

Car Firms to Vote On Consolidation

NEW YORK (AP)—Stockholders of Packard Motor Car Co. and the Studebaker Corp. will vote Aug. 17 on whether to combine the two pioneer auto companies.

A consolidation of the two remaining "independents" among the car makers has been approved by their directors. The plan calls for election of James J. Nance, 53-year-old president of Packard, as president and principal executive officer of the new company.

The new organization would be known as the Studebaker-Packard Corp. Technically the program proposes the purchase by Packard of Studebaker's assets.

Paul G. Hoffman, 63-year-old Studebaker board chairman, will become chairman of the new company. Harold S. Vance, 63, president of Studebaker, will head an executive operating group.

Principal headquarters of the new company will be in Detroit, home of Packard.

Ward's Wins Damage Suit

PORTLAND (AP)—Montgomery Ward & Co., which filed a \$2,900,000 damage suit 12 years ago because of a picket line, won \$153,050 verdict Monday.

Judge James Alger Fee, who heard the case in federal district court here, assessed the damages against five railroad companies, a rail terminal firm, and 28 trucking firms. All were blamed by Ward's for failure to go through an AFL Clerks and Warehousemen's picket line.

Judge Fee said the firms had an obligation to go through the line. In addition he blamed the federal postoffice for the action that led finally to the mail order store's closure, four months after the strike began.

CLOSED 11 WEEKS

The strike began in December, 1940. The store closed on May 3, 1941, and did not re-open until July 26 that year with settlement of the strike.

"The closure was the result of arbitrary and unwarranted interference of the government in private affairs," the judge said in his written opinion. "The post-office on April 26, 1941, had placed a limit on the amount of parcel post which would be handled in the Ward plant."

"No words can express the disapproval of the court with regard to this action. Under a representative government it was unforgivable. However the court cannot assess damages against private parties for the consequences of the act of the government then in power," the judge said.

FEARED VIOLENCE

The railroads and trucking firms had contended they could not order employees through the picket line because of the danger of violence.

Judge Fee did not agree with this argument. He said they did not prove an assertion that there had been a failure of police protection.

The highest damages were against the railroad companies, the largest one of these being \$6,500 general and \$1,500 punitive damages against the Union Pacific railroad.

Judge Fee mailed the verdict from San Francisco, where he since has been elevated to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Divers Find Carrier

SYDNEY, Australia (AP)—An Australian syndicate began salvage operations on the bottom of Rabaul Harbor last week and reported a big prize at the very outset—a Japanese aircraft carrier with 20 planes intact on its flight deck. The salvagers said it would be worth around \$175,000.

STOCK RECLASSIFIED

Submitted to stockholders will be a proposal for reclassification of Packard stock on the bases of one share for each five presently held. Then Studebaker stockholders, if they approve the proposal, would get 1 1/2 shares of the new company stock for each share of Studebaker common they now have.

The net result of the stock transaction will be that the new Studebaker-Packard organization will have about 6 1/2 million shares of stock outstanding.

Two distinct and separate sales organizations will be maintained to handle Packard's medium and high-priced lines and Studebaker's low and low-medium priced cars and over-all truck line.

EARLIER MERGERS

The projected Studebaker-Packard combination is the latest move among the smaller concerns in their fight against the almost overwhelming competition of the industry's larger concerns. Last year Kaiser-Frazer and Willys-Overland joined forces. A few weeks ago Nash-Kelvinator and Hudson combined to become American Motors Corp.

All six of the small car companies together have been able to garner less than five per cent of the auto market so far this year. General Motors, Ford and Chrysler have accounted for more than 95 per cent.

AFL Delegates Support Strike

ASTORIA (AP)—The AFL State Federation of Labor opened its annual convention Monday, and at once pledged support to lumber workers who have gone on strike.

Delegates quickly passed a resolution of support, and said that the lumber workers were entitled to the 12 1/2-cent raise they ask.

President J. D. McDonald urged labor to get behind candidates friendly to labor in the coming election. He predicted forces unfriendly to labor would try in the next Legislature to settle both the Oregon industrial accident act and the unemployment compensation law.

