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Washington Column

By Peter Edson
(WNEA Washington Correspondent)
Washington (WNEA)—New testimony on possible wartime shipments of uranium salts from the U.S. to Soviet Russia presents a tantalizing mystery. It will probably be impossible to find any medium who can contact the late Harry Hopkins in the spirit world as easily as the Russian embassy could get him on the wire in Washington.

As disclosed by senior investigator Louis J. Russell and ex-air force Maj. George Roney Jordan before the House Un-American Activities committee, two lead lease shipments of uranium salts were made by air through Great Falls, Mont., and Fairbanks, Alaska.

Assuming that the shipments were made as described, the big question is how much good they may have done the Russians.

One of the atomic secrets revealed at the end of the war concerned this fact that the Russians had requisitioned some uranium compounds through the lend-lease administration. There was considerable argument at the time over whether to give them any or not. If the request were refused, it might arouse Russian suspicions that the U.S. government was trying to develop an atomic bomb.

The decision was finally made to give the Russians a little material—not enough to do them any good—just enough to quiet their curiosity and make them think the United States attached no particular importance to uranium products. In the light of testimony now being disclosed, the ruse was a complete failure.

Investigator Russell's statement is that on February 1, 1943, the Russian purchasing commission in Washington requisitioned 220 pounds of uranium oxide, 220 pounds of uranium nitrate, and 25 pounds of uranium metal.

The figures in the Russian requisition are of particular interest. They are not just accidental numbers. As the official Smyth report on nuclear fission was to disclose in 1945, the "critical mass" of fissionable material necessary for an atomic explosion "is generally regarded as between one and 100 kilograms."

This is two to 220 pounds. The Russians may therefore have thought they knew how much to ask for to make a bomb. But they may also have been a little mixed up in their intelligence reports and their chemistry. As the Smyth report also explains, this critical mass of from two to 220 pounds of fissionable material would have to be separated from 140 times as much natural uranium.

Another interesting detail is that when the order was filled, only 200 pounds of uranium oxide were shipped, instead of the 220.

The 25 pounds of uranium metal which the Russians asked for could have been used in experiments on conversion into plutonium—the operation carried on at the Hanford, Wash., atomic energy plant. Whether it would have been enough to do the Russians any good is beside the point, because there is no record this order was ever filled.

But the Russians soon discovered their mistake in not asking for enough natural uranium salts to do them any good. On March 19, 1943, they requisitioned "several tons" of uranium nitrate and uranium oxide.

There wasn't that much available, as by this time all U.S. supplies were reserved for the government. The Russians were able to buy 500 pounds of each salt from Canada, however, and they were shipped through Great Falls by air, guarded by machine guns, according to Major Jordan.

The Russians made another inquiry through the U.S. war production board for from 10 to 15 tons of uranium salts in August, 1943. By that time the Canadian government had also stopped sales, so the Russians got no more.

HUNTERS ARRESTED
Astoria, Dec. 21 (AP)—Five Clatsop county duck hunters were arraigned in justice court here yesterday for Oregon state game code violations.

The men were charged with disturbing wheat as a "lure and enticement" to draw wild ducks within range of their guns.

The men, Marsh Hoffman, Robert Larson, Richard Ball, Robert Hawkins and Thomas Baldwin, all pleaded innocent.

WHO REMEMBERS "THE SCARLET TIDE"?
An article in the Oregon Journal's Sunday magazine recalls the fact that the first moving picture striking at communism was filmed here at Bend. "The Scarlet Tide" was the title and those of us who were around about 30 years ago remember the taking of the picture and the company of actors and actresses who participated.

Just what the plot was we cannot remember but we do recall that there was a knock down fight between two characters out in the timber and that there were interior scenes done in the home of H. E. Allen, then assistant manager in the Brooks-Scanlon office.

One prize boner was permitted to get into the picture. This was to leave the name of The Shevlin-Hixon Company on an engine that came down along the tracks by the power house pulling a train of logs. We forget the name of the company given in other parts of the picture but it was not Shevlin-Hixon.

This was a silent picture, of course. Even so if it could be resurrected and brought back for a showing we think it would draw a crowd. We are not sure but it might even go as the comedy on the nights it showed.

