

VOL. 15.—NO. 52.

WILMINGTON, N. C., SUNDAY, OCTOBER 24, 1943

FINAL EDITION

PRICE FIVE CENTS

### Five Railroad Unions Order Strike Ballot

Step Taken To Point Up Demands For Substantial Wage Increases

### REJECT 4-CENT HIKE

Robertson Says 'Hundreds And Hundreds' Have Urged Strike Call

CHICAGO, Oct. 23.—A nationwide strike vote among 350,000 members was ordered today by officials of the five operating railroad unions to point up their demands for substantial wage increases.

General chairmen of the five labor organizations voted unanimously to poll the rank and file on the walkout question after they had decided to reject a pay hike of four cents an hour proposed by an emergency board last month. The workers asked a 20 per cent raise, with a minimum increase of \$3 a day, ten months ago, and they deemed the board's suggested boost an "insult."

Will Prepare Ballots Delegates to the joint meeting are to appoint three men from each union to prepare and distribute the strike ballots. Officials estimated the results would be known in 20 or 30 days.

Some inkling of the sentiments of members throughout the country was provided by David Robertson, president of the brotherhood of locomotive firemen and engineers, who reported "hundreds and hundreds" had sent messages advocating a strike call.

If the members vote for a strike, a spokesman said, a date will be set and the next move will be up to the government. The government presumably would take all steps necessary to forestall paralysis of the carriers at a time when they are transporting unprecedented loads of war material.

Adopt Resolution The labor leaders adopted a resolution maintaining the overall cost of living had gone up almost 25 per cent since January, 1941, the date used in the controverted little steel formula, while food costs alone had soared more than 40 per cent.

The strike referendum will be conducted among members of the brotherhoods of locomotive engineers, locomotive firemen and

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### 434 NURSES PASS N. C. BOARD TESTS

Twenty-Three Wilmington Women Included On List Granted Licenses

RALEIGH, Oct. 23.—A record "class" of 434 graduate nurses passed North Carolina board of nurse examiners examinations conducted in Raleigh and Winston-Salem August 24-26 and have been licensed. Miss Bessie M. Chapman, board secretary, said today.

Miss Chapman said 475 nurses reported for the exams, with the largest group ever to report, and the 434 who passed constituted the largest number ever licensed at any one examination.

Many of the new licensees will join either the Army or Navy nurse corps within a few weeks, she said.

Fifty-one nurses were registered in recognition of their registration in other states.

Elmore Culp of the Duke University Hospital School of Nursing

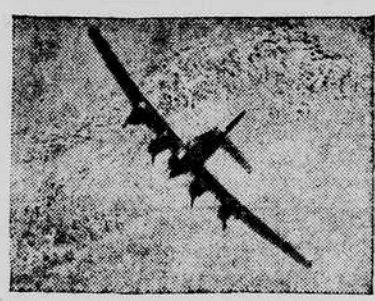
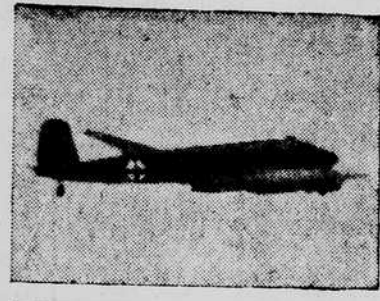
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### Labor Turnover In Vital Industries Shows Drop

The labor turnover in the Wilmington area has dropped in essential industries as a whole at least 25 per cent in the past 90 days, Felix A. Scroggs, manager of U. S. Employment Service, said today.

This figure, he said, includes Camp Davis and Fort Fisher, which have shown only a small decrease in turnover due to the travel necessary to get to jobs and the type of persons employed, most of whom accept work more or less on a temporary basis.

### GOING, GOING, GONE



(U. S. Army Air Force Photos From NEA) This is the death story of a big four-motored Focke-Wulf Kurier raider that was caught at sea by an American Liberator on anti-submarine patrol. The cross on its side made a fine target for the Liberator's bullets as the German plane twisted and turned in evasive maneuvers. But it was finally shot out of the sky and crashed flaming into the sea.

### Broughton, Darden Call Tobacco Market Holiday

### SEEK BETTER PRICES

Governors Ask Warehouses To Close Wednesday, Thursday, Friday

RALEIGH, Oct. 23.—Governor Broughton, acting jointly with Governor Darden of Virginia, tonight called for a sales holiday in the three mule-cured belts in an effort to halt declining tobacco prices.

The governor said he and Governor Darden are asking warehouses to close Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, at least. During this period, Governor Broughton said, every effort will be made to raise prices, particularly for lower grades of tobacco.

SHARP DROP The action was taken following a conference here today between Governor Broughton and tobaccoists. Governor Broughton called the session after prices on lower grades of tobacco dropped as much as 16 cents a pound this week.

