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Stagecraft In Washington

People are always asking newspaper men to what extent news is "manufactured." Not very often in these days when so much is really happening, and—except for the Sunday supplements (if they can be classed as news) very little is manufactured by reporters. But "getting into the headlines" is one of the great arts, and it is practiced in the best of circles, as witness this United Press story of yesterday's White House conference:

WASHINGTON, Aug. 5.—(U.P.)—President Truman's weekly news conference scarcely had started today when a voice from the back of the room asked the question everyone was waiting for:

"Mr. President do you consider these congressional spy hearings a RED HERRING?"

That was all Mr. Truman needed. I do, he replied firmly. That referred to Congress' failure to pass his anti-inflation and housing programs while it takes time out to conduct two separate investigations of subversive activities.

Then, smiling broadly, Mr. Truman said that since the reporter had brought up the subject he had SOMETHING HE WANTED TO READ to the 104 scribes present.

Picking up some TYPEWRITTEN NOTES from his desk, he said the hearings are serving no useful purpose whatsoever. He paused slightly to emphasize the "whatsoever," then said: They are nothing but a red herring.

Mr. Truman did not appear actually angry, but he was deeply moved. A reporter asked if, contrary to usual White House news conference rules, the President could be quoted directly.

"Yes," said Mr. Truman, and authorized this direct quote:

"They are using these hearings simply as a red herring to keep from doing what they ought to do."

Not very important, perhaps, but highly amusing. You will notice that the unidentified "voice from the back of the room" seemed to be putting the words into the President's mouth, but in any case the President had them in neatly typed notes and should have required no prompting.

"Well, do you call that manufacturing news?" What do you think?

"But we've always heard that reporters were free to ask the President anything at these conferences?" They are—but within certain limits. Ever since Teddy Roosevelt's day it has been forbidden to quote the President directly, except with his express permission, and it was Teddy who perfected the little technique of warning the boys:

"You may print this, but if you quote me I'll call you a liar."

Franklin D. made it a point to insult any reporter who asked an unwelcome question. If the reporter talked back he was subject to loss of his White House press card. Only one bold gal from Maine could "sass" FDR and get away with it.

Degeneration of the presidential press conference is, in our opinion, one of the greatest problems of Washington reporting. On Tuesdays and Fridays the reigning president sees the press—for about 15 minutes—and usually about 100 attend, including visiting press. You are scrutinