

Who Killed Cock Robin?



Washington Merry-Go-Round

By DREW PEARSON

WASHINGTON — Unlike the proverbial wise-crack about the first hundred days of matrimony, the first hundred days of the life of any president are the easiest.

Today Harry Truman begins the second half of his first year in the White House and already he has begun to feel the pinch of increasing trouble. Here is the report card on how he has done so far.

POLITICS — Politically, Harry has outshone the "old master." He has steered a medium course between southern reactionaries and big city liberals, kept his fingers on the pulse of the country, striven for national unity, and leaned over so far to please congress it's almost become a sin. You can't please both sides indefinitely, however, and the time has just about come when Truman will have to choose between the liberals and the conservatives.

CABINET—Taken man for man, Truman's cabinet is better than Roosevelt's. Truman believes in delegating responsibility and eliminating too much centralized control. His cabinet, however, has one administrative weakness. Most of its members served time in congress; therefore, have drifted into the bad habit of spending more time shaking hands with visitors than running their department. Important administrative problems are muffed because the cabinet chiefs simply don't have time both to talk to people and make decisions.

WHITE HOUSE EFFICIENCY—Truman so far has operated a more efficient administration than Roosevelt. He likes to decide things quickly, doesn't let them hang fire. Sometimes this gets him into trouble, as in the case of his statement that all lend-lease would be forgiven—a pronouncement later publicly reversed by Secretary of State Byrnes.

FRIENDS—This may be Harry Truman's Waterloo. He loves convivial friends, isn't always too careful how he picks them, is intensely loyal, whoever they are. If you served with Harry in the Missouri national guard or in battery D, or helped him in the old Pendergast days or in his campaign for vice president, he doesn't forget it. Roosevelt put principles before friends, Truman puts friends before principles. One old friend, Edward McKim, a Nebraska insurance man, got him into trouble. Another insurance friend, George Allen, the Mississippi jester, is likely to get him into more.

ARMY-NAVY—As head of the senate investigating committee, Truman got significant insight into the war and navy departments. He knew their faults and failings better than most. But, as president, he has done almost nothing to clean house. This may cause him trouble among several million GIs who know what's what inside the army and navy.

Pearl Harbor Whitewash? Up on Capitol Hill, certain solons have discovered that hindsight is better than foresight regarding the appointment of a committee counsel for the Pearl Harbor probe. The man they selected is William D. Mitchell, attorney general in the Hoover administration.

But it is now remembered when Herbert Hoover and General MacArthur drove 15,000 bonus veterans out of Washington, Mitchell was called upon to whitewash it—which he did.

Hoover sent his attorney general out to the American Legion convention at Portland, Ore. Mitchell gave such a picture of the bonus army eviction Washington police chief, Gen. Pelham D. Glassford, prepared a document, published nationally, contradicting Mitchell.

Some solons are wondering whether the forthcoming Mitchell report on Pearl Harbor will be another whitewash.

Capital Chaff

The war department has just received a letter from the giant Texas cotton broker, Anderson, Clayton & Co., asking permission to reopen their branch in Osaka, Japan. The war department, after considering carefully, decided it was a matter for the state department. So the letter was sent to the head of the economic section of the state department, who is Will Clayton, senior partner in Anderson, Clayton. Wonder what his decision will be. . . . It was only at the last minute that the navy was given the job of taking over strike-bound oil plants instead of the petroleum administration for war. Originally PAW was to do the job, but labor leaders protested the PAW was packed with big oil company executives. So last week, navy officers spent most of one night at PAW offices, changing already prepared telegrams to read "U. S. Navy" instead of "PAW" . . . Reconversion czar John Snyder has recommended to President Truman a set of mediation boards for each strike-threatened industry. These boards would investigate how much wages have dropped in each industry and recommended what wage increases were necessary to make up for increased living costs, etc. What Truman will do about the recommendation is still undecided. . . . Maj. Gen. Stephen G. Henry, assistant chief of staff and General Marshall's chief aide on army personnel, has been overseas making a quick study of the discharge system. War department brass hats at last have woken up to the rebelliousness of enlisted men over discharge inefficiency. General Henry hopes to speed it up. . . . The army is keeping doctors in Panama despite 103 points and three years' service. Meanwhile the shortage of civilian doctors in the U. S. A. continues.

Side Glances



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"Oh, there are lots of things to talk about with a returned soldier —tell him how you appreciate the nice things victory brings us, nylons, for instance!"

McKENNEY ON BRIDGE

By WILLIAM E. MCKENNEY America's Card Authority

CZECHS PLAY SMART HAND OF BRIDGE

I want to thank Dr. Paul Stern, general secretary of the Tournament Bridge association of London, England, for the hands he sent over to us during the war.

A hand of bridge deal. Dealer is North. Cards: ♠ J1098, ♥ 4, ♦ QJ2, ♣ KQJ10. Dealer's hand: ♠ A7643, ♥ Q9632, ♦ K3, ♣ A. Rubber—E-W vul. South West North East: 1♠ 2♣ 2♦ Pass, 2♥ Pass 3♥ Pass, 4♥ Pass Pass Double. Opening—♠ K. 15

representative player of Czechoslovakia. The ace of clubs won the first trick, a spade was led and won by East with the king. The nine of clubs came back and South trumped. The ace of spades was cashed, but the next spade, ruffed with dummy's seven, was over-ruffed by East with the eight. East returned another club which South ruffed with the three of hearts. King and ace of diamonds were cashed, and the third diamond ruffed with the six of hearts. Declarer led the nine of hearts to the ace and cashed the ten of diamonds, discarding the six of spades. Eight of clubs was played, and South was able to make his queen of hearts for the tenth trick.

IN FORMER YEARS

Thirty Years Ago—A party of 13 La Granders today ignored the fact that it was the 13th of the month, and enjoyed the drive to Beaver creek which in recent weeks has become almost purely a pleasure trip, replete with scenic attractions.

There has been shipped out of Cove and Union during the past 12 days 40 cars of fresh Italian prunes.

Tax payers held a mass meeting in the city hall last night to discuss the Sunday closing law. As has been the tenor of discussion throughout the whole propaganda for Sunday closing, the objections raised were not aimed at the main features or the principles involved, but at that phase which seems to permit drug stores and bakeries to compete with the cigar dealers and confectioneries.

Fifteen Years Ago—Directing a strong oral attack on Senator Charles McNary and presenting his platform, Elton Watkins of Portland opened his senatorial campaign in eastern Oregon yesterday, delivering two talks.

Ten Years Ago—Jean Ann Richards of Union was doubly rewarded at Portland when her Herford was judged grand champion steer in the 4-H club division of the Pacific International. Besides the title she won high praise from Governor Martin.

BARBS

People who bet usually find out that most race horses go 'round in circles that get nowhere.

The first batch of 1945 income tax returns has been released and the only change is a slightly different type. You can, however, still read 'em and weep.

Puzzled over the price ceiling, the New York State Fair Bureau



Federation wants the lid taken off of sauerkraut. Is that being nice to the neighbors?

The elevator strike in New York brought one main thought: let's get it over with and give the riders a lift.

President Truman received an ancient peace pipe from the Sioux tribe of South Dakota. No, the Indians givers do not intend to take it back.

This Curious World



WE, THE WOMEN

By RUTH MILLETT

"Don't you rather hate to see your husband swap his uniform for civilian clothes? Most men look so much better in uniform," the bright, young thing said to the war wife whose husband had at last won his right to a discharge button.

"NOT ON YOUR LIFE," said the wife. "It was in a uniform that he left us three years ago."

"It was in a uniform he said goodbye before sailing for overseas."

"It was in a uniform I saw him when I had nightmare pictures of his being wounded, of his never coming back."

"It is only in uniform that his young son knows him—and most of that familiarity is with a photograph."

"A uniform interrupted my husband's career. It cost us the home we had to sell when he went into service. It put years of

separation and unshared experience between us. It caused me more loneliness and worry than I have ever known."

"But while a war was being fought I was proud of the uniform—in spite of all it did to our security and established life."

"But the war is over now—and I'm glad to see the uniform go into moth balls."

"My husband has never looked as handsome as he does now—so far as I'm concerned—in that brand-new civilian suit."

"It means he belongs to us once more—instead of belonging to the army."

"It means we can begin to rebuild our life again—to make plans on our own, to share again the experience of living."

"To every other woman a man may look better in a uniform. But to his wife he never looked so good as in the first civilian suit he puts on when his days of wearing a uniform are over."

Behind Scenes in Washington

By PETER EDSON, La Grande Evening Observer Washington Correspondent

WASHINGTON—Congress is investigating whether army officers who have suffered amputations are being better fitted with artificial limbs than enlisted men, who have lost legs and arms.

Evidence that this situation might exist recently came to the attention of the house subcommittee on aid to the physically handicapped. The war department was presenting its witnesses—mostly officers who had gotten artificial limbs and reported that they were well satisfied with them—to testify before the committee. A couple of ex-GIs who had been given artificial legs and were trying to work in a steel mill in Baltimore heard about the hearings and decided to present their side of the case.

One of them charged that the men who fitted the artificial devices "catered more to officers. Unless you come from a special family who has enough money to buy you your own leg, it looks like you have to put up with one of these," he said.

He said the leg the army had given him never fit properly and it had been giving him so much trouble he wasn't able to make enough money to support himself.

