Nixon, Benson Push Farm Bill

Present Program Labelled Unfair

WASHINGTON (AP)—Facing a rugged fight in the House, the Eisenhower administration has appealed to the country at large for support of its farm program pegged to flexible instead of high, rigid price props.

Vice President Nixon and Secretary of Agriculture Benson appeared together Monday night on a nationwide radio broadcast in which Benson stated:

"The present farm program is unfair to both farmers and taxpayers, and that's why the administration has asked Congress to correct the faults of the law."

Benson said it is not true—as some have charged—that the administration is proposing changes in the nation's basic farm law that would lead to reduced farm income.

PRESIDENTIAL REQUEST

Nixon said continuation of the present program and its high-level supports would be "the height of irresponsibility."

The two administration leaders went on the air at the request of President Eisenhower as the House moved toward consideration later this week of a bill providing, not for flexible supports, but for a one-year extension of the present war-born system of props at 90 per cent of parity of wheat, corn, cotton, rice, peanuts and tobacco.

Across the Capitol, the Senate Agriculture Committee also has urged another year of rigid, high props, but the House will act on the farm legislation before the Senate does.

Parity is a standard for measuring farm prices said by law to be fair to farmers in relations to the costs of the things they must buy.

OPPONENTS TO SPEAK

Proponets of extension of inflexible farm price floors will have their inning with the public Wednesday night in a broadcast. Their case will be put forth by Chairman Hope (R-Kan) of the House Agriculture Committee and Rep. Cooley (D-NC), its ranking Democrats.

The administration has asked Congress to approve a system of sliding scale price supports that would range between 75 and 90 per cent of parity, with the higher range to be applied in times of scarcity to spur production and the lower range to be used in times of surplus to discourge over-production.

'MR. AMERICA' Richard Du Bois, above, of Hollywood, Calif., has been named "Mr. America" of 1954 in the annual contest held under the auspices of the Amateur Athletic Union in connection with its national weight lifting championships. Du Bois is 21 years old, is 6 feet 1½ inches tall, weighs 215 pounds and has a 52-inch chest. He triumphed over 50 other contestants.

Reynolds Gets $175,000 In Libel Suit With Pegler

NEW YORK (AP)—Author Quentin Reynolds Tuesday won a $175,000 cash award and a token moral victory in a federal libel action against Newspaper Columnist Westbrook Pegler.

An award of $175,000 levied against Pegler, the Hearst Corp. and Hearst Consolidated Publications, Inc., was believed to be one of the largest, if not the largest libel award ever made in a U.S. court.

A SINGLE DOLLAR

But the jury also awarded Reynolds only one single dollar to compensate him for loss of earnings, damage to his reputation and mental anguish suffered over the past four years from a defamatory Pegler column on which the $500,000 suit was based.

"I'm happy about the award, but I can't figure out how they arrived at that dollar," Reynolds said after the weary jury announced its verdict shortly before 1 a.m. Pegler was not in court and the Pegler-Hearst lawyer declined to comment.

Reynolds in the course of the seven-week case had claimed he lost a fortune in the magazine and entertainment fields because of the Pegler column.

Federal Judge Edward Weinfeld, in charging the jury, declared the column, published in 1949, was defamatory and libelous in itself as a matter of law.

He urged them to "use your common sense" in determining what compensation was due Reynolds for his principal claims of injury.

NOT INJURED GRAVELY

In effect, the jury, which had been deliberating since noon Monday, decided he was not injured gravely at all.

The $175,000 was awarded as punitive damages, which the judge had explained took in "actual malice . . . ill-will, spite, hatred, intent to injure" and was also designed to prevent repetition of the offense and serve as a warning to others.

For Pegler it was the end of a carefully cherished claim that he has never been successfully sued for libel. Previous libel cases have been settled out of court with Pegler claiming he has never been assessed a penny in settlements.

The jury divided its $175,000 levy among the three defendants: $100,000 against Pegler; $50,000 the Hearst Corp., which distributes the Pegler columns to 186 newspapers; and $25,000 against Hearst Consolidated Publications, which publishes the local Pegler outlet, the New York Journal-American.

Actually, because of a protective clause in Pegler's contract, the Hearst interests and not Pegler will have to pay the $100,000 levied against him.

LAWYER APPEALS

Neither will he have to pay any part of the $1 which was allocated to all three dependants.

There was an immediate motion, however, by Pegler's lawyer to set aside the verdict on the grounds of excessive damages being granted. Judge Weinfeld, who will hear the motion Friday, meanwhile granted a 20-day stay in the award.

The jury also announced it was deadlocked in a counterclaim filed by Pegler which alleged Reynolds had libeled him in a book review published in the New York Herald Tribune nine days before Pegler wrote his Nov. 29, 1949 column.

