Mayor Warns Taxi Firms Franchises 'In Jeopardy'

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THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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Largest Afternoon Newspaper in The Carolinas

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CHINESE GOVERNMENT BIDS FOR TRUCE

Bill Offered To Call Vote On Scott's Road Plan

Referendum Would Come Before July

Bill Is Referred To Road Group

RALEIGH — (AP) — Legislation to call an election on the issuance of $200,000,000 in bonds for building rural roads—to carry out Governor Scott's country roads program—was introduced in the General Assembly today.

Reps. Harry VanderLinden of Catawba and William T. Hatch of Wake sent forward a bill in the House calling for submission to the people of the question of issuing the largest bond issue in state history.

An identical measure was sent forward in the Senate by Senator Lee Weathers of Cleveland.

The measure were sent to the Roads Committees of the two houses.

Under its provisions a statewide referendum would be held prior to July 1, 1949 on a date to be fixed by the governor in a proclamation.

Introduction of the measure resulted from a special message to the Assembly by the Governor Monday night at which he urged an election on issuance of $200,000,000 in bonds for rural road building and asked for a one-cent per gallon increase in the gasoline tax to finance repayment of the bonds.

The bill introduced today made no provision for increasing the gasoline tax. Informed sources said that it would be proposed in a separate bill which may be introduced tomorrow. These sources predicted that the measure would make the gasoline tax increase contingent upon approval of the bond issue by the people.

The bill provides that the $200,000,000 shall be used "exclusively for the purpose of the construction of hard-surfaced, all-weather roads which are a part of the state highway system and which are known and referred to as secondary roads or farm-to-market roads, as distinguished from the state highways which are known as primary roads."

The funds would be "fairly and equitably divided between the ten highway districts of the state" by the State Highway Commission.

Bonds issued under the act would mature within twenty years of their issuance and "shall bear interest at a rate to be fixed by the Governor and Council of State, not exceeding four cent per annum."

Another bill—once creating a state personnel department—was also introduced in the Assembly.

The measure, which would divorce administration of state employees from the Budget Bureau, was recommended by Governor Scott both in his campaign for election and in his inaugural message.

It was introduced in the House by Reps. Fred S. Royster of Vance and William T. Hatch and Arch T. Allen of Wake. It was referred to Judiciary Committee II.

The measure provides for appointment by the Governor of a personnel director at a salary to be fixed by the Governor.

It provides for creation of a

See VOTE ON on page 8-A

Wholesale Food Prices Decline

NEW YORK — (AP) — The Dun & Bradstreet wholesale food index this week declined to $6.02—lowest level in twenty months.

The figure compared with $6.08 a week ago and $7.25 a year ago. The index represents the total wholesale cost of a pound each of 31 foods in general use.

The previous low was $5.95 on May 20, 1947.

The only foods advancing in wholesale price this week were barley, hams, butter potatoes, rice and lambs.

Declining were flour, wheat, corn, rye, oats, lard, cottonseed oil, cocoa, peanuts, eggs, raisins, steers and hogs.

WEATHER

Occasional rain this afternoon, partly cloudy and colder tonight and Thursday. Lowest temperature tonight 35.

Temperature at 2:00 today	60
High and low last 24 hours	70-30
Sunset today	5:29
Sunrise tomorrow	7:30

More Weather Data on Page 8-A

Taxi Franchises In Jeopardy, Mayor Says

By DICK YOUNG
Charlotte News Staff Writer

Franchises of two local taxicab companies "will be in jeopardy" if on Feb. 1 they have not complied with the City Council's order to install adequate telephone facilities, Mayor Baxter announced today.

Pointing out that the telephone edict was handed down by the Council on Dec. 8 and recalling that he had written the two companies on Jan. 13, reminding them of the Feb. 1 requirement, the Mayor asserted:

"Telephone facilities are available and can be secured, and the two companies, the Red Top and Victory, have been given ample notice. I can say with emphasis that their franchises will certainly be in jeopardy if the facilities are not in by Feb. 1."

He went on to say: "We of the Council have no intention of putting anybody out of business or throwing anybody out of work just for the sake of showing authority, but the taxicabs are a public utility and the public must be served. Enforcement of our taxicab ordinance is for the public good and we have given the taxi companies ample opportunity to get in a position to adequately serve the public."

