

## Demos May Clip Powers of House Rules Committee to Pave Way for Truman Bills

By Francis J. Kelly

WASHINGTON, Dec. 30-(AP)—To clear the road for the Truman program, democratic leaders of congress were reported to have decided today to cut down the power of the house rules committee to block legislation.

The decision, subject to a vote of the house, was made at a meeting of democratic leaders in the office of Rep. Sam Rayburn, the shyness speaker when the house organizes Monday.

The leadership also decided to seek appointment of a committee which would recommend a "code of fair treatment" for witnesses testifying to house committees.

The purpose behind the proposed reduction in the rules committee's powers was obvious: to smooth the way for labor, social welfare and

civil rights legislation expected to be asked by President Truman. Some similar bills have come to a dead end in the rules committee.

**Acts as Dispatcher**  
In theory, that 12-member body performs a function similar to that of a train dispatcher. It looks over the legislative situation on the floor and decides what bills should get the right-of-way in a particular day or week of a session. The bills come to it only after being cleared by a regular legislative committee.

In practice, however, there have been frequent complaints that the rules committee overstepped its authority, holding back legislation or pushing it ahead according to the personal preferences of the 12 members. In some instances, southern democratic members teamed with republicans on the committee to block a measure.

**To Offer Amendment**  
Rep. Sabath (D-Ill.), veteran of 42 years in congress who is slated to head the committee, said he will offer an amendment to the house rules to trim the rules committee's power.

Under his plan, a bill could be taken away from the rules committee and brought to the house floor on a petition signed by 100 "or maybe 150" house members, provided the petition was filed by the chairman of the legislative committee which approved the bill.

Under the present rules, it requires a petition signed by 218 members—a majority of the house—to take a bill from the rules group or any other house committee. No change is contemplated in the 218-signature rule as it relates to legislative committee.

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## Odom Flies to Hawaii to Try Record Hop

SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 30-(AP)—Bill Odom is flying to Hawaii tonight to attempt a record, light plane distance hop—Honolulu to New York non-stop.

The distance is 5,010 miles and, if the famed "round-the-world flier" succeeds, he will have more than doubled the record for planes in his Beechcraft Bonanza class.

He also will have flown about 1,000 miles farther non-stop than any of the four classes of small aircraft.

The 29-year-old pilot loaded his tiny plane aboard Pan American's huge Pacific Trader, a sky freighter, for tonight's trip to Honolulu.

From there, at 10 p.m. (Hawaii time) Monday he plans to take off on his long hop, entailing an initial overwater jump of more than 2,000 miles to the west coast.

He said the present Bonanza class record is 2,061.703 miles. Two Soviet fliers claimed to have set it on Sept. 23, 1937, in a Moskvalev plane flown from Moscow to Krasnoyarsk.

## Chambers Aided In Formation of Coast Spy Ring

WASHINGTON, Dec. 30-(AP)—Congressional spy hunters said today that Whitaker Chambers in addition to obtaining many Washington secrets for Soviet Russia, once carried a money belt with \$10,000 to San Francisco "for the purpose of financing west coast spy operations."

Chambers, an ex-communist, has admitted he served as a courier for a red network in Washington before the war.

In a formal report, summarizing its year-long espionage investigation, the house committee on un-American activities said Chambers received stolen government documents at least 52 times—usually once a week—and most of them reached soviet agents in this country.

Among the secret data Chambers passed along to red spies, the committee said, was "the metallurgical formula dealing with the Norden bomb sight" and information about "a new self-sealing aviation tank developed by the navy."

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FOG IN PARIS—Gendarmes stand near a street light during an unusually heavy fog in Paris.

## Harmsworth Go To Be Renewed

DETROIT, Dec. 30-(AP)—Canada and Italy challenged formally today for the Harmsworth trophy, held by Gar Wood for the United States since 1920, and a 1949 renewal of the world's premier speedboat racing event thus is assured.

Thus the stage was set for the first Harmsworth renewal since Wood's last successful defense in 1933.

Ray Lapham, Vanport College Teacher, Dies

ASTORIA, Ore., Dec. 30-(AP)—Ray Lapham, 55, Vanport college English instructor and fiction writer, collapsed and died while vacationing here today.

