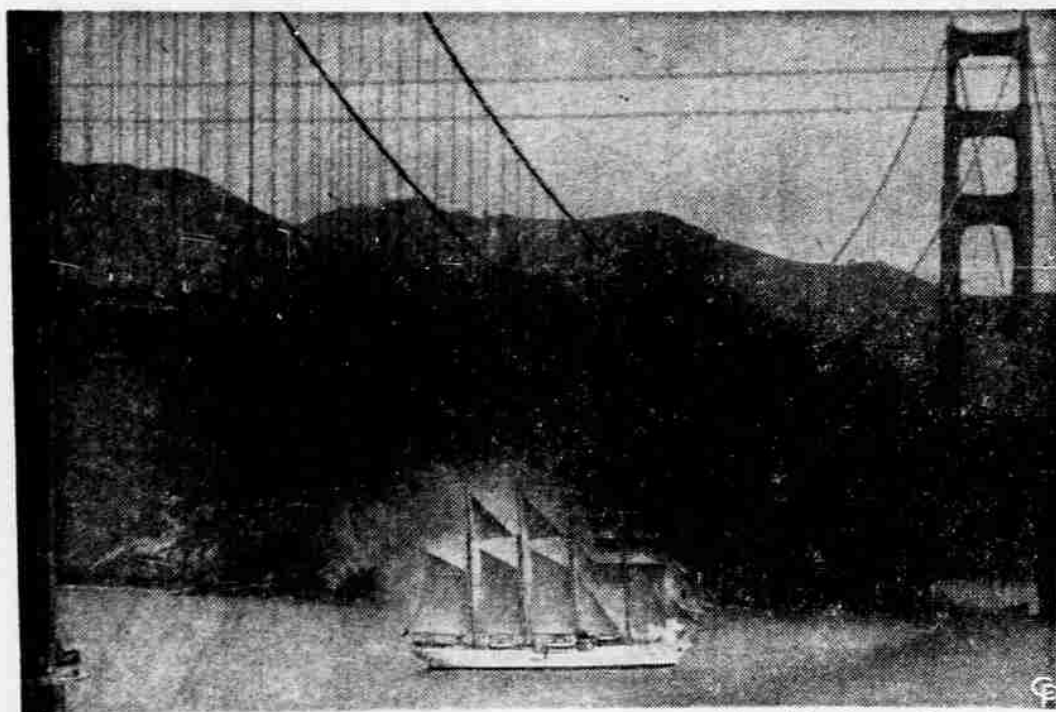




TACKLING UNDER GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE, Chilean training ship Esmeralda enters San Francisco Bay. Smoke is from guns as she returns welcoming salute. (International)

Air Force To Hold B52 Bomber Production To 15 Planes a Month

Washington—(U.P.)—The Air Force has announced that it will hold B52 heavy bomber production at the present rate of 15 a month instead of expanding to the 20 a month goal given Congress last year.

The service said that the total number of the intercontinental HA bombers to be produced is not being changed but that production will be stretched out an extra six months.

The planned total production of eight-jet B52s is now 603. The stretchout will keep production going longer and thus make a "favorable" situation for the Air Force and the Boeing Airplane Co., Seattle, if it is decided later to buy more of the aircraft.

The Air Force said the new production schedule will make it possible to obtain "a substantially greater proportion" of

a new B52 model which is reported to have considerably increased fuel capacity and thus greater range than the models now in the Strategic Air Command.

Fewer Tankers
Present plans call for equipping 11 heavy bomber wings with the airplanes. There are 45 planes to a wing.

The Air Force also announced that production of the KC135 jet tanker plane will be held to 15 a month, a goal to be reached in about one year. Previously it had been planned to go to 20 a month.

Under congressional pressure resulting from concern about Russian air power progress, Defense Secretary Charles E. Wilson increased the B52 production goal to 20 planes a month last year.

Wilson took credit at the time for pushing the Air Force somewhat faster than it had planned to go.

Air Force production experts testified to the Senate air power inquiry at the time that 20 a month was a larger than "optimum" number for a production program calling for some 600 airplanes.

As a result of the congressional concern, and over Wilson's objections, Congress appropriated \$900 million in extra Air Force funds of which the lion's share was supposed to go for bombers and jet tankers.

Ahead of Soviet
Meanwhile, the Pentagon learned that it had overestimated the number of Bison jet bombers Russia had produced. The Reds actually possessed, it is now known, probably no more than 50 and had no expectation of overtaking U.S. production of the B52 for some years.

Also the Air Force in January came to the conclusion that it could not afford to continue to expand the B52 production rate if it also started a large scale production program for the supersonic B58 bomber. It was forecast in January that by April flight tests would show whether the B58 should be pushed and the B52 schedule eased.

Paradoxically, the B52 is a heavy bomber replacing the old B36 super bomber and the B58 is a medium bomber scheduled to replace the B47 stratojet. The B58's speed is estimated at 1,000 miles an hour.

The Air Force said its new B52 schedule will "somewhat ease" training and conversion from B36s to B52s.

It said the B52s supported by KC135 tankers, will "greatly increase our deterrent striking power and provide a powerful restraining force to Communist aggression."