While the Mayor didn't come right out and say the franchise will be revoked and the taxicabs ordered from the streets, his statement that the franchises would be in jeopardy certainly carried that implication.

Mr. Baxter said that inquiries have disclosed that the two companies have not as yet arranged for telephone switchboard facilities, and this led him to issue the warning to the cab operators.

The Mayor's letter of Jan. 13 addressed to the Red Top Cab Co. and the Victory Cab Co. reads as follows:

"The City Council is counting on you folks to have your telephone call system with proper switchboard and advertised telephone numbers available for public information as of Feb. 1.

"Future consideration of your

See TAXI on page 8-A

10 Coast Guardsmen Die In Ship Crash

NEW YORK—(AP)—Ten Coast Guardsmen were killed and at least eighteen injured today in the fiery crash of a Coast Guard cutter and a tanker in thick fog off the New Jersey coast.

Many of their shipmates courageously stayed aboard the flaming cutter Eastwind to fight and brief under control the fire that threatened the ship's ammunition store. Seventy-eight uninjured survivors of the crew were taken aboard another vessel.

The collision occurred about 60 miles southeast of Barnegat Light Vessel.

The 504-foot tanker Gulfstream, which collided with the Eastwind, reported she was proceeding to New York under her own power with an uninjured crew of 42. Her bow was damaged.

The freighter Republic of Columbia came alongside the Eastwind and crewmen went aboard to help the cutter's crew fight the flames, the Coast Guard reported.

The collision occurred about 4:30 A. M. (EST). At 11:10 A. M. (EST) the skipper of a rescue vessel standing by reported the flames were under control.

The S. S. Suzanne, one of several rescue vessels which rushed to the scene through the fog, took seventeen injured Coast Guardsmen aboard and rushed at full speed for New York. Her skipper, Capt. Frank Boyer, of Baltimore, said five were badly burned and the others suffered minor burns.

The rescuer ship with 78 uninjured survivors aboard was the S. S. S. Junior, skippered by Capt. George H. Grant of New York. He reported he also had two injured Coast Guardsmen aboard.

The ten dead were reported by the Coast Guard.

The Eastwind, in the ice-breaking service, normally carries a crew of about 120.

Meanwhile, the Coast Guard said a Navy fighter plane speeding to the scene had crashed two miles off Little Macinponzo Inlet, N. C. The pilot was picked up unhurt. A Coast Guard helicopter flying toward the burning Eastwind was diverted to fly him back to his station. Another Coast Guard helicopter took off for the Eastwind.

The Coast Guard said the Eastwind was hit on the starboard side opposite the chief petty officers' quarters.

The crash tore the cutter so that her ammunition magazines were exposed and firefighters battled in momentarily peril of explosion, the Coast Guard said.

The Eastwind, whose home port is Boston, was bound for Curtis Bay, Md., when the collision occurred. Her skipper is John A. Glynn.

The Gulfstream, owned by the Gulf Oil Corp., left Philadelphia last night for Kuwait, Persia and other Persian Gulf ports without cargo. Her skipper is Capt. Henry G. Coyle of Maywood, N. J.

Two Key ECA Officials Quit

WASHINGTON — (AP) — Two key officials of the Economic Cooperation Administration, Deputy Administrator Howard Bruce and Information Director Bryan Houston, have filed resignations, it was disclosed today.

An ECA spokesman said that Bruce, retired Baltimore banker and industrialist, asked to be relieved on Jan. 31. Bruce originally took the post with the understanding that he would be free to leave after Jan. 1.

The spokesman said Administrator Paul G. Hoffman has asked Bruce to remain until June 30.

Houston, former vice president of the Pepsi Cola Corp., is leaving within a day or two to become vice president of a New York advertising firm. No successor has been chosen. Officials declined to give the name of the advertising firm.

Bruce sent a resignation letter to President Truman in November, it was learned. In it, he reminded the President of the agreement that he could leave after the first of the year.

Lovett Asks Reds Prove Good Will

Calls For Action, Not Mere Words

WASHINGTON — (AP) — Undersecretary of State Lovett called on the Russians today for action—rather than the mere words of Communist leaders outside the USSR—to show that they seriously want better relations.

His news conference comments were directed at recent statements by Palmiro Togliatti in Italy and Marcel Cachin in France, among others.

