

NAVY JET HITS APARTMENTS

Rail Strike Bill Passes Two Panels

By Gazette Leased Wires

WASHINGTON — Senate and house committees Thursday approved legislation to halt the Penn Central strike and, at the same time, to give congress and the administration time to provide a permanent remedy of railroad peace in the Northeast.

The senate labor committee acted first by unanimously approving a bill, H.R. 11-0, to halt the strike for 90 days.

Minutes later the house commerce committee gave its approval to a comparable measure that would put the workers back on the job until Sept. 24.

Ways To Save

The house bill also would require the President to return to congress within 60 days with a report on ways to save rail service in the Northeast.

The senate committee rushed its measure to the full senate which was standing by to act.

Earlier, assistant Republican leader Robert Griffin of Michigan introduced two bills to deal with the situation — one to force an end to the strike for 30 days, the other to set up long range machinery to handle general transportation strikes.

Treasury Secretary Shultz signaled the administration's position Wednesday during an appearance before the joint economic committee of congress. Asked if congress ought to intervene in the labor dispute, Shultz said he had no such recommendations. Shultz also said he was opposed to giving any more federal aid to the bankrupt railroad.

Since congress planned to recess after Thursday's sessions until Feb. 19, it was questionable whether emergency legislation could be enacted.

The union, meantime, said representatives of the UTU and the railroad were to meet in Washington later Thursday with labor department officials.

Griffin said he would prefer permanent legislation to deal with national emergency transportation strikes but was realistic enough to know this cannot be passed in time to affect the Penn Central crisis.

Close Operations

He said that, because of the shutdown, one major auto company would have to begin closing its operations by Thursday night, and he added, the entire auto and steel industries could be shut down in a few days.

Henry Ford II, chairman of the board of Ford Motor Co., sent a telegram to President Nixon, urging him to seek emergency legislation to require continued operation of the railroad's freight services while efforts are made to settle the tieup.

He said 18 Ford plants employing 55,000 would be forced to shut down in three to 10 days. A longer strike would completely halt operations, he said.

All passenger and freight service on the Penn Central railroad was halted Thursday by a strike of 28,000 conductors and brakemen trying to stop the nation's largest rail line from reducing train crews by a third.

Today's Index

Comics	31
Courthouse	3
Crossword	15
Daily Record	3
Deaths	3
Editorial Features	6
Farm	27
Financial	32
Marion	14
Movies	28, 29
Society	16-18
Sports	21-26
State	4, 5
Television	30
Want Ads	33-37

Cite Plans To Free POWs By Weekend

SAIGON (AP) — The four parties to the Vietnam cease-fire agreement held a series of meetings Thursday, making arrangements for the release of the first group of American prisoners from South Vietnam this weekend, U.S. officials said.

Pentagon sources said Thursday that the Viet Cong has indicated plans to free 27 American POWs Sunday night about 65 miles north of Saigon.

The sources cautioned that similar indications earlier this week had failed to materialize, but said the latest signs had been relayed to the Pentagon by American officials in Saigon and appeared firmer.

A senior American official in Saigon said Wednesday that the first group would be freed Saturday, but later reports from defense department sources in Washington said 27 prisoners of war would be handed over on Sunday.

Final Details

U.S. officials said representatives of the United States, North and South Vietnam and the Viet Cong were ironing out the final details Thursday. They would not elaborate.

There was still no firm word on release of the first American prisoners by North Vietnam, but indications were that it would come in Hanoi early next week during the visit of Henry Kissinger.

Delegates to the Joint Military Commission also were working on plans to get Viet Cong representatives to the seven regional headquarters.

(Continued: Page 3, Col. 5.)

Boy Seen in Illinois Not Guy Heckle

Cedar Rapids News--

The hope of finding a missing Cedar Rapids boy in Illinois was shattered about mid-day Thursday.

A waitress and a service station attendant in Carlock, Ill., had reported seeing a boy Sunday and Monday who matched the description of 11-year-old Guy Heckle, who disappeared Saturday night while on a Boy Scout camping outing near Toddville.

