

Willys-Overland Gets Army Favor On Midget Cars

By I. F. STONE
Special Correspondent

WASHINGTON, Feb. 15.—Army technicians consider weight the important factor in the midget cars it has ordered for cross-country work. They insist that a car that weighs more than 2000 pounds would be too heavy for its crew to lift out of ditches and shell-holes.

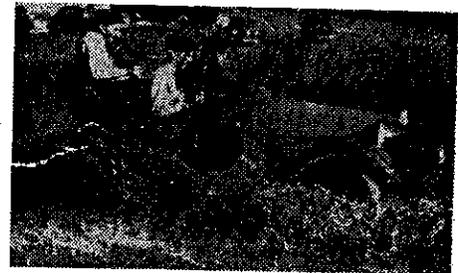
Nevertheless weight specifications were lifted last month to please Henry Ford when the Defense Commission awarded him a \$1,400,000 contract to build them. Now the limit has been raised again to meet the desires of Willys-Overland, which has signed a contract for 1500 cars.

The terms of the new order are so strange that they will figure in the forthcoming inquiry by the House Military Affairs Committee into the Ford midget-car award. The agreement sets a minimum weight of 2268 pounds but no maximum.

Representative Charles I. Faddis (D., Pa.), sponsor of the investigation, which will concentrate on granting special favors to selected defense bidders, commented yesterday that it was odd to place a bottom rather than a top limit in a contract for a car that the Army was trying to keep as light as possible.

Cars Reviewed

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On Jan. 18, PM revealed that Bantam had been instructed to build the heavier car. Since that time, the technical commission which advises the infantry, cavalry and artillery has declared that 2160 pounds was the absolute maximum of allowable weight. Bantam's representative here, when told of the new 2268-pound minimum, said: "I'll have to put pig iron in my car to make it heavy enough."

Army Crashes Bring Check-Up

BALBOA, Canal Zone, Feb. 15.—U. S. Army mechanics checked all P-36 types of Curtiss pursuit planes at Albrook Field today for some common defect to explain the crashes of four such planes in two days, with three fatalities.

The possibility that carbon monoxide gas was leaking into the cockpits through some unnoticed apertures was being investigated.