to straighten out the tangled Yugoslav situation by accepting the resignations of Subasic and his entire cabinet which he had demanded January 22 and then reappointing the premier and five of the six members of the former cabinet.

The announcement by the information department of the Yugoslav government said the king's instructions ordered the new government to observe the reservations made in his communique of January 11, at which time Peter objected to the form of the proposed regency and to what he called its unrestricted legislative powers.

Blast Injures 15 Persons

HAMMOND, Ind., Jan. 29. (AP)—At least 15 persons were injured tonight by an explosion followed by fire which swept the Phil Smidt and son restaurant at 1170 Indianapolis Blvd., but police said they had no reports of any deaths.

Police said they believed the blast which occurred during the dinner hour originated in the heater part of an oil tank. The cafe, widely known for its fish and chicken dinners, was partially filled with about 100 persons at the time. Scores of diners were said to have escaped through side entrances and windows, according to Miss Cleo Myers, 27, cashier in the restaurant.

Bridges Gets Court Hearing

WASHINGTON, Jan. 29. (AP)—The supreme court today agreed to give Harry R. Bridges, West Coast CIO leader, a chance to show why he should not be shipped back to his native Australia.

The court will review a 3 to 2 decision of the ninth federal circuit court of appeals which denied the longshoremen's union executive a writ of habeas corpus.

108,691 Federal Ballots Cast by Armed Forces

WASHINGTON, Jan. 29. (AP)—War Secretary Stimson estimated today that 108,691 federal ballots were cast by service personnel overseas in the 1944 general election.

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Henry Defends Himself

Nominee Certain He Can Handle Commerce Post

NEW YORK, Jan. 29. (AP)—President Roosevelt in a message tonight said that "America, its people and its government, need Henry Wallace now, more than ever before."

"I count on his aid, his wisdom and his courage in the difficult ways to the magnificent hopes we hold for a world worthy of his faith in the people and of the struggles of free people everywhere, which have so splendidly justified that faith," the president said.

The message was read by Bruce Bliven, editor of the new Republican magazine, at a testimonial dinner in honor of the former vice president of the United States and presently nominee for secretary of commerce.

It was the president's first public announcement on the Wallace candidacy since the senate commerce committee last week rejected his nomination by a 14-5 vote.

The former vice president in his prepared address tonight said he would prefer not to be secretary of commerce "if there were serious danger of a 'too little' and 'too late' man being appointed" to head the lending agency.

"I feel that from the standpoint of 60,000,000 workers, the profits of business, the income of farmers, the welfare of the country as a whole, and the protection of the United States treasury, I could do a better job if the two were combined than if they were separated," he said.

"The people who are fighting against me know that they are not fighting a starry-eyed liberal or mystic. If they really thought that, they wouldn't be worried," he continued.

Draft Board Calls Sinatra

JERSEY CITY, N.J., Jan. 29. (AP)—Four-F Frank Sinatra has been ordered by his local draft board to report for re-examination and possible induction into the US armed forces.

Ira W. Caldwell, chairman of draft board 19, 26 Journal square, said tonight an order directing the swoon-crooner to report for a physical examination was mailed to Sinatra's Hasbrouck Heights address on January 18.

Sinatra is now in Hollywood. Caldwell did not say whether the singer would have to return to Jersey City for the examination.

Italian Aviators Fly For Japanese Airforce

CHUNGKING, Jan. 29. (AP)—A Chinese central news dispatch published here today charged that some Italian aviators are flying for the Japanese airforce.

Labor Union Officials Reject Compromise on 'Closed Shop'

WASHINGTON, Jan. 29. (AP)—A proposed compromise of the controversial "closed shop" question was rejected by labor union spokesmen today as the house began debate on limited national service legislation.

The fate of the bill, which empowers draft boards to assign men 18 through 45 to war production jobs, is considered highly uncertain. The house is expected to vote on it Thursday or Friday.

Berlin Bound



Marshal Gregory K. Zhukov (above) commands the First White Russian army which is striking beyond Poznan toward Berlin. He is a hero of fighting at Moscow and Stalingrad. (AP wirephoto)

Snell Renews Plea for Study Of State Taxes

Termining his requested tax survey the "most vital, important and far-reaching" research project which will come before this session of the legislature. Gov. Earl Snell on Monday renewed, in a letter to the senate, the plea for the study he had first voiced in his message to the joint assembly of the two houses at the opening of the session.

The governor's letter followed defeat in the senate last week of an amendment which would have authorized the hiring of national-recognized experts to survey the state's tax structure.

He had in mind "a firm such as the one which has done similar work for the states of Colorado, Montana, Washington, California, Wyoming, Illinois and several other states of the union" when he suggested in his message to the legislature that nationally-recognized experts be employed, his letter declares.

"This particular firm also is the one which conducted the very fine survey for the Portland school board," it continues, pointing out that the firm is a western organization, and adding that "the main objective is to get the job done."

