

## Baer Deportation Hearing Stirs Memories In Oregon

By GORDON G. MACNAB  
Associated Press Staff Writer

A deportation hearing for Walter E. Baer has been set at Seattle, tentatively for Jan. 18, and news of that has a familiar, distant ring in Oregon.

It sets up echoes of an all-but-forgotten story of a cause celebre. It was 20 years ago that the government tried, and failed, to deport Walter Baer to his native Germany. The attempt brought hearings and appeals and went even to the Oregon Legislature and the Senate of the United States.

Time after time Baer lost and deportation was near—he once was at Ellis Island ready for sailing in a matter of hours—but always a reprieve came.

The one which seemed at the time to have ended his troubles was a Christmas Day present in 1935 from Gov. Earl Snell—a conditional pardon for the offenses on which his deportation was based.

But a 1932 law says a conditional pardon is not enough to the government, with an additional conditional pardon as well, now seeks to deport him as an undesirable alien. Baer is 56 and a U. S. resident for a half century.

### ARRESTED

It was on April 9, 1934 that Baer, a Portland civil engineer, was arrested—exactly 20 years and 7 days before his 1954 arrest. He was charged with being an undesirable alien because he had been convicted in Idaho of a burglary and in Oregon twice for forgery. Federal law said two such convictions, of an alien, warranted deportation.

Baer came to the United States with his parents when he was a small boy—apparently about 7, although some reports vary a year or two either way on that. After he became 21 his parents were naturalized. He didn't bother to get his citizenship.

As a matter of fact, about the time he was old enough to seek it on his own, he was in trouble with the law. Three prison terms were behind him by the time he was released from the Oregon prison at Salem in 1924. He was 26 then.

Baer in the next 10 years achieved a measure of prominence. He married in Portland, fathered three children, and took a leading role in working for a city sewage disposal plant for which voters authorized six and a half million dollars.

But he also registered in 1928 to vote, and he was an alien. In the

depression years he worked with the State Emergency Relief Administration and there he was called by some a disturbing influence. Indeed, W. J. Chamberlain of Corvallis, state commander of the American Legion, said later that Baer was "instrumental in inciting discontent."

At any rate, in 1934 the government decided to deport him to Germany. The protests came quickly. A Walter Baer Defense Committee was formed; the Oregon Prison Assn. recommended that he be pardoned; the Oregon State Grange asked Gov. Charles Martin to give a pardon; petitions, letters and telegrams all headed toward the governor because it appeared a pardon for Baer's Oregon convictions was necessary if deportation were to be averted.

### RELEASE

Baer's life since release from prison had been good, his supporters said. "As a boy in his teens, he made a mistake," said the Oregon Journal in urging a pardon. But Gov. Martin was not moved. "Crime has reached such heights in the United States," he said, "as to have become a public scandal. . . . Except in the most unusual circumstances I will not pardon criminals."

For this the governor was lauded by the Oregon Cattle and Horse Raisers Assn. The American Legion commended him. The Eagle Creek Grange of Clackamas County urged its state officers to disavow their support of Baer.

But his supporters pressed on. The Legislature was memorialized and the Journal asked: "Is there no forgiveness for a penitent; no mercy for a sorrowing family?"

### PUBLIC EFFORT

While this public effort was under way, Baer's attorney, Irvin Goodman, was using all the court avenues open to him. When these seemed about exhausted, Sen. Charles L. McNary introduced a bill in the U. S. Senate to stay the deportation.

Nothing ever came of it, the Senate never acted, but the delay saved the day, for war came to Europe and there could be no deportation. Baer remained at liberty under \$2,000 bond.

In December, 1945, with the war at an end, proceedings again were opened. But Martin no longer was governor and Earl Snell, then the state's chief executive, gave Baer a conditional pardon—a pardon in effect during good behavior—and the government no longer had grounds for deportation.

### SUPPORT

In the course of this long struggle, Baer's wife not only supported him but at one point she bashed her purse on the head of Roy Norene, Portland immigration chief, and started scratching and kicking him while other women in the hearing room rushed at him screaming.

Norene's "I'm sorry, I had no choice," went all but unheard.

But in the years since, the family split up and his wife divorced him in 1951. Two years later Baer, now a Seattle resident, remarried.