The tobaccoists passed a resolution suggesting that a holiday be called for at least two days and to continue as long as the two governors deem necessary.

The tobaccoists also asked that Representative Harold Cooley, who was present, confer with other North Carolina Congressmen and the Commodity Credit Cooperation in an effort to halt further price declines. The congressmen were asked to request CCC to restore former buyer allotments and to restore tobacco prices to their former levels.

At Wilson, N. M. Schaum, chairman of the U. S. Tobacco Association's sales committee, said no action would be necessary by his group if the two groups of the two governors called the holiday.

In opening the meeting, Governor Broughton said that farmers who cooperated with a governmental request to harvest food, feed and fiber crops before marketing their tobacco "have been penalized because of the price declines."

"If the situation continues," he said, "confidence of farmers in their government will be shaken."

From each of the three belts—old, middle and new—the opinion reports of sagging prices, the opinion generally was that recently reduced buyer allotments caused buyers to concentrate on better grades, passing over the lower

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### WEATHER

FORECAST NORTH CAROLINA: Slightly warmer Sunday and Sunday evening. Cape Fear River stage at Fayetteville at 9 a. m. on Oct. 23, 9.04 feet.

WASHINGTON, Oct. 23.—(AP)—Weather bureau report of temperature and rainfall for the 24 hours ending 8 p. m.

Station	High	Low	Pre.
Asheville	77	45	0.00
Atlanta	75	48	0.00
Birmingham	78	35	0.00
Boston	54	35	0.00
Chicago	48	45	0.00
Cleveland	48	45	0.00
Detroit	48	45	0.00
Fort Worth	81	72	0.16
Galveston	48	45	0.00
Kansas City	52	50	0.00
Louisville	80	49	0.00
Memphis	81	55	0.00
Miami	85	64	0.00
Mobile	81	64	0.00
New Orleans	81	64	0.00
New York	55	47	0.00
Norfolk	68	46	0.00
Pittsburgh	69	49	0.00
Richmond	53	50	0.53
St. Louis	76	49	0.00
Savannah	59	54	0.00
Washington	72	47	0.00
Wilmington	72	47	0.00

### 88 Men Perish In Fire After Tanker Collapses

One of Two Vessels Explodes Following Collision Off Florida Coast

### 28 MEN ARE SAVED

Coast Guard Races To Scene After Persons On Shore Sound Alarm

PALM BEACH, Fla., Oct. 23.—(AP)—Two blacked-out tankers collided off the Florida coast in the darkness Wednesday night and 88 men perished in the flames which spread from the explosion of one of the vessels laden with thousands of gallons of aviation gasoline.

The navy permitted announcement of the disaster today after investigating salvage possibilities. Twenty-eight merchant crewmen and members of navy gun crews were saved, most of them leaping overboard as the flames whipped over the decks and spread out over the water.

### Sound Alarm

Persons ashore heard the explosion and saw the towering flames and gave the alarm which sent Coast Guard craft racing to the scene.

One of the ships, northbound and riding low in the water with the weight of the gasoline, had 43 crewmen aboard, including seven naval gunners, and only seven men survived.

The other tanker, southbound in ballast, was manned by a crew of 73, including 25 gunners, and 21 reached safety. Most of those on deck perished instantly. Christopher P. Finley, 28, of Miami, third assistant engineer aboard the empty tanker, was at his post at the time of the crash, at 10:50 a. m.

"I knew something terrible had happened," he declared, "but every hand in the engine room stayed at his post, and that saved a lot of lives."

### Explosions Follow

"Two explosions followed immediately after the collision."

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### MAYOR PROCLAIMS ANNUAL NAVY DAY

Cameron Calls For Observance By Wilmingtonians On October 27

MAYOR BRUCE B. CAMERON issued a proclamation Saturday, asking for observance in Wilmington of Navy Day on Wednesday, October 27.

A complete Navy Day program of arrangements is nearing completion under the leadership of John A. Sheehan, chairman. Participation in the observance of Navy Day is being asked of the schools, churches, USO clubs, merchants, and the general public.

The mayor's proclamation follows in full: "Whereas, by official designation October 27 has been set apart as Navy Day; and

"Whereas, the Secretary of the Navy has officially designated the Navy League of the United States as official sponsor to obtain appropriate observance of Navy Day; and

"Whereas, the Navy League of the United States has called upon the people of the nation to devote some time during the week of October 24 to October 30 to appropriate celebration of the accomplishments of our Navy, and particularly on October 27 pay respect to

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### Eisenhower Warns Nation Faces Long Victory Road

NEW YORK, Oct. 23.—(AP)—Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, speaking from Algiers on a war bond program, warned the people of the United States tonight that "it will be a long, long way to final victory, over a rough, bitter road."

