

Wilson Calls Bomb Scare Unbelievable

WASHINGTON, March 30 (AP)—Secretary of Defense Charles E. Wilson, speaking out amid efforts here and in London to soft-pedal atomic scare talk, today gave a cryptic description of the monster H-bomb blasts in the Pacific as "unbelievable."

Wilson declined to elaborate on the comment at his news conference. Asked if the American people might be told more about the tests, the defense chief replied:

"I don't think you should scare everybody so they can't sleep nights."

Wilson made the statement as other top officials apparently sought to calm the wave of atomic jitters that spread around the world as a result of belated reports about the so-called "runaway" H-bomb explosion at Bikini on March 1.

In related developments:
1. Chairman Lewis L. Strauss of the Atomic Energy Commission, newly returned from the Pacific test zone, conferred with President Eisenhower at the White House and later told newsmen he saw no reason for concern over the unexpected fury of the March 1 blast.

2. In London, Prime Minister Churchill told the House of Commons that on the basis of British scientific knowledge there was no foundation for fears that the American hydrogen tests might get out of control.

British outcries against the U.S. tests have been rising in volume since President Eisenhower told his news conference last Wednesday something must have happened in the March 1 explosion that surprised and astonished the scientists.

On Capitol Hill, Rep. Chester Hollifield (D-Calif.) who recently returned from Bikini, said in a speech to the House that "The danger of destroying civilization has become real."

Hollifield, a member of the Senate-Atomic Committee, said adequate defense against atomic attack is "a delusion," and he declared:

"Civil defense plans to evacuate American cities in advance of an attack is a confession of failure and desperation. Mass extermination of millions in any or all nations can occur during a week-end."

AEC Chairman Strauss, who has never held a formal news conference since he took over the nation's head atomic post last June, brushed aside a barrage of questions by newsmen as he emerged from an hour-long talk with Eisenhower at the White House.

Churchill Defends Bomb Experiments

LONDON, March 30 (AP)—Prime Minister Winston S. Churchill today asserted American H-bomb experiments in the Pacific are essential to free world defense. He spurned Laborite demands he use his influence to have them called off.

Churchill called the H-bomb the "greatest possible deterrent against the outbreak of World War III."

Seeking to calm the wave of anxiety raised here by the apparently limitless power unleashed in the Pacific tests, Churchill assured the House of Commons U.S. scientists were in complete control of the awesome weapon.

Published reports here had indicated that the first U.S. weapon, exploded March 1, had gotten out of control.

The Prime Minister revealed that British detection instruments recorded the explosion of a second weapon Saturday. He let the House know, moreover, that he is in "almost hourly" communication with Washington on atomic and other problems.

Despite prodding from Labor Party Leader Clement Attlee, Churchill refused to summon an immediate meeting of the Big Three on atomic and hydrogen weapons. But the 78-year-old statesman made clear he still hopes to meet with Soviet Premier Georgi Malenkov and President Dwight D. Eisenhower sometime in the future.

The Prime Minister told the House that not only did Britain have no power to stop the tests, but "I am sure that it would not be right or wise for us to ask that it should be stopped."

"When similar experiments were conducted by the Russians, I cannot remember that anyone suggested that such representations should be made to the Soviet Union."

President Theodor Heuss penned his name to the treaty in his Rhineland villa, completing a two-year process of German ratification.

With this step West Germany became the second of the six West European nations to complete action on the plan to create a two million man, six-nation army.

The Netherlands also has ratified. The Belgian Parliament has approved the treaty, and it now needs only King Baoudouin's signature. Luxembourg is believed certain to follow suit. Thus ratification by West Germany tossed EDC's fate squarely into the laps of France and Italy.

These two countries have yet to vote on the treaty signed by their governments in May, 1952. There is mounting pessimism here that EDC will founder in one or both of these countries. This feeling is shared by many top level German and Allied officials here.

In Italy, Premier Mario Scelba's Cabinet failed again today to act on EDC. Reports from Rome said the treaty has little chance for final passage before autumn.

In France, Premier Joseph Laniel's government has declined to set a date for a vote on EDC in the National Assembly despite pressure from the United States.

