

Telegraph Observes Birthday

By JACK V. FOX
United Press International

One hundred years ago today a Morse telegraph operator in Sacramento, Calif., tapped out a message for President Abraham Lincoln in Washington.

It was the first telegram ever sent coast to coast.

America was in the first year of bloody Civil war and the message came from California's Chief Justice, who said:

"California will stand by its government on the day of its trial."

Just a few hours earlier that day—Oct. 24, 1861, the strands of wire had been linked across the nation with the final gap closed in Salt Lake City for the company known as Western Union.

End of Pony Express

If Buffalo Bill Cody could have read, he would have read the handwriting on the wall that day. For it was soon to cost him his job as a Pony Express rider. The company—carrying letters from St. Joseph, Mo., to California in 10 days at \$8 apiece—soon went bankrupt.

It seemed—and it was—miraculous in those days to be able to send messages at the fabulous speed of 20 words a minute.

Today the news organization that brings you this story—United Press International—has 480,000 miles of its own circuits within the United States including two separate "trunk" circuits operating coast-to-coast at 60 words a minute.

UPI has one single circuit that winds 47,000 miles to radio and TV stations in the country with approximately 2,500 separate points simultaneously receiving the news that is dispatched.

So has telegraphy been advanced that the UPI wires now carry signals to newspaper offices which cut a tape that automatically operates a type-setting machine.

But back in the year 1860, telegraph lines had been strung only from the Atlantic to Omaha and from the Pacific as far east as Carson City, Nev. A 1,550-mile gap lay between them.

Gap Is Closed

There were two big telegraph companies—Western Union and the American Telegraph Company. American Telegraph wanted to close the gap by a southern line going through Texas. Hiram Sibley, president of the Western Union, wanted it further north.

Sibley prevailed and sent Edward Creighton, after whom Omaha's Creighton university is named, out to explore the Territory. Lincoln warned Sibley that Indians would tear down the poles as fast as Western Union put them up.

Creighton managed to persuade the Indians that the telegraph was the voice of Manitou, the great spirit, and should not be harmed. Then he marched west from Omaha with 400 armed men, 100 wagons and 500 oxen and mules. He set the first pole on July 4, 1861, and then advanced 10 to 12 miles a day until he had planted 25,000 poles by the time he reached Salt Lake.

Joseph Gamble of the Overland Telegraph Company marched east with a similar company until he reached Salt Lake on Oct. 24 just a week after Creighton had got there.

Red Tests Force U.S.

WASHINGTON (AP)—Sens. Mike Mansfield, D-Mont., and Clinton P. Anderson, D-N.M., said today the Soviet Union's explosion of a massive nuclear device may force U.S. resumption of atmospheric testing.

Mansfield, the Senate Democratic leader, discounted the claim of Soviet Defense Minister Rodion Y. Malinovsky that the Soviets have solved the problem of destroying rockets in flight.

But the Montana senator said no one can be sure that the Soviets have not made some progress in developing an antimissile missile in their series of high-altitude shots. He said it is his understanding that atmospheric tests are necessary to perfect such a missile.

Anderson, a member of the Senate House Atomic Energy Committee, said he regards it as likely that the United States will fire off an above-ground explosion relatively soon.

Mansfield said the Russians are endangering their own people, as well as others in the Northern Hemisphere, with the fallout from their series of tests.

"They are certainly guilty of indirect aggression against the countries that lie in the path of that fallout," he said.



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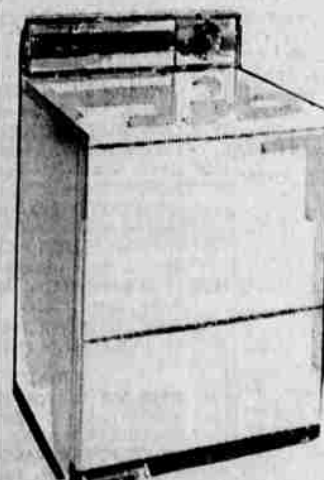
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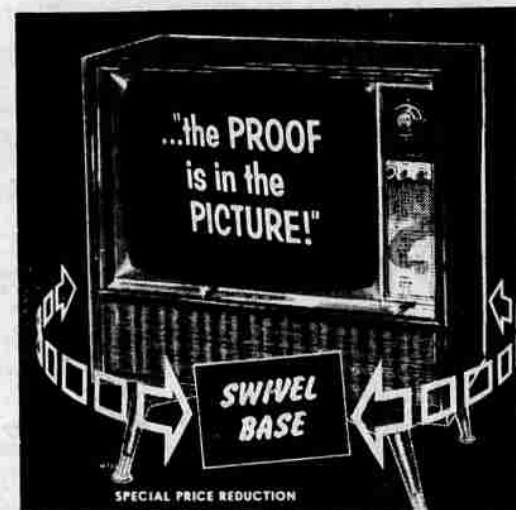
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