In Pegler's column, Reynolds said he was depicted as a pro-Communist, a nudist and a man so unfeeling he would propose to a widow on the way to bury her husband. He said Pegler attacked his World War II career as a foreign correspondent for Collier's Magazine, called him "yellow" and "an absentee war correspondent."

That column, Reynolds testified, ended his 17-year association with Collier's and cost him $25,000 a year, made him "dead" in radio and television work he estimated this loss at $52,000 a year and was responsible for his being cold-shouldered in Hollywood, where he once earned $100,000 a year.

15-YEAR FEUD

The Reynolds-Pegler feud dates back 15 years to when Pegler and the late columnist Heywood Broun fell out. Reynolds, who had been friends with both men, took Broun's side.

When Reynolds reviewed a biography of Broun, he said Broun while dying brooded constantly over a Pegler attack.

Pegler, admittedly incensed, wrote that Reynolds was accusing him of being morally responsible for Broun's death and then wrote the libelous column.

One of the charges in that column was that Reynolds proposed to Mrs. Broun on the way to her husband's grave, a statement she denied from the witness stand.

Chiang-U.S. Pact Reported

TAIPEH, Formosa (AP)—An influential Taipeh newspaper said Tuesday President Chiang Kai-shek and Gen. James A. Van Fleet have agreed tentatively on a mutual defense pact linking Nationalist China and the United States.

There was no confirmation from any source.

The usually well-informed United Daily News said:

1—Chiang and Van Fleet had agreed on a pact which would leave the Nationalists free to attack Red China and would not commit the United States to support such an attack.

2—The United States would agree to protect major offshore island bases such as Quemoy and the Tachens.

Quemoy, near Red-held Amoy, lies across the Formosa Straits. The Tachens, northern anchor of the Nationalist island chain, lie roughly 200 miles north of Formosa.

Since the oubreak of war in Korea the U.S. 7th Fleet has patrolled waters around Formosa to guard against Red invasion. However, it has not guarded the offshore island bases, many of which lie almost within range of Red guns.

The Daily News said the tentative defense pact has been sent to Washington for final approval.

Hawn Opposes

(Continued from Page One)

lieves needed in government operation.

Allen A. Smith, attorney representating three private utilities — Pacific Power & Light, Portland General Electric and Washington Water Power—urged the partnership program.

He said local agencies should be permitted to finance power facilities in multi-purpose dams with the government paying for non-reimbursable features of the projects.

Smith also said the government should not attempt to influence Northwest residents on whether a utility should be public or private and that the preference clause, giving priority of power rights to publicly owned utilities should be modified.

Lloyd Tupling, Boise, manager of the National Hells Canyon Assn., said it was vital to get comprehensive planning, and that only the federal government was in position to handle it.

"The fight over Hells Canyon is merely the forerunner of a situation which will get worse unless a number of changes are made in existing federal policies, programs and administration organization . . . Unless a basic national water policy is established and a unified federal agency is created with responsibility for multiple-purpose river basin development there will be chaos, instead of mere controversy," he said.

Shriners Hold Big Parade

ATLANTIC CITY, N. J. (AP)—Ten thousand Shriners marched in a four-mile parade through city streets and along the gaily festooned boardwalk Tuesday in honor of retiring Imperial Potentate Remmie L. Arnold of Petersburg, Va.

Some 40,000 other Shriners assembled here for the 80th annual Imperial Council will line the route of march during the six-hour parade.

Tuesday the Shriners will stage a benefit show for their 17 hospitals devoted to the care of crippled children. Screen stars Bob Hope and Gloria de Haven head the cast.

Delegates from 165 temples attended a Mardi Gras celebration as the council's five-day festivities opened Monday night.

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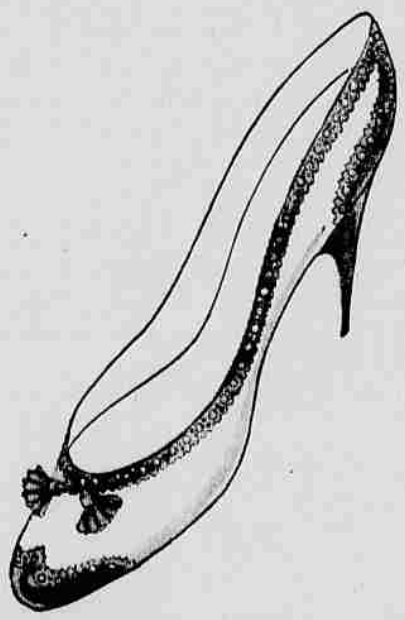

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