Lovett said the United States is naturally very much interested in the comments of these leaders—which other officials have been studying for evidence of a new Soviet "peace offensive."

"COLD WAR" CONTINUES

But he strongly restated the basic American cold war policy of calling for actions rather than words alone if the Soviets and their Communist associates want to bring an improvement in world conditions.

Lovett discussed the situation at his last news conference as acting Secretary of State. He has been acting in the absence of the ailing Sen. George C. Marshall, retiring secretary.

Lovett said that after Dean Acheson is sworn in as secretary either tomorrow or Friday, he will remain as Undersecretary until James E. Webb is confirmed by the Senate and can be sworn in.

Lovett cited the Soviet blockade of Berlin and prospective negotiations on the Austrian treaty as issues which the Russians could provide evidence of good faith in the near future.

He suggested that if the Soviets really want to ease world tensions the proof will soon be found at those points.

The apparent "peace offensive" by the Communists came up when Lovett was asked for his reaction to comments from Communist leaders in France and Italy, and to New Year's greetings published in the Soviet information bulletin here. The Communist statements were described by the questioner as emphasizing the possibility of better relations between East and West.

Lovett said the United States is naturally very much interested in these things. He took note of the fact that the comments are coming from individuals in various countries and said the United States has not received any direct communication from the governments which would indicate a more serious approach.

Lovett denied that Britain has offered to recognize Israel if the United States will accept a British plan for guaranteeing peace in the Middle East.

Lovett told a news conference that he and the British ambassador, Sir Oliver Franks have talked over the possibility that Britain would grant diplomatic recognition to the new Jewish state. But he emphasized there was no attempt at bargaining on that point.

Sir Oliver merely indicated, he said, that Britain is considering recognizing Israel as British Foreign Minister Bevin made plain yesterday to the House of Commons.

SOUTHERNERS IN CAPITAL FOR INAUGURAL

Gov. James E. Folsom of Alabama and his wife (top) arrive in Washington to attend the inauguration of President Truman Thursday. The Governor waves his broad-brimmed hat in response to greetings. Bottom: Gov. Herman Talmadge's Georgia delegation reaches the capital on a special train and is greeted by Rep. James C. Davis, Georgia Congressman. Left to right: James Peters of Manchester, chairman of the Georgia Democratic executive committee; Mrs. Eugene Talmadge, the Governor's mother; Governor Talmadge, Mrs. Peters, the Governor's wife, and Rep. Davis. (AP Wirephotos.)

Capital Gay On Inaugural Eve

Crowds Pour Into Washington

By DON WHITEHEAD

WASHINGTON — (AP) — Gay and carefree thousands poured into Washington today in a holiday mood for Harry S. Truman's Presidential inauguration tomorrow.

They came in a stream of special trains, by plane and automobile to pay tribute to the one-time farm boy whose mother once said he "plowed the straightest row of corn" in all Jackson County, Missouri.

The best guesses are that 500,000 to 750,000 people are headed for Washington.

There was jarring discord thrust into the Democrats' happy affair late yesterday — the Senate defeated a bill to waive the 20 per cent Federal tax on all grandstand parade and inaugural ball tickets. This was the Democrats' first defeat in the new Congress.

DEWEY MESSAGE

But the sting of this Republican maneuver was eased by a message to the President from Gov. Thomas E. Dewey, the defeated GOP Presidential candidate.

Dewey wished Mr. Truman "good health and divine guidance" in congratulating him on his forthcoming inauguration. And the President replied that "good wishes such as yours strengthen me for the tasks that lie ahead."

At the White House, Mr. Truman fanned the jubilee spirit by signing a bill giving a Thursday - Friday holiday to Federal workers in the Washington area. This gives them a four - day week-end for the festivities.

Even the weatherman was helpful. He promised no rain or snow when Mr. Truman and Vice President - Elect Barkley of Kentucky are sworn into office at noon tomorrow on the platform at the steps of the Capitol. Just winds, a cloudy sky and the temperature at 38 to 40 degrees.

The President was in good physical condition for the inauguration grind. His physician, Brig. Gen. Wallace H. Graham, announced he weighs 174 pounds — only four pounds over his best weight.

Some time during the day the President was expected to sign a bill giving himself a $25,000-a-year raise in salary and a $50,000 tax-free increase in his expense account. His present salary is $75,000.