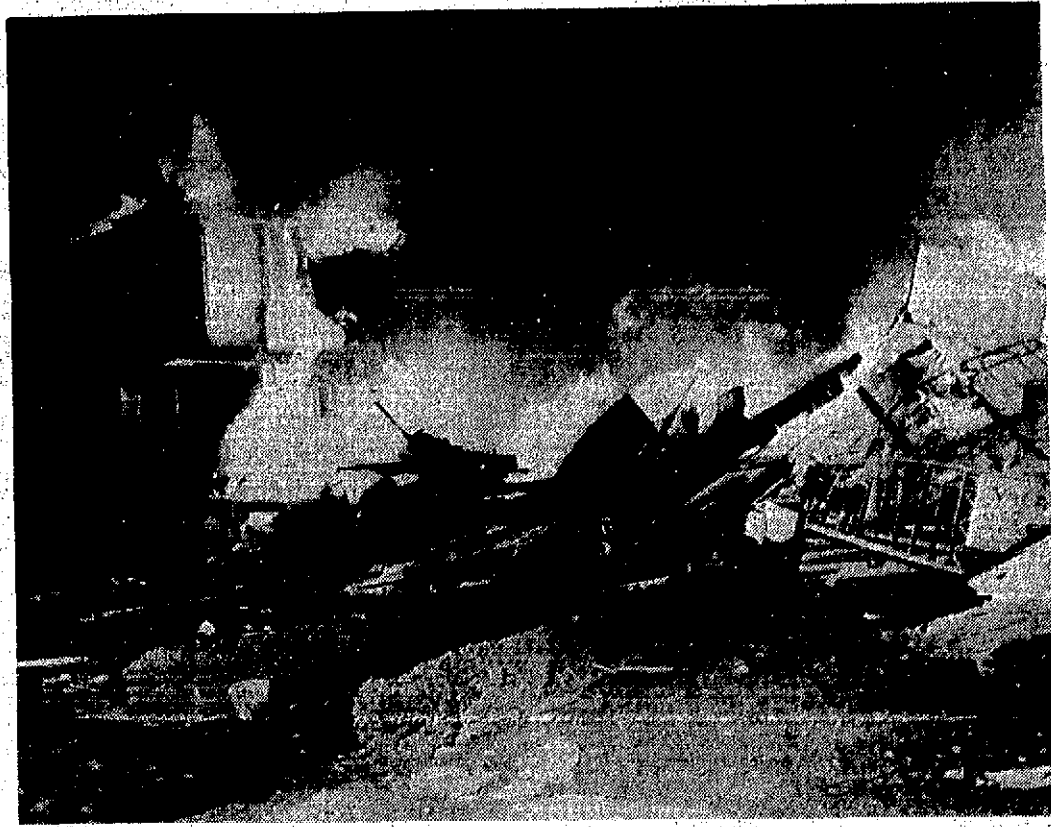
The two had provided an Illinois state trooper with a description of young Heckle, matched that of young Heckle.

Not Heckle

However, when confronted with a picture of the Cedar Rapids youth, the waitress and service station employee indicated he is not the same boy they encountered Sunday night and Monday morning.

The boy seen in Illinois reportedly had told the two persons there that he had run away from home in Iowa. He could

(Continued: Page 3, Col. 7.)



CRASH AFTERMATH — A damaged Alameda, Calif., apartment house burns, along with rubble from a demolished apartment complex, after a navy jet slammed into the buildings. (More photos on picture page.)

House Votes To Reinstate REAP

By Carl Craft

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Nixon lost an opening round in his multibillion-dollar spending bout with congress Wednesday as the house voted to force him to give the farmer 55 cents a day to save America's soil.

The vote was 251 to 142. Legislation to reinstate the Rural Environmental Assistance Program, a Farm-Belt legend known as REAP, was passed by the house and sent to the senate.

