

Astoria Now Labeled As "Disaster"

ASTORIA (AP) — The Red Cross has named this city's sliding hill a disaster area Saturday as four more families were brought to the hospital.

The total of families affected since Tuesday night to twenty-two dwellings have been affected.

Dr. Karl, county health officer, issued a statement urging

users of city water to boil it before drinking it the next two days. He said there was a possibility that broken sewer lines in the slide area had contaminated the water. The State Board of Health will test the water Monday.

In designating the hillside a disaster area Gerald Wesselus and Richard Singheiser, Red Cross officials from San Francisco, said victims would be offered the same kind of aid given in 1949 and 1950 during a slide on another hill here.

At that time the Red Cross paid for moving houses and new founda-

tions in cases where families could not stand the costs. The city of Astoria is offering the same arrangements it made then: to trade city-owned lots for deeds for evacuated slide land, which it condemned.

It was believed that 21 of the 22 buildings affected by the slide can be salvaged by moving. The other will be abandoned.

Wesselus estimated that the Red Cross had spent \$100,000 since 1949 to aid Astoria slide victims.

Meantime the stricken hill at the west edge of the city's business district continued to slip despite the fact there had been no rain since Thursday evening. An eight-inch water main broke Saturday morning, further soaking the soft earth.

Two of the families moving Saturday lived in the center of the slide area. The other two lived on Bond Street, on the fringe of the area, from which one family moved Friday.

One of three houses which had been abandoned in a previous slide on the hill came apart Saturday when it was moved to clear the way for salvage operations.

A moving company aided by a city bulldozer continued to crib up houses to keep them level preparatory to moving them.

Farm Hearing Be Held

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Truman's new farm program is set for a prompt airing Saturday in the Senate Agriculture Committee.

The committee announced public hearings Monday, Jan. 18, in the Senate.

Secretary of Agriculture, Charles Brannan, said he would be present to answer questions.

President Truman has promised to give details of his plan in a message to Congress Monday.

Truman already has announced that he will "insulate" existing farm surpluses and then shift gradually from the present fixed level government price supports to flexible ones.

Truman's plan would allow the surplus to be used as emergency reserves and would tend to reduce price supports, at least in part.

Man Acquitted Murder Case

ASTORIA (AP) — Jimmy Biswell, 16, was acquitted Friday night by a jury of manslaughter in the slaying of his father Nov. 4.

The boy killed his father, Eldon Biswell, by striking him in the head with a baseball bat. His attorney pleaded that the boy was mentally insane at the time.

The testimony that the father had been cruel to him.

The case in Circuit Judge Biggs' court lasted an entire

Rail Unions Win Salary Increase

CHICAGO (AP) — A five-cent hourly wage increase was announced Saturday by negotiators for the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen and the nation's railroads.

The agreement, retroactive to Dec. 16, 1953, affects 60,000 engine men and firemen.

Spokesmen said terms of the settlement were the same as those agreed upon by the railroads and the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen last month. The BRT received a five-cent hourly increase Dec. 17.

BODY FOUND

ASTORIA (AP) — The Coast Guard reported Saturday the finding of a body in the water under pier 2 here. The office of Sheriff Paul Kearney identified it as the body of William E. Smith, a cook on the dredge Davidson, who disappeared Dec. 12. Investigators found no sign of foul play, and surmised the man fell overboard while boarding the dredge after a trip into Astoria.

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FBI Checking Money Rumor

ST. LOUIS (AP) — FBI agents are checking a story about the missing \$303,720 Greenleaf ransom money held by a 40-year-old barber held in Las Vegas, Nev., on a worthless check charge.

He was identified as Frank Beninato, charged with issuing an \$800 worthless check in San Francisco.

Beninato told officers he saw a man take a suitcase from the parked car of resigned Lt. Louis Shoulters a few minutes after Shoulters and suspended Patrolman Elmer Dolan arrested kidnapper Carl Austin Hall the night of Oct. 6.

Shoulters and Dolan have been indicted by a Kansas City federal grand jury for perjury in connection with their testimony about the handling of the two suitcases, in which Hall carried the ransom. Less than \$300,000 of the \$600,000 ransom was recovered in the suitcases.

Hall and Mrs. Bonnie Brown Heady were executed last December for the kidnap-killing of 6-year-old Bobby Greenleaf.

PUD's Join For Power Development

ELLENSBURG (AP) — Twenty-one PUD's and municipal power systems joined here Friday in putting together the framework of Washington State Operating Agency No. 1 for developing the state's power resources.

The Washington State Power Commission must approve the agency before it can begin functioning.

Agency organizers plan to ask the commission on Jan. 22 for such official sanction.

The new partnership for generating and distributing electric power was described Friday as the first of its kind in the nation.

Signing as charter members of the agency were 14 county public utility districts and 7 cities with municipal power systems. Others are expected to join later.

The PUD's that signed were Grant, Douglas, Ferry, Klickitat, Benton, Wahiakum, Klickitat, Snohomish, Grays Harbor, Pacific, Pend Oreille, Lewis, Cowlitz and Chehalis counties.

The cities were Grand Coulee, McCleary, South Cle Elum, Ellensburg, Blaine, Cashmere and Sumas. The last two were not represented at the one-day sessions but had been committed to the plan previously and were listed as charter members.

The five-man executive committee was named to carry the petition to the new power commission. They are Earl J. Cole, Kelso, representing the Cowlitz PUD, chairman; Mayor Herb Roggens, Ellensburg, secretary-treasurer; William Schemp, Grant PUD; John

M. Fountain, Pend Oreille PUD, and Ralph Roser, McCleary.

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