German government officials believe EDC would be ratified if it were placed before the Assembly now. But they said the latest word from Paris is that Laniel will not ask the Assembly for a decision before May 15, if then.

Congress Approves Cut in Excise Taxes

WASHINGTON, March 30 (AP)—Congress passed a bill today to reduce excise taxes by 999 million dollars a year, beginning Thursday, on a wide range of goods ranging from refrigerators to lipstick.

The measure now goes to the White House for President Eisenhower's signature. Congressional leaders predicted confidently that he would sign it tomorrow.

Plane Hits Mess Hall, Kills Five

FT. BRAGG, N.C., March 30 (AP)—A big Flying Boxcar, falling in flames, glanced off an officers quarters, bounced across a parade ground and crashed into a mess hall here today.

Seven men died in the crash and in flames that shot from the wreckage of the shattered plane and mess hall. At least 10 men were injured, the Air Force reported.

Five of the dead were in the plane and two in the mess hall. Two airmen and two soldiers in the plane were hurt. Five others in the mess hall, preparing dinner for an Army psychological warfare unit, were among the injured. One man was hurt fighting fire and trying to rescue the injured.

Only the time element kept the death toll from mounting into the scores when the plane crashed about 10 a.m. More than 150 soldiers would have been in the mess hall two hours later.

Scores of soldiers and civilians at this huge Army post stood horrified as the crippled C119 plane, which had just taken off from adjacent Pope Air Force Base for Louisville, Ky., turned in a cloudy sky and tried desperately to make it back to Pope.

The pilot, Lt. Albert W. Parks, 25, of Cannelton, Ind., was credited by the Air Force with a heroic effort to save his plane. Injured, he died three hours after the plane crashed.

The mess hall, torn apart by the force of the crash, burst into flames. The wreckage, fed by gasoline from the plane, burned for several hours.

House Strikes Provision

WASHINGTON, March 30 (AP)—The House struck from an appropriations bill today a provision which would have permitted starting 20,000 new public housing units in the next year.

Though the public housing issue is expected to be revived later, today's action left little hope for the program of President Eisenhower, who has asked authority for 35,000 units a year in the next four years.

The House approved the excise cuts 391-1 after conflicting Senate and House versions of the legislation were ironed out by a compromise committee.

Then the Senate passed the compromise 72-8 acting to give the American public its first general reduction in excise taxes in 30 years.

James C. Hagerty, White House press secretary, said the President probably would sign the bill tomorrow morning. If he does, taxes on refrigerators and similar household appliances will be cut in half April 1, and the rates for jewelry, sporting goods, cosmetics, and many other products, will drop.

Although the administration is not happy about losing so much revenue at this time, the President is not expected to veto the bill. Congressional leaders pointed out that while it cuts revenues 999 million it also extends 1951 excise increases which will bring the government \$1,077,000,000 in the next year. These increases were due to expire April 1.

The administration has forecast a budget deficit of \$2,900,000,000 for the fiscal year beginning July 1. With the latest cuts, this deficit may rise about another billion dollars.

Many merchants and manufacturers figure the tax cuts will give a big boost to retail sales.

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Europe Defense Treaty Gets German Ratification

BONN, Germany, March 30 (AP)—Disarmed West Germany ratified the European Defense Community treaty today, but the belief grew among Germans that this American-supported plan to strengthen Western defenses against Russia is dying.

President Theodor Heuss penned his name to the treaty in his Rhineland villa, completing a two-year process of German ratification.

Powers Ease Russian Trade

LONDON, March 30 (AP)—The Western Big Three agreed tonight to ease the controls on trading with Soviet Russia—but with strict security safeguards.

A communique issued after a two-day conference among U.S. Foreign Aid Chief Harold Stassen and top British and French officials said the three countries would work for "an expansion of trade" with the Soviet bloc in Europe "compatible with security requirements."

They ruled out any change in the tight controls on trade with Red China and North Korea.

The communique said that the United States, Britain, and France will open talks with the Allied countries with a view to revising the bans on trade with Russia "by narrowing substantially their scope and increasing their effectiveness."

TV Grid Control Asked

KANSAS CITY, March 30 (AP)—The NCAA's television committee today recommended a nationally controlled TV football program and promptly ran into major opposition from the Big Ten conference on the issue of regional telecasting.

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