The other veteran also charged officers got better legs and better fits. He said he had to have four operations after he left the army. He said his leg still fit poorly although he had improved it by whittling part of it himself. He said he knew of scores of men, in the hospital with him recovering from amputations, who now are extremely dissatisfied with their artificial arms and legs.

From the testimony of these two men and other information he gathered, Rep. Augustine B. Kelley, (d. Penn.) chairman of the committee plans to get to the bottom of this alleged preferential treatment of officers.

Kelley also said that hearings before his group demonstrated that the artificial limb business was in the "horse and buggy area."

Among the most informative testimony presented to the committee was that furnished by William H. Jacobs, an attorney in the department of justice. He lost his leg a few inches below the hip falling off a wagon when he was a child. Since then, he has followed progress of the artificial leg business very closely.

He says that there have been only two major improvements in artificial legs in the last 50 years. One is the use of light metal and the other is "hip control." Hip control is the use of a friction knee joint combined with a belt that goes around the body just below the belt.

For persons who have amputations above the knee weight of the leg is one of the most important factors. Jacobs told the committee he had had six artificial legs before he found one that was satisfactory. And the one he had, he improved after it came from the factory by drilling holes in it and reducing the weight.

Other persons appearing before the committee said that they had made many improvements in their artificial legs with little gadgets they had invented themselves. One man described a device which locked his knee joint when he stood up. He patented it and soon expects to put it on the market.

Rep. Kelley believes that the government must subsidize the artificial limb business and pay for research in improvements or veterans will continue to be dissatisfied with the arms and legs they get to substitute for the ones they lost.

The National Research council is working on the problem. See BEHIND SCENE . . . Page 6

EVENING OBSERVER'S PROGRESS PROGRAM

IRRIGATION—Complete the Grande Ronde Valley irrigation project. LA GRANDE — A city of 10,000. Extend the city limits.

THOUGHT FOR TODAY

Some maladies are rich and precious and only to be acquired by the right of inheritance or purchased with gold.—Hawthorne.

Comforting Conversion

Probably the feeling each new generation has about its scientific and mechanical achievements is natural. We of today turn a pitying glance upon the past, wondering how grandpa got along without our wonderful gadgets of speed, convenience, efficiency and amusement. No doubt our ancestors of a hundred and two hundred years ago felt the same way about their grandfathers.

There is some perplexity, of course, mixed with the present generation's pride. For all our satisfaction in the atom bomb, in superior planes, electronics and complicated, effective means of slaughter, there are times when the more thoughtful become a little frightened at contemporary ingenuity.

As an antidote for that vague disquiet, we recommend the announcement by the Grumman aircraft people that appeared in the papers the other day. It seems that Grumman, which did such a good job of building fighter planes for the navy, is beating its fuselages into canoes — aluminum ones.

They sound pretty good, too. For one thing, they're lighter than the present canoe. They're also sturdy. It's claimed that you'd have to fire a bullet through one in order to puncture it. That should allow daring woodsmen to shoot rock-filled rapids with greater confidence, and still not interfere with the canoe's more usual chore of toting young men and their best girls over moonlit lakes.

What's more, the aluminum canoe is advertised as porcupine-proof.

That's interesting. But what interests us more is the Grumman people's possible reaction to their new product.

The Grumman people, like other aircraft manufacturers, have spent the last five years in a race against obsolescence. War's swift pace sometimes made a new airplane outmoded before it ever got into the air. The test of battle and the enemy manufacturers' ingenuity called for constant improvements and refinements, or basic changes in design, power or armament.

Now, converting to canoes, the Grumman people can relax. Their scheme of making them from aluminum is the second improvement in the canoe since Hiawatha's time. The only previous change was also in material, from birchbark to wood and canvas. The design has remained the same.

So the Grumman engineers won't have to alter the aboriginal blueprints or worry about obsolescence. We rather suspect that the Grumman people find some comfort in contemplating their new model and reflecting that, for all our cleverness, perhaps we moderns aren't so all-fired smart that it needs to scare us.

Funny Business



"Could you use three to fill for a luncheon bridge, lady?"

SO THEY SAY

While it is important that we try to protect ourselves against exhaustion of petroleum reserves, it is a good idea to remember that oil producers are continually uncovering new fields and new methods to keep petroleum sources ample for our needs. —Winfield, Kan. Courier.

For months the administration has been warning our own people that this country has neither the coal nor transportation to supply fuel needs. Yet they seem to have no difficulty in finding 6,000,000 tons of coal for Europe, including the Nazis. —Sen. Styles Bridges, of New Hampshire.

The British government is determined to do its utmost to promote in conjunction with the leaders of Indian opinion the early realization of full self-government in India. —Viscount Wavell, Viceroy of India.