During the day, too, the President will put the finishing touches on his inaugural address. It is expected to stress the theme of peace —the theme that has threaded the inaugural hopes of Presidents for generations.

With Washington crowded as it is, the inaugural committee passed out the happy word that no one will be sleeping on park benches. There will be about 25,000 rooms available in private homes to take care of the hotel overflow, an official said.

Especially honored visitors are Mr. Truman's old World War I buddies, veterans of Battery D, 129th Field Artillery, which the President commanded.

They will have breakfast with him tomorrow and they'll walk beside his automobile in the giant inaugural parade.

Coal Pact Provision Ruled Illegal

WASHINGTON — (AP) — The union shop provision in John L. Lewis' contract with soft coal operators was held illegal today by a National Labor Relations Board examiner. Little practical effect is expected from the finding, however.

The ruling grows out of two Taft-Hartley law provisions:

A union shop clause, under which employees must join the union, is permissible only by vote of the workers in an NLRB-supervised election.

A union can use the board's procedures only after its officers have signed non-Communist affidavits, which the United Mine Workers' chief has refused to do.

There has been every indication in Congress, however, that the union shop election rule will be knocked out in revision of the labor laws.

And there has been considerable talk of eliminating the non-Communist affidavit provision, too.

Either move apparently would let the mine workers' union shop clause stand up.

Repeal Of SC Poll Tax Is Advocated

COLUMBIA, S. C.—(AP)—Outright repeal of the state's poll tax was proposed today in the General Assembly.

Rep. Coleman of Fairfield introduced a resolution for a constitutional amendment to repeal the $1 tax, assessed against all males from 21 to 60 years old.

This resolution differed from a previous one proposing elimination for the tax as a prerequisite for general election voting. The latter, meanwhile, received a favorable Senate Judiciary Committee report.

Coldest Snap Of Winter Forecast For Midwest

KANSAS CITY — (AP) — The weather handed the midlands a one-two punch today, following up a snow that virtually paralyzed some areas with bitter cold.

The Kansas City area was hardest hit by the snow storm which began before dawn yesterday and ended shortly before midnight. The weather bureau recorded eight inches of snow.

Public and parochial schools in both Kansas City, Kas., and Kansas City, Mo., were closed today. The highway patrol reported some highways in northwest and central Missouri were virtually impassable.

Hotels were jammed with storm-bound visitors and extra cots were set up in dining rooms and guest rooms.

Temperatures headed downward over much of the mid-continent.

The coldest weather of the Winter season appeared in prospect for the northern plains and North central states for the next couple of days. The cold wave accompanied by strong northerly winds swept southward through the northern plains and across the Mississippi valley.

The mercury plunged to new low marks for the season in some communities. Low marks included 25 below at Minot and Pembina, N. D.; -20 at Miles City, Mont.; -15 at Willmar, Minn., and -10 at Minneapolis.

At 5:30 A. M. today Dickinson, N. D. reported 21 below zero and Chadron, Nebr., had 18 below. It was one above at Goodland in Western Kansas and four above at Tarkio, Mo.

At Topeka, Kas., hospitals moved some patients into corridors to make room for persons injured in falls on slippery streets and sidewalks.

Thousands of homes in St. Louis were without electricity last night. Falling tree limbs, coated with ice by a freezing rain, snapped electric company wires throughout the city. Many telephones also were out of order.

Immediate Peace Talks Proposed

Steps Taken To Halt Civil War

By JAMES D. WHITE

NANKING — (AP) — The Government today asked for a cease fire order on both sides in the Chinese civil war and immediate peace negotiations.

A formal statement by the Government information office announced the move to halt the three-year war.

The statement said:

"The executive Yuan, at a regular meeting, discussed at length the national situation and made the following statement:

"The Government, in deference to the general wishes of the people for an early restitution of peace, hereby makes known its desire for both Government and Communist forces to cease fire unconditionally and immediately and for both sides to appoint delegates to start peace negotiations."

MUST HAVE APPROVAL

The executive Yuan constitutionally may negotiate for peace. But the legislative Yuan must approve the proposals voted today by the executive Yuan.