Lapham was duck hunting with a Vanport college student, Jim Putnam, Portland. Death was believed due to a heart attack.

Hall Asked to Dissolve Centennial Commission

PORTLAND, Dec. 30-(AP)—Governor John H. Hall was asked today to dissolve the Oregon Territorial Centennial commission.

The commissioners voted for the dissolution, overruling a suggestion that they continue until March to organize commemoration of Oregon's first territorial governor's inaugural.

PORTLAND, Dec. 30-(AP)—The Oakland A's dropped a 2-0 decision to the Portland Eagles as the Californians closed a northern road trip in the Pacific Coast hockey league.

It was the second straight shut-out for Portland goalie Tom Karakas, who blanked Seattle last night, 3-0.

STONE BOWL SET

WALLA WALLA, Dec. 30-(AP)—Walla Walla's own grid bowl game, the Stone Bowl contest at the penitentiary between the Braves, champions of the prison's intramural league and an all star team from the rest of the loop, will be played Sunday, January 2.

Scientific and medical interest in hypnosis was first aroused in the late 18th century, by the work of a Viennese physician named Mesmer.

NEW YORK, Dec. 30-(AP)—President Truman will have an Israeli forest named after him.

This announcement came today at a meeting of the Mizrahi women's organization of America, a religious-zionist group.

The "Harry S. Truman forest" will consist of 50,000 trees, said Mrs. Dvora Rabinowitz, the organization's president.

NEW YORK, Dec. 30-(AP)—Thirteen republican senators who classify themselves as liberals decided today to try to oust Senator Taft as chairman of the senate republican policy committee.

They want to put in Senator Lodge of Massachusetts instead. Taft showed no alarm.

"I expect to be elected by a substantial majority," the Ohio senator said when he learned of the group's decision.

There will be 42 republicans and 54 democrats in the new senate which convenes Monday. Thus the insurgent group would have to round up 22 votes to put out Taft and install Lodge.

They met for two hours, late in the day, after Taft had announced at a policy committee session that he is a candidate for re-election as chairman. Twelve of the self-described liberals attended their closed meeting, Senator Ives of New York, who served as their spokesman, said that Senator Tobey (New Hampshire) couldn't come but would support their plan.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 30-(AP)—The internal revenue bureau may have the last laugh on Radio Comedian Jack Benny.

Usually well-posted sources said today the bureau advised Benny he will have to pay the income tax on the money he gets out of the KKW contract which is switching him from the NBC to CBS network Sunday.

The revenue bureau declined comment, however.

An adverse ruling from the bureau could mean a cash setback of as much as \$2,080,000 for Benny, whose comedy specialty is portraying himself in the role of a money-grubbing tightwad.

NEW YORK, Dec. 30-(AP)—Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt thinks her frequent critic, Columnist Westbrook Pegler, is "such a little gnat."

That's how she described him today in her question and answer column in the current issue of the Ladies' Home Journal magazine.

Pegler declined to comment on the former first lady's description of him.

He frequently has referred to her as "Eleanor the Great" describing what he characterized as her use of her position as wife of a president to interfere in governmental affairs.

Mrs. Roosevelt made her description in answer to the following question:

"You have three big, strong American men as sons. Why do they not horsewhip Westbrook Pegler?"

She replied:

"I have four sons, not three 'big strong American men as sons.' Why should they bother, however, to horsewhip a poor little creature like Westbrook Pegler? They would probably go to jail for attacking one who was physically older and perhaps unable to defend himself. After all, he is such a little gnat on the horizon. . ."

## Okawa Freed From Asylum

TOKYO, Dec. 30-(AP)—Dr. Shumei Okawa, the man who slapped Tojo, was released from an insane asylum today. Thus he became the only top Japanese war trial defendant to go free.

Of the original 28 who went on trial, former premier Hideki Tojo and six others were hanged one week ago; 16 are serving life imprisonment; two are serving shorter terms, and two died during the trial.

The tall gaunt Okawa gained notoriety shortly after the trial began in June, 1946, when he slapped Tojo's bald head, attempted to undress in court, and giggled continuously and hysterically.

He had to be removed to an asylum, but remained on trial in absentia until April 9, 1947, when the 11-nation tribunal dismissed the indictment on the grounds that he was mentally incompetent.

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