It was the first house floor action by the new congress in a clash with Nixon over the setting of spending priorities.

The vote, by which the house asserted that Nixon should restore life to a \$225 million program that he killed last December, came amid Republican predictions that Nixon would use multiple vetoes to keep his budget intact, while Democrats accused the White House of moving toward one-man rule.

Short of Two-Thirds

A veto is virtually certain if the bill also clears the senate. The house vote indicated backers are short of the two-thirds total needed to override a veto. Passage came on the votes of 199 Democrats and 52 Republicans, while 20 Democrats and 122 Republicans joined in opposing the legislation. Thus, 393 congressmen voted.

If this had been a ballot to override a veto, Nixon would have won because 262 votes in favor of the bill would have been needed to write it into law over the President's objections.

Nixon's victory would have been by 11 votes.

Refuse Compromise

Prior to the final vote, the house began its battle by refusing to accept a Republican-backed compromise.

Then, a GOP-supported attempt to write what Rep. Paul Findley (R-Ill.) termed "the concept of fiscal responsibility into the forced-spending bill" was turned down on a parliamentary point-of-order on grounds it was not germane to the measure at hand.

Republican Leader Gerald Ford of Michigan advised his colleagues that Nixon "has no

choice" and must cut spending if congress won't do it. "I have good reason to believe he will veto the bill," he said.

Poage Moves On

The chief handler of the legislation, Rep. W. R. Poage (D-Tex.), chairman of the agriculture committee, noted those repeated threats of a veto by Nixon, then yelled to his colleagues: "Let him crack his whip. Let him crack his whip — we're going to try to do what this house should do."

The house spent most of the afternoon arguing over the merits of the committee's bill to resuscitate REAP from the grave

in which the President had buried the program last Christmas. The soil conservation program, born during the dust storms of the Depression, provided federal payments for such farm projects as building ponds and terracing fields.

Elsewhere Wednesday in the dispute between congress and the President over spending policy:

Roy Ash, Nixon's budget chief, was scolded by members of a senate judiciary subcommittee, including Sen. Muskie (D-Maine) who claimed the administration seeks to "spoon feed" congress predigested and useless data while denying lawmakers the budget data it hands Nixon and Ash.

A bill aimed at giving congress more authority over federal regulatory commissions was introduced by Rep. Moss (D-Calif.), who declared federal boards are increasingly dominated by White House politics and interest groups.

Nixon asked congress Wednesday to authorize \$3.559 billion for foreign aid that he called essential to continuing efforts to build lasting peace. Congress quit last year without finishing action on his foreign aid proposals. Instead it enacted a temporary resolution that expires at the end of this month.

Navy Reports

A radio transmission was monitored from the pilot of a companion aircraft to the one that crashed, a Federal Aviation Administration spokesman in Los Angeles said.

He requested to make a 360 degree turn because he had lost his wing man, duty officer Jim Keogh said.

Another FAA source said the surviving pilot described how he looked over his shoulder and saw an explosion below.

Both planes, on a flight from Lemoore naval air station near Fresno, reportedly were on approach to the Alameda naval air station, two miles from the crash scene.

A navy spokesman confirmed that an A-7 from Lemoore was missing. He identified the pilot as Lt. Robert Lee Ward, 26, from Cary, N.C., who was attached to a navy squadron at Lemoore.

Capt. Richard Allmann, a safety officer for Naval Air Pacific fleet, said he received one eyewitness report that the plane was afire before it plunged into the apartments. He also said there had been reports that the pilot had ejected.

However, he could neither confirm nor deny the reports. James Haverberg, who lives

Fear 40 Died in Explosion, Fire

ALAMEDA, Calif. (AP)—Rescue crews searched Thursday for more victims believed buried in charred debris after a navy fighter jet crashed into an apartment house and exploded, touching off an inferno that spread to two adjoining apartment buildings. The local fire chief said as many as 40 persons may have perished.