Gen. Nathan F. Twining, Air Force chief and chairman-designate of the Joint Chief of Staff, has proposed to his superiors that the Air Force build 17 B52 wings instead of the planned 11.

The proposal so far has neither been rejected nor accepted.

Rearward Seats Ruled Out as Safety Feature in Event of Airplane Smashup

Editor's note: Following is the last in a series of articles dealing with air traffic congestion and passenger safety.

By ROBERT J. SERLING
United Press Correspondent
Washington—(U.P.)—The builders of America's new jet transports have decided that passengers are just as safe riding frontwards as backwards.

British experts have been insisting for years that aft-facing airline seats are safer in low-speed crashes. The theory is that in the sudden deceleration, a passenger in a rearward seat is pressed against the cushioned back instead of being thrown forward.

The U.S. Military Air Transport Service liked the idea and equipped all of its four-engine transports with aft-facing seats.

But American aircraft manufacturers, who have received orders for more than 200 new jet airliners, said not a single order specifies seats that face to the rear. They added that American scientists do not agree that such seating arrangements are any safer.

"We figured that because of all the publicity about backward seats, some airlines would at least consider putting them in their new jets," said a Douglas Aircraft Co. official. "But they didn't."

Backward Seats Heavier
A Boeing engineer who has worked on that company's 707 jet transport said Boeing "went to every aviation research outfit that had done work on the subject and found unanimous opposition to the idea."

The research organization, he said, reported that in many accidents occurring at relatively low speeds, aft-facing seats actually were more dangerous than conventional seats. This was true in so-called "ground loops" or cart-wheeling, when violent ac-

celeration threw passengers sideways instead of forward.

Tests also showed that to withstand the same amount of deceleration force as a front-facing seat, a backward seat has to be three times stronger. This adds weight to the plane, and weight is an airplane's greatest enemy.

If rearward seats are out as a safety device, how about parachutes for passengers?

Aviation industry spokesmen list three arguments against providing parachutes:

—The majority of accidents occur while landing or taking off, at altitudes too low for use of parachutes, or happen with such suddenness that there would be no time to jump.

—Equipping every passenger with a parachute would add enormous weight to a plane.

Safety Research Promising

—Unless a plane were disintegrating in the air or being consumed by fire at a high altitude, it would be far safer for a passenger to take his chances on riding a crippled plane to earth. Even expert chutists frequently are injured.

—Jumping out of a plane at 30,000-40,000 feet (the altitude at which jet airliners will operate) would require oxygen masks for every passenger, adding further to a plane's weight.

Aviation scientists see more promise in other air safety research projects.

The Guggenheim Aviation

TRAIN BOWS TO AUTO

Toledo, Ohio—(U.P.)—Trainmen on a northbound train took one look at the southbound track early Thursday and flagged down an oncoming southbound train. The southbound train stopped just in time to prevent a head-on collision with Marion T. Watson's car. Watson, 59, was locked up on a drunk and disorderly charge.

Utilities Rate Cut Bill Before Senate

Salem—(U.P.)—A bill which would give the public utilities commissioner authority to regulate rate reductions as he now may control rate increase has been sent to the floor of the Senate without recommendation. The Senate Commerce and Utilities Committee first tabled the bill but later decided to let the Senate consider it without making a recommendation.

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Quotes From the News

By UNITED STATES

Los Angeles—U.S. Attorney General Herbert Brownell Jr., in saying that Communism should be taught in American schools, but not by Communists:

"A Communist teacher forfeits the privileges of academic freedom because his training, purposes and design are all at odds with it."

Detroit—James R. Hoffa, Teamsters union vice president, on the recent meeting of the Teamsters Executive council:

"We agreed that Dave Beck is entitled to his constitutional rights and we are not making any judgments about him until he has his day in court on any and all charges."

Cairo—The Mid East News agency, quoting a "responsible diplomatic source" on progress in American-Egyptian negotiations on the Suez canal:

"I am optimistic and it can be said the next few days will bring good news which will inspire confidence."

Washington—President Eisenhower in congratulating U.P. photographer James K. W. Atherton for his prize-winning photograph of Mrs. Eisenhower at a GOP rally:

"Wait till Mrs. Ike sees that in the papers."

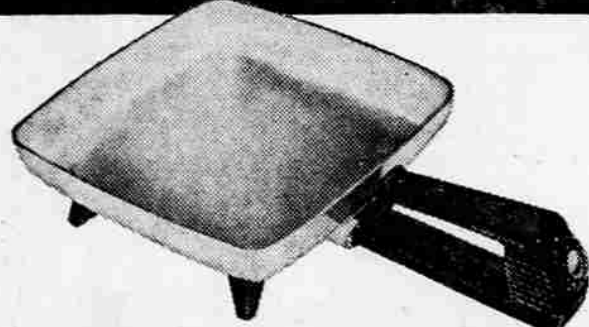
Belgrade—Yugoslav Vice Premier Aleksander Rankovic, taking notice of a renewed Soviet campaign of words against the Tito government:

"We are again witnessing really comic accusations."

New Orleans—Don Inman, one of the divers who went over a capsized oil drilling barge to determine whether the six men inside might be alive:

"I'm sorry to say it, but these men are dead."

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