The executive Yuan is composed of eleven ministers, four commissions and two administrative bodies. It is powerful but is at the back and call of the central executive committee of the Kuomintang Party, which, in turn, takes its orders from President Chiang Kai-Shek.

Chiang's views on the affairs today is eagerly awaited in the capital. The Government announcement, however, was taken to mean that he had at least given tentative approval to the peace move.

The bitterness of the struggle inside the executive Yuan was hinted at by a report Premier Sun Fo threatened to resign at today's meeting if a decision to negotiate was not made.

The group gaining the upper hand today includes members of the executive yuan who overcame confusion, panic and inertia as well as strong resistance when they forced the vote through without the visible approval of Chiang.

The opposing group is composed of Kuomintang diehards who, it is reported, seek to make Nanking a second Tientsin by remaining for a Communist attack before abandoning the city. The gravity of the problem is shown by fears expressed by some peace seeking officials that they will be assassinated by such elements.

CITY PEIPING

They point to the situation in Peiping, where a bomb wounded a peace delegate, former Mayor Hu Shi-Yuan, before he could leave to confer with the Reds on a cease fire agreement there. A source arriving here from Peiping said an examination of the fragments showed that it was a standard National hand grenade. This source said that an investigation led to the conclusion the bomb was planted by Kuomintang extremists in order to delay a negotiated peace in Peiping.

(At besieged Peiping, an 11-member peace mission from that ancient city was expected back from the encircling lines of the reds with an answer to their peace pleas. They went into the lines Monday under a truce flag.)

As the nation of 460,000,000 groped for a way to stop the civil war, foreign diplomats were informed the Government would begin moving from Nanking to Canton on Friday.

(Previously several ministries were reported to have moved some

See CHIANG on page 8-A

The Sheriff Said 'Still'; The Man Said 'Washpot'

NASHVILLE—(AP)—Sheriff O. Faulkner believes there's a moonshine liquor still with two handles on it in Nash County.

The sheriff was roaming about the countryside a few days ago when he came upon a man working in his front yard upon what appeared to be a copper still. The quick-thinking workman told the sheriff that the big container was "a washpot".

The sheriff rallied quickly and asked: "Where are the handles"?

The man still had some unused lengths of copper. Without answering the high-sheriff's question, he continued at his task until he had attached two handsome handles to the sides.

Blast Feared In California

Pipeline Break Threatens Town

RIVERSIDE, Calif. — (AP) — A break occurred today in a 30-inch natural gas pipeline at the nearby rural community of Moreno, which police warned its population of approximately 250 to evacuate immediately. They said a terrific explosion might occur at any moment.

Firefighting equipment from numerous cities, including Riverside, Hemet and Perris rushed to the scene.

The break occurred near the main section of Moreno, about five feet underground.

Within a short time, with a favoring wind, the fumes could be detected at March Air Base, about five miles distant. The roar could be heard a mile and a half away.

About 30 cars from the Riverside County Sheriff's office sped through Moreno urging the residents to leave immediately. Some were evacuated promptly.

Cars from the San Bernardino County Sheriff's office and the State Forestry Service also assisted.

The gas line is operated west to the Colorado River by the El Paso, Texas, Natural Gas. Co. From there it is maintained in California by the Southern California and Southern Counties Gas companies which serve numerous cities in the southern part of the state.

Within a short time after the break, the blue flames, spouting out with a terrific hissing noise, swept over nearby Alessandro Valley, which is sparsely populated.

The nearest cut-off in the line was reported to be at either Beaumont or Banning, about 30 miles distant.

Meanwhile, flames still leaped twenty feet high from the Big Inch pipeline at Morris, Ind., today, nine hours after natural gas in the artery caught fire.

But the fire was under control, said a spokesman for the Texas Eastern Transmission Corp., operator of the Big Inch and the Little Inch lines, adding, the fire probably would burn out "in an hour or so."

Gas in the line was shut off at its source, Longview, Texas, and pumping stations along the line were closed down to ease the pressure.

As soon as the fire, which broke out during a power failure at a pumping station, dies out, engineers will resume pumping gas through the Big Inch, which supplies numerous Eastern states. There are separate pumping stations for each line.

The gas will be routed past the fire scene through by-pass lines, laid long ago for just such an emergency.

The fire broke out in a pumping station about 10:15 (CST) last night in the pumping station from an electrical arc in connection with a power failure, one workman said.