One of the principal questions which has arisen in Oregon's tax program is dividing the fields of taxation among the state and its political subdivisions, the counties, cities, school districts and other taxing units, the governor's letter maintains.

Nationally-recognized experts would provide a report which "should be recognized and accepted nationally" and would be effective in attracting industrial development, it declares.

March of Dimes Drive Extended Until Feb. 15

NEW YORK, Jan. 29. (AP)—Basil O'Connor president of the national foundation for infantile paralysis, announced today the March of Dimes would be extended until February 15 because of "abnormal weather of the last two weeks caused postponement of March of Dimes events in many parts of the country."

March of Dimes was to have ended Wednesday.

Firemen Pension Sought

House Approves Contested Bill on Party Vacancies

A proposal for a firemen's compensation and retirement program was before the 43rd legislature today as the senate and house neared the half-way mark of the scheduled 50-day meeting.

The bill, (HB 207) making provisions for both volunteer and paid firemen throughout the state, is similar to measures which failed of passage in previous session but proponents have said it eliminates some of the objections of its forerunners. It was introduced in the house by Rep. Earl H. Hill. Would Limit Salaries

Other new measures before the house for future action include a bill (HB 200) that would bar paying salaries to state officers higher than that of the governor (now \$7500); provide for bringing charges against parents or guardians responsible for child delinquency (HB 199); and suspend salaries and expenses of the racing commission during the federal ban on racing (HB 202).

The house bill (HB 145) which would permit county courts to fill legislative vacancies without regard to the political affiliation of the previous holder was passed 50 to 7 in comparatively short order — unlike the stormy time which greeted a proposal to vote on the measure last week.

Closer Control Sought New introductions in the senate included several liquor control bills to implement seizure of supplies in places found in violation of the code and to legalize the commission's action in limiting kinds and brands of liquor on sale. Another new bill would establish protective areas along highways, and SB 21 would regulate the city annexation of new territory (story at bottom of this page).

Committees were scheduled to be increasingly active today. Four hearings will be held, three this afternoon, on proposals to tax aviation gasoline 5 cents a gallon, to limit access to highways, and to prevent public utility districts from serving outside their own territories without the consent of the people to be served.

Hearing Tonight A hearing on the so-called "hotel" or civil rights bill will be held tonight.

The next three days are expected to see introduced by far the greater majority of bills which will hit the house this session, since Thursday is the last day on which house members may enter measures without approval of the legislature and rules committee.

RAF Hammers Berlin Again

LONDON, Tuesday, Jan. 30. (AP)—Refugee-packed Berlin was bombed again last night by the RAF after more than 2000 Allied heavy bombers, most of them from the US Eighth air force, dealt devastating blows to seven German rail centers and a tank factory during the day.

The newest bombing of Berlin presumably was carried out by the RAF's swift Mosquitoes as were raids Saturday and Sunday nights. Almost 1200 American Flying Fortresses and Liberators, escorted by 700 Mustangs and Thunderbolts, bombed two railyards at Coblenz, others at Siegen, Hamkujl-munster and Zaeljwa factory at Kassel.

Superforts Hit Iwo Jima

WASHINGTON, Jan. 29. (AP)—Superfortresses slammed Iwo Jima with "good results" today to ease the next trip to Tokyo, while headquarters boosted the bag of enemy planes in Saturday's big strike to a record 119.

The force that went to Iwo Jima, about half way between the B-29 base on Saipan and the Japanese capital, encountered only "meagre" fighter opposition and anti-aircraft fire, 20th air force headquarters reported in a communique, indicating that the heavy working-over the Japanese outpost has had in the last week has softened it considerably.

Soviets Sweep to Within 93 Miles of Berlin; U. S. Third Gains on Reich Soil

Siegfried Outposts Reached

Allied Bombers Blast Retreating German Vehicles

PARIS, Jan. 29. (AP)—The US Third army smashed into Germany at two new points today, crossing the Our river from Belgium and battering into the outposts of the Siegfried line in a storm of fire from enemy tanks and self-propelled guns.

Unable to bring up assault boats and bridging equipment over the jagged, snow-banked terrain, the doughboys waded through the icy waters four feet deep and clambered up the steep banks into the reich. Part of one German town was in American hands tonight.

The crossings were forced at Peterskirche and Oberhausen, seven and 10 miles south of St. Vith and some 13 miles southwest of Prum, the Eifel mountain road and railway center which supplies the Siegfried line.

Ahead of the charging ground forces, pouncing allied fighter bombers caught the Germans once more trying to withdraw and knocked out more than half of 2000 motor vehicles spotted on the roads.

Incomplete reports said pilots claimed destruction of 690 vehicles, damaging of 571, destruction of 18 tanks and armored vehicles and damaging of two more. The convoy was caught 10 miles southeast of St. Vith.

John J. Mahula Dies in Action On War Front

First Lt. John J. Mahula, army artillery, was killed in action in Germany, January 19, his parents, Mr. and Mrs. James Mahula, 1466 North Liberty street, have been notified by the war department. He had been overseas four months, landing in England and going later to France and Belgium.

Lieutenant Mahula was born 25 years ago in Denver and had lived in Salem since he was three years old until he enlisted in the army in September 1941. He trained at Jefferson Barracks, Mo., and later Keeler field where he was graduated from aviation mechanics school. He served for a year at Morrison field, Palm Beach, Fla., and then went to officers candidate school at Ft. Sill, Okla. He was commissioned second lieutenant in the artillery in November 1943.

He was one of three sons of the Salem family serving in the army. The others are M. Sgt. Martin Mahula, in the South Pacific and Sgt. Francis Mahula with the army in the European theatre.

He attended St. Vincent dePaul's parochial school, Mt. Angel preparatory and Mt. Angel college. When he enlisted he was employed by the Oregon Pulp and Paper company. The last letter which his parents received from him was dated January 3.

New Annexation Bill Entered; Salem Would Be Little Affected

A new proposal in regard to city annexations was introduced in the legislature Monday by Sen. Merle Chessman, Clatsop county republican, but only one of its provisions would affect Salem's proposed annexation ordinance even if the bill should become law before the election in April, city officials said Monday night.

That provision is to the effect that 25 per cent of the owner residents of the territory up for annexation must petition for annexation before such an election could be held.

Russian Drives Unchecked



Arrows indicate red army drives on the eastern front (heavy line). Russians were 109 miles from Berlin at Pniew, west of encircled Poznan. To the east Torun had been encircled. To the north pressure continued on East Prussia where 200,000 Germans have been reported trapped. In the south the Russians held vital industrial centers of southern Silesia. (AP wirephoto map)

Yankees on Luzon Speed Toward Calumpit Within 25 Air Miles of Manila

GENERAL MACARTHUR'S HEADQUARTERS, Luzon, Tuesday, Jan. 30. (AP)—American armored units sped toward Calumpit within 25 air miles of Manila, Sunday after Sixth army infantrymen swept unopposed into San Fernando on the heels of several hundred Japanese who fled toward historic Bataan.

The armored units shot past San Fernando, 34 miles from Manila, to enter the narrow neck of land between two swamps in a drive nearing Calumpit on the Pampanga river.

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Cloudy Today

with occasional rain showers, minimum temperature to be about 32 degrees in the mid-Willamette valley area, predicts US weather bureau at McNary field, Salem.

Capital's Danger Is Acute

Russians Invade Pomerania Area On 30-Mile Front

LONDON, Tuesday, Jan. 30. (AP)—A powerful red army invaded Pomerania in northeastern Germany for the first time yesterday on a 30-mile front, sweeping to within 93 miles of Berlin and to within 57 miles of the big Baltic port of Stettin, Premier Stalin announced last night on the eve of Adolf Hitler's 12th anniversary as chancellor.

"The fate of Berlin is in the balance," a German radio announcer declared in calling on Germans to rise and save the fatherland capital in the same manner that Russians saved Moscow from the nazis legions in December, 1941.

Marshal Gregory K. Zhukov's First White Russian army smashed 13 miles inside Germany northwest of tottering Poznan in western Poland after leaving siege units behind to reduce that island of resistance. Berlin said Russian troops had fought their way into the heart of encircled Poznan and that its fall was only a matter of hours.

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The fall of San Fernando was reported in a communique which listed Nipponese casualties on Luzon in excess of 25,000 men as against American casualties of 4254.

While the push toward Manila gained speed, other Yanks to the north, battling in tough ridge country, seized more high ground in the Rosario area within 14 miles of the summer capital of Baguio.

The Fourteenth army corps of Maj. Gen. Oscar W. Griswold seized San Fernando, capital of Pampanga province in a push nine miles below Angeles, then sent patrols far ahead where the central Luzon plain narrows between two swamps. The Yanks at San Fernando are 90 miles south of Lingayen gulf where they landed January 9.

The First corps of Maj. Gen. Innis W. Swift took ridges overlooking camp one in behind fallen Rosario and also capped a bloody fight 15 miles to the southeast at San Manuel by annihilating Japanese in hand-to-hand fighting. Around San Manuel, 49 destroyed enemy tanks and 789 Nipponese bodies have been counted.

Harry Hopkins Now in Italy

PARIS, Jan. 29. (AP)—Harry L. Hopkins, on an information mission for President Roosevelt preparatory to the Big Three conference, has gone to Rome to see Pope Pius XII following visits to London and Paris.

An American-imposed censorship had banned any mention of Hopkins' movements for "security reasons" until a Paris radio broadcast today announced his visit here.