John P. Boyd Jr., Seattle immigration chief, said that the current deportation effort is based on two things: Baer's failure to furnish notification of address as required of an alien, and his Oregon convictions. The conditional pardon which in 1945 halted the case no longer is effective for a full pardon now is needed.

But, said Boyd, the failure to notify authorities of his address is sufficient ground for deportation and a full pardon now would not halt it.



FIRST ENTRANT in the Jaycees' "Brightest Christmas Yet" program was Mrs. C. D. Groves, 1434 Lakeview Avenue, who is shown handing the signed entry form to Bob Beach, Jaycee chairman of the event. Leo Morstad, member of the Christmas committee, took the picture which shows Mrs. Groves' Madonna, central figure of the scene.

## Woman Builds Xmas Scene

Mrs. C. D. Groves' entry in the Jaycees' "Brightest Christmas Yet" contest this year will be her Nativity scene which she started in 1945 with a single Madonna.

This figure was one of her first attempts at molding a face in plaster of Paris. Her model was their daughter whose hands were reproduced for the hands of the figure.

A new figure has been added each year. Following in sequence were Joseph, the Child, animals, kings, shepherds, sheep and this year two new angels.

Faces and hands for each of the figures have been modeled from those of members of her family or close friends.

In addition to the Nativity scene this year, Mr. and Mrs. Groves intend to broadcast background music on a special wave length that can be tuned in by passing cars. The wave length can be picked up within a radius of about 75 feet, according to Mrs. Groves.



AFTER AN ABSENCE of 16 years, L. K. Wade has been transferred here from Roseburg as superintendent of the Shell Oil Company. He replaces George Roberts who transferred to Coos Bay this summer because of poor health. J. W. Weber has been acting superintendent pending Wade's arrival.

### STRANGLER

WARWICK, R.I. (AP) — Maureen Dorgan, 6, was strangled yesterday when a rope of the swing she was riding in her back yard broke and tangled around her neck.

### KILLED

LENS France (AP) — A bus carrying a group of school teachers to an education meeting plunged through a guard rail after a collision with a truck on a bridge Thursday. Ten women were killed and about 20 others were hospitalized with serious injuries.

### BATTLE

TAIPEH Formosa (AP) — Nationalist Chinese guns on Yikiangshan Island opened up on a Communist convoy of 33 supply ships Wednesday and the defense ministry said the craft "scattered in confusion in all directions." There was no claim by the Nationalists that any of the Communist craft had been sunk.

### Used Records

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## Democratic Chiefs Plan Rules Curb

WASHINGTON (AP) — Evidently concerned by a threat of a coalition roadblock in the Rules Committee, House Democratic leaders are considering a plan to curb that committee's power in the new Congress.

When Democrats organize the House Jan. 5, they may propose restoration of the 21-day rule which was in effect in 1949-50. This rule, in practice, limited to 21 calendar days the time the Rules Committee could hold up bills approved by regular legislative committees.

At the expiration of the 21-day period, the chairman of the committee that originally approved the bill could call it up for a House vote.

The 21-day rule was repealed in 1951. The Rules Committee now can block legislation almost indefinitely — a power it has exercised freely in past years.

In the new Congress, the Rules Committee will be composed of eight Democrats and four Republicans. The Republicans

will be Representatives Allen of Illinois, Clarence Brown of Ohio, Ellsworth of Oregon and Latham of New York. The top Republicans on the committee in the present Congress. Only three of the four Democrats now on the committee will be in the new Congress. They are two Southerners — Representatives Howard Smith of Virginia and Colmer of Mississippi—and Rep. Madden of Indiana.

Smith, by virtue of seniority, will be the new chairman. That leaves five seats to be filled by Democrats at a party caucus early next month. One is reserved for Rep. Delaney of New York, a Democrat who lost his committee post two years ago when Democrats had to trim their membership from eight down to four as Republicans took over the committee.

In the past, Smith and Colmer have frequently voted with the Republicans on legislation which they label "New Dealish" or "liberal." On the assumption that they will continue to do so on some bills, Democratic leaders figure that at best they will sometimes get only a tie vote in the Rules Committee, even with the addition of four-hand-picked new members.

It takes a majority of seven votes to get a bill out of the committee and onto the floor for debate.

## FHA Finance Demand Rises

WASHINGTON (AP) — The demand for FHA home financing in November more than doubled that for November last year and set a new record for the month, the Federal Housing Administration reported today.