Secretary of Treasury Henry Morgenthau, Jr., who also spoke from Algiers over the same program broadcast by CBS, said the American people had over-subscribed the Third War Bond drive by nearly \$4,000,000,000.

Gen. Eisenhower declared: "This is a hard war, a bitter, bloody war. Make no mistake. It will be a long, long way to final victory, over a bitter, rough road. Our men know it, and are ready for it. But they want to be assured above all else that the home front is behind them."

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# RUSSIANS TAKE MELITOPOL AND DRIVE TOWARD CRIMEA; NAZIS IMPROVE ROME LINE

## IN NEW POSITIONS

Thrown Back By Fifth Army After Launching Bitter Counter-Attack

## COSTS ARE HEAVY

Allied Planes Press Home Attacks On Troops, Gun Positions

## BY EDWARD KENNEDY

ALLIED HEADQUARTERS IN THE SOUTHWEST PACIFIC, Sunday, Oct. 24.—(AP)—Japanese hopes of reaching the New Guinea coast on the Huon peninsula in strength were blasted Friday by determined attacks delivered by Australian group troops and American bombers.

These attacks blunted the enemy spearhead and forced him to fall back from the village of Katika westward to a depth of 1,100 yards toward his inland jungle strong positions at Sattelberg. The Australians, who thus

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## Allies Close Jap Escape Route On Huon Peninsula

closed the narrow corridor which Japanese earlier in the week had driven to the coast about five miles north of Allied-won Finschhafen, counted more than 510 enemy dead.

While these units of the Australian Ninth division succeeded in blocking the coastal outlet of escape for considerable enemy forces, American-flown Mitchells swept over the rear areas. The sordid destruction with their bombs and more than 55,000 rounds of 50 caliber machinegun fire.

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## Yugoslav Patriots Take Four Slovenian Villages

SCORE NEW GAINS

Others Involved In Heavy Fighting With Nazis Near Mount Chakor

LONDON, Oct. 23.—(AP)—Yugoslav partisans under the dashing young lawyer-general, Petar Dabcevic, today were involved in heavy fighting with Nazi motorized units in the vicinity of Mount Chakor on the Montenegrin-Albanian frontier, while other patriots captured four villages in southwest Slovenia.

A communique of the Yugoslav liberation army reported the fall of the strategic Slovenian centers of Kopriva, Visnyvrh, Novi Grad and Gradisce, hamlets which are important because they command lines of communication in a difficult mountainous area.

## Strike Along Rail Line

The partisans also struck successfully along the railway line serving the territory between the Sava and Danube rivers in eastern Croatia, said a war bulletin broadcast by the free Yugoslav radio.

German motorized and tank forces were under almost continuous attack in the Croatian province of Lika, near Jegerana and near Dolny-Lapac. The partisans also sank a German ship off the Dalmatian coast.

The communique reported that two enemy tanks were destroyed in the fighting on the Montenegrin-Albanian frontier. Gen. Dabcevic's command there consists of units of the second corps. The youthful general won a military reputation fighting in the republican army in the Spanish civil war.

On the southeastern Balkan front the Germans claimed they occupied Stampalia, another in the Dodecanese island group 28 miles southwest of Cos, freeing a large number of German prisoners held there by the British since late September.

Claims of the island's capture yesterday lacked Allied confirmation but if the German propaganda (Continued on Page Nine; Col. 6)

## 20 MEN KILLED IN PLANE CRASH

Craft Falls At Fort Benning While On Night Parachute Mission

FORT BENNING, Ga., Oct. 23.—(AP)—Twenty officers and men were killed last night when an Army transport plane crashed at Lawson Field here while on a night parachute mission the public relations office announced today.

The dead included two officers and three enlisted men of the Army Air Corps and 15 enlisted men from the parachute troops here.

The plane crashed shortly after taking off from Lawson Field, public relations officers said. They reported it was a routine flight to permit the paratroopers to make a night jump, now a part of their regular training.

Fire broke out when the plane crashed, trapping all occupants. The list of dead and next of kin: Air Corps personnel: 2nd Lt. Gerald A. Scafer, Pitts-

burgh, Pa. 1st Lt. Milton W. Grieg, Baltimore, Md. Sgt. Robert W. Farmer, Dayton, O. Pfc. Donald M. Schroeder, Los Angeles, Calif. (Continued on Page Two; Col. 2)

## PURSUE GERMANS

Soviets Are Racing To Cut Off Crimea At Perekop And Kherson

## 20,000 NAZIS LOST

Fall Of Key City Undermines Entire German Strategy In South

LONDON, Sunday, Oct. 24.—(AP)—The Russian army captured the key city of Melitopol after 11 days of street fighting and swept on southward today through the flat, muddy plains toward the Crimea.