In a news story reporting developments in the field of electronics we find this:

In years to come, the engineers speculated, the traditional business convention may be outmoded. Its substitute may well be telephone television. Such a setup would allow across-the-desk conversations between men many miles apart. They would no longer need spend time and money traveling to conventions.

The reporter who wrote that, we should say, has never attended a convention.

A letter to the editor appearing in the Portland Oregonian offers the theory that cancer is spread by rats and suggests that it would be interesting to learn whether Bend, Prineville and Redmond are cancer free. Unfortunately not. Incidence of the disease in these communities, while not unusually high, is high enough. There is no local proof in support of the correspondent's belief. We are happy at the absence of rats, however. Some day we may be rid of the other evil.

Just another evidence of the importance of water was given here last night when the municipal ice skating rink was opened. The flooding required in preparing the rink is one of the uses that is expressly forbidden in New York this winter. There water is a scarce luxury while in Bend, in the winter season at least, there is an abundance for all purposes.

In the two years that Floyd West has served as manager of the Bend chamber of commerce he has made many friends and not a single enemy. He leaves with the best wishes of all in the three central Oregon counties for whom he has worked and with whom he has cooperated.

Fremont Journal

Out on the Farm

By Ila S. Grant

Note—The Fremont exploring party left Albert lake on December 22, 1948, and headed eastward, making a "dry" camp in an area where Indians had previously encamped.

December 22—To-day we left this forbidding lake. Impassable rocky ridges barred our progress to the eastward, and I accordingly bore off towards the south, over an extensive sage plain. At a considerable distance ahead, and a little on our left, was a range of snowy mountains, and the country declined gradually towards the foot of a high and nearer ridge immediately before us, which presented the feature of black precipices, now becoming common to the country. On the summit of the ridge, snow was visible; and there being every indication of a stream at its base, we rode on until after dark, but were unable to reach it, and halted among the sage bushes on the open plain, without either grass or water. The two Indian rubber bags had been filled with water in the morning, which afforded sufficient for the camp; and rain in the night formed pools, which relieved the thirst of the animals. Where we encamped on the bleak sandy plain, the Indians had made huts or circular enclosures, about four feet high and twelve feet broad, of artemisia bushes. Whether these had been forts or houses, or what they had been doing in such a desert place, we could not ascertain. (To be continued)

Dec. 21—One of our neighbors has gone in for raising pigs on a large scale. He built them a new house, and hovers over them like a mother.

One little pig out of the last litter caught cold and nearly died. He developed pneumonia, and after two shots of penicillin, one of sulfa, and one of a heart stimulant, he still was a sick little pig. Our friend took the little fellow in the house, and made him a bed in the furnace room. On an impulse, he got out a jar of well-known ointment, advertised for the relief of colds, and smeared the same thickly over the patient's nose and "chest." He covered him lightly and resigned him to his fate.

"Would you believe it?" asked the neighbor. "The next morning the pig had quit wheezing, and he acted like he had just a light case of sniffles."

"You'll get him so spoiled, he'll have to live in the house the rest of his life," I cautioned.

"That was a week ago. If he keeps improving at his present pace, soon he'll be back in the pen with the other pigs. "We'll miss the little shaver," the neighbor admitted.

TIME TO STOP

Malden, Mass. (AP)—Norman Thurston was towing an automobile when the tow-bar snapped and the driverless car: Sideswiped his own vehicle. Knocked over a tree. Felled an electric light pole. Bowled over a gasoline station pump. Stopped.

taking S. D. Percival's place on The Bulletin for the past several weeks, returned to Antelope yesterday.

Millard Triplett has started construction of a new house southwest of Carlyle Triplett's place.

Bend's Yesterdays

(From The Bulletin Files)

FORTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

(Dec. 22, 1904)

Incorporation of Bend was favored by a vote of 164 to 3 in the election this week. A. W. Goodwillie was named Bend's first mayor.

A bear that crossed the Deschutes river in Bend this week was chased eastward and shot by B. H. Langtry. The bear's appearance caused considerable excitement in the village.

A. J. Henneman, of Culver, came to Bend this week with a wagon load of potatoes.

Ralph Spencer, who has been

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