It was the fourth straight month for which a new record was set.

Despite the onset of bad construction weather, FHA said, 52,700 home builders and buyers applied for FHA mortgage insurance — only 5,750 fewer than in October. The number was more than twice the 23,700 applications in November of last year, and well above the previous November record of 45,600 in 1947.

FHA credited the activity to the new housing law which reduced down payments and liberalized purchase terms on both new and used dwellings.

As in October, nearly half the applications were for the purchase of older houses — 25,550 for used dwellings, 26,650 for new.

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## Weyerhaeuser To Build New Plant

LONGVIEW, Wash. (AP) — The Weyerhaeuser Timber Co. Wednesday announced plans to build a chemical plant here to manufacture chlorine and caustic soda for use in its Longview and Everett pulp mills.

Ray Baker, manager of the Weyerhaeuser pulp division, said the plant will be built west of the company's forest products plant on the Columbia River. Construction will start in May and the first production is slated for late in 1956. The plant will employ 85.

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## Storms Cover Wide Area

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The nation's weather showed little change in the last 24 hours, with more rain or snow in North-east, Midwest and Western areas. Skies generally were fair in the Gulf states, most of the plains and in the Far West.

The storm over northern New England continued to dump rain along the East Coast from New Jersey northward and snow into the upper Ohio Valley and the eastern Great Lakes region. Falls in most areas were light.

It was below freezing again today in northern Florida with a low of 28 at Cross City and 30 at Tallahassee, the lowest reading along the East Coast from Florida to Maine. Temperatures were in the 30s along most of the east coast, the Ohio Valley and in the Far Northwest.

## Girl Regains Partial Sight

BALTIMORE (AP) — Ten-year-old Jane Irving, of Winter Park, Fla., will be able to see the color and lights of Christmas for the first time in seven years.

She began losing her eyesight seven years ago as a result of a serious infection in infancy. She was almost totally blind, could just about tell night from day, her mother Mrs. Muriel Irving said, when the Lions Club of Winter Park financed her trip to Johns Hopkins Hospital here.

Doctors in Hopkins' Wilmer Clinic determined she "had no useful vision in either eye" and decided to perform corneal transplants to try to improve her sight.

That was two months ago. The operations have been completed and Jane is seeing better than she has since she was 3.

She can distinguish the colors of passing automobiles, tell the color of her dresses and even make out the reindeer, sled and Santa Claus on her Christmas cards.

The West Baltimore Lions Club, which took Jane's case as its special concern when she arrived in Baltimore, threw a big banquet for her two nights ago.

Gov. Theodore R. McKeldin was there to praise the "courage and faith of the brave little girl from Florida."

She'll be going back home soon. It's still too early to define the full results of the operations but doctors say her eyes have shown considerable improvement. She must return to the hospital in six months for another examination.

### HANGED

LONDON (AP) — Mrs. Sibson was hanged in Holloway Jail Wednesday for the murder of her daughter-in-law. A native of Cyprus who spoke no English, she was the first woman sent to the gallows in London in 21 years.

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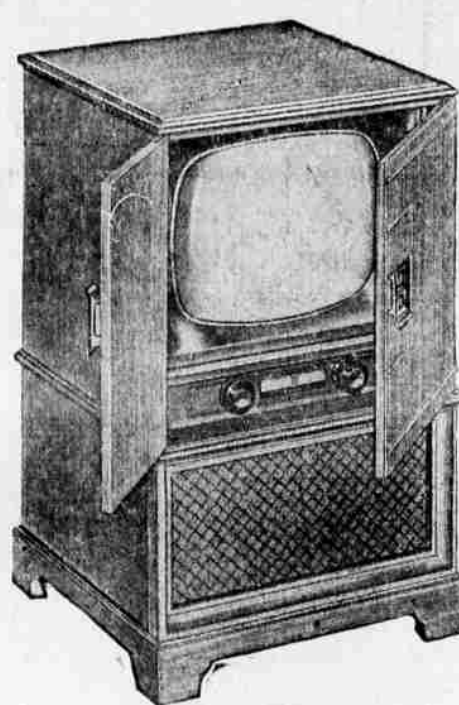
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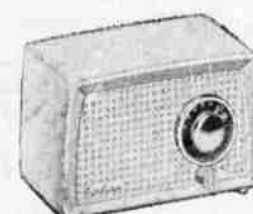
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