Moscow reports said Soviet motorized columns swung out in pursuit of the Germans in a race to cut off the Crimea at Perekop and Kherson after smashing the last-ditch German stand in Melitopol.

The Germans lost more than 20,000 men in their vain attempt to establish a winter line in the ravaged city and a triumphant Moscow communique, recorded by the Soviet monitor, described Nazi losses as "extraordinarily heavy."

## Battle In Streets

The Germans had rushed infantry divisions, tanks and artillery into the city, hoping to halt the Russians, but bitter hand-to-hand fighting forced back the defenders street by street. More than 4,000 Germans were killed in the last day alone while 57 tanks and 18 guns were wrecked. Large quantities of war material were captured and several hundred prisoners taken.

The fall of Melitopol yesterday undermined the entire German defense strategy in the south. Ahead of the Russians were 135 miles of indefensible steppes leading to the mouth of the Dnieper river.

Premier Marshal Joseph Stalin announced the victory in a special order of the day describing Melitopol, on the Molochna river and the main railway into the Crimea, as "the most vital strategic center of German defenses" on the southern front.

## Guards Approaches

The city "guards the approaches to the Crimea and the lower reaches of the Dnieper," Stalin pointed out in his triumphant announcement, perhaps indicating it intends to send his armies without pause into the Crimean peninsula, where it is estimated a German force of about 500,000 men is entrenched.

Today's victory definitely shattered the German front from Zaporozhe to the Sea of Azov, which Hitler apparently had planned to hold as a continuation of the already-broken Dnieper line.

The triumph also brought a new threat to the large German armies cornered approximately 50 miles to the northwest in the great bend of the Dnieper. Russian armies driving down behind these forces from the north made further progress today.

The Soviet daily communique, recorded by the Soviet monitor, reported continuing advances both south and southeast of Kremenchuk, where they last were reported but 15 miles from the ore center of Krivoi Rog, and south of Peryaslav, where they began

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## Tripartite Conference Continue Discussions

MOSCOW, Oct. 23.—(AP)—The foreign affairs executives of the United States, Britain and Russia held their fifth day of meetings today.

The United States has been fully informed over why foreign secretary Anthony Eden of Britain saw Premier Marshal Joseph Stalin Thursday and later Russian commissar of foreign affairs Vyacheslav Molotov.

Hull conferred for the second time this week with Chinese Ambassador Fu Ping Sang before today's meeting. He also seen the Mexican ambassador, the Australian chargé d'affaires, and Canadian minister.

## REDS MAY RESUME POLISH RELATIONS

Reported To Have Agreed To Take Up Dealings With Exiled Regime

LONDON, Oct. 23.—(AP)—A Berlin broadcast, quoting the Stockholm Tidningen, said today it had learned that Russia had agreed to resume diplomatic relations with the Polish government-in-exile in London.

Russia broke relations with the Polish government April 26, accusing it of acting in concert with the Germans in pressing charges, originating in Berlin, that the Soviets had slain 10,000 Polish officers near Smolensk.

The German broadcast, recorded by the Ministry of Information, said the Stockholm newspaper carried the report in the form of London correspondence saying the Russians had handed a memorandum to the U. S. and British ambassadors in Moscow recently.

This German account was similar to some stories published in London. The Russians here said they knew nothing about it. The Poles answered only: "Ask your ambassador to Moscow—he should know."

It was reported that the Soviets, as one term of the agreement, would recognize all Poles from western Poland now in Russia as Polish subjects, but would

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## Great Fleet Of British Bombers Attacks Kassel

LONDON, Oct. 23.—(AP)—A great fleet of British four-engine bombers penetrated a heavy screen of fighters and murky weather last night and dropped 1,500 long tons of bombs in an effective attack on the German armament city of Kassel, losing 44 bombers on the mission.

A subsidiary force hit Frankfurt and the small but swift plywood Mosquito bombers raided the Cologne area.

The RAF's losses on the Kassel raid raised the total for the month to 163 in nine major operations, but the Air Ministry described the blow as highly effective. Returning crews brought back photographs showing huge fires they left burning under a pall of smoke filling the skies for

a height of more than three miles. The Nazis threw up an unusually heavy fighter force to check this latest phase of an air bombardment running through both day and night, but the British were out in what was described as "very great strength" and the tonnage equalled or exceeded the 1,500 long tons dropped the last time the city was hit, on Oct. 3.

The 44 downed planes represented the heaviest loss to the British bomber command since the Aug. 31 raid on Berlin, when 47 aircraft were missing, but the number was under the RAF's record loss of 58 suffered in the Aug. 23 attack on Berlin.

Still torn by the Oct. 3 pounding (Continued on Page Nine; Col. 4)