Six persons were known dead and at least 17 were injured, with an unknown number of missing, including the plane's pilot. Many residents of the apartments were families of navy men assigned to the nearby base where the plane was headed when it crashed Wednesday night.

Fire Chief Ernest Servente estimated that 42 to 45 tenants were inside when the jet slammed into the four-story, 27-unit stucco apartment building.

Authorities said that in all, more than 200 persons were believed living in the buildings affected by the crash and fire in the San Francisco bay area community. One adjoining building was leveled and another damaged.

The building exploded in flames and witnesses said they saw only a very few people escape.

"I can't see how anyone could survive that. It just cremated them," Servente said.

Chief Deputy Coroner Roland Prahl said, "There's a good chance that many people were incinerated in certain areas by the intense fire."

Servente said that "it probably will take all day" for firemen, marines, coroner's officials and rescue squad members to sift through the heap of steaming rubble that remained of the apartments.

Clearing Rubble

Two big cranes were brought up to lift away large pieces of debris, but after four hours the cranes and men with shovels and pitchforks had made little headway.

Intense heat prevented workers from entering the rubble for several hours after the 8:25 p.m. PST crash. The seventeen injured persons, most from nearby buildings, were treated for lacerations, burns and other minor injuries at Alameda hospital, a spokesman said.

Military investigators prowled the area in a hunt for pieces of the aircraft.

Witnesses in the residential area said they heard a "whining" noise just before the crash. Then there was an explosion that sent flames and smoke several hundred feet into the air, they said.

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However, he could neither confirm nor deny the reports. James Haverberg, who lives

across the street from the building hit by the plane, described the crash:

"As soon as it happened... I was there in about 30 to 40 seconds and some guy helped me crawl in there and get this woman out and by that time it was really getting hot," he said.

"I didn't see anybody else get out. I didn't see anyone leave on their own. The entire thing was too hot. There was no warning at all."

"It felt like an earthquake," said Lupie Perez, who lived in the rear of the four-story building.

"We tried to get out, but the doors were jammed. Someone told us to get out in a hurry and kicked out the door, and we managed to get out," she said.

Eyewitnesses said the plane came in low, heading in a westerly direction, clipped one building and then plowed full force into the other.

"Worst Ever"

Alameda Mayor Terry LaCroix called the crash "the worst fire and holocaust ever in the city." Alameda, an island city adjacent to Oakland and across the bay to the east of San Francisco, has a population of about 66,000.

Patricia Posche, 19, of Alameda was a passenger in a car passing the building at the time of the crash.

"The jet hit flat on top of the building," she said. "The only ones who could have made it were on the bottom floor."

Miss Posche said a man, burned and clad only in a T-shirt and slacks, fell backwards out of a first floor window. She said the man started screaming. "My children are in there." She said she saw him then pull his wife and two small children outside.

Iowans Face Costly Auto Trips in Ohio

By Jerry Mursener

DES MOINES (UPI) — The executive secretary of the Iowa reciprocity board said Thursday a sweeping decision by the Ohio reciprocity board could produce "catastrophic effects" on Iowa motorists who want to drive through Ohio.

United Press International has obtained a copy of a decision by the Ohio board which would require "every motor vehicle which is or should be duly registered in Iowa" to have an Ohio registration to drive through the state after April 1.

The Ohio board's decision came after a long dispute between the two states over assessments against commercial carriers, but Executive Secretary Richard Howe said the Ohio action could "easily apply to every Iowa motor vehicle in Ohio."

Howe said the exact interpretation of the Ohio order would "place an unbelievable burden on the motorists of Iowa who want to drive through Ohio." He said the attorney general's office has been directed to investigate the latitude of the Ohio decision and to possibly seek an injunction action to delay the April 1 implementation.

Apply to All Vehicles?

Originally, Howe said, he believed that the order applied only to commercial vehicles — defined as trucks and trailers of more than 12,000 pounds. However, he said he now believes the interpretation could apply to

(Continued: Page 3, Col. 6.)

Today's Chuckle

Don't work up a head of steam before you find out what's cooking.

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