Tiny Baby Dies

LONGVIEW (AP)—Tiny Joanne Treenna Ross, who weighed only 1 pound 13 ounces at birth, died at a hospital here Monday at the age of 12 days. She was the smallest child ever to survive premature birth at the hospital here. Her parents were Mr. and Mrs. Rexford Ross of Rose Valley.



THEY'RE TOPS — Miss California, center, Lee Ann Meriweather, 19, of San Francisco, stands with runners-up at Santa Cruz, Calif. Left is Miss San Diego, Jeanette Golus, 19, who finished third, and at right, Miss San Jose, Jill Glon, 18, who placed second. They were chosen from 22 contestants before a throng estimated at 30,000.

Union, Big Steel Hit Snag In '54 Contract Negotiations

PITTSBURGH (AP)—U. S. Steel Corp. and the CIO United Steelworkers of America have hit a snag in 1954 contract talks, a source close to the negotiations said Tuesday.

The source who declined to be quoted by name said the trouble could be considered serious. No indication was given as to what issue was involved.

PREPARE FOR STRIKE

Officials of union locals across the country, the source said, have received unofficial word to lay preliminary arrangement for a strike.

The union's contract expires June 30. The union could call a strike anytime after that. The source said, however, there is great confidence on both sides that a strike will be averted.

David J. McDonald, president of the CIO United Steelworkers, prepared to report to his Executive Board and the union's powerful 170-man Wage Policy Committee on contract talks with U. S. Steel Corp.

The union, which received an 8 1/2 cent hourly raise last year, asked for an unspecified wage hike.

McDonald also urged liberalized hospitalization and pension programs, as well as other contract changes.

BIG STEEL MUM

Big steel kept mum on what it would offer, if anything. And union leaders didn't comment on what progress, if any, they made in the bargaining talks which recessed last Friday subject to recall at any time.

There has been considerable speculation that big steel would not agree to a wage hike—at least not a large one—but would go along with better pensions and liberalized hospitalization programs.

The union also demanded a guaranteed annual wage. It was thought big steel might agree to study the proposal.

Cost of Living Shows Gain

Index Reverses 3-Month Decline

WASHINGTON (AP)—The cost of living rose three-tenths of one per cent last month, reversing a three-month decline, the government reported Tuesday.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics announcement was underscored by a report from New York that the purchasing value of the dollar fell to the lowest point in its 169-year history in May.

The National Industrial Conference Board report said the value of \$1 dipped to 54.1 cents based on the January, 1939, dollar equaling 100 cents. The dollar declined 3.6 per cent in purchasing power in the past year, the report said.

Rises in food prices were mainly responsible for the increase which brought the cost of living back to the February level.

The increase was enough to present a cent-an-hour loss in pay for one million railroad workers whose contracts contain an escalator clause tying their pay to the cost of living.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics' mid-May consumer price index stood at 115 per cent of average 1947-49 prices, compared to 114.6 per cent in mid-April.

The increase brought the index again close to the 115.4 per cent record of last October. The index has declined each month since then except in January and May.

BLS Commissioner Ewan Clague described the price situation as "still stable." He said this condition probably will continue through the summer, barring a new international crisis.

The May increase was due mainly to an eight-tenths of one per cent hike in food prices, the largest monthly increase since June, 1953. Fresh fruits and vegetables, meats and coffee were the items mainly involved in the sharp rise.

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'Tighten Belts' Japan Urged

TOKYO (AP)—A Japanese government white paper urged citizens Monday to tighten their belts as a result of "a marked worsening" of the nation's international trade situation.

The ministry of international trade and industry, reporting a \$1,140,000,000 excess of imports over exports, urged the people to "gear their living to the nation's actual economic capacity—in other words abide with austerity living and seriously strive to expand exports."

Japan sold \$1,270,000,000 worth of goods and services to other countries—an increase over 1952 of 1.4 per cent, the white paper said. But imports rose 18 per cent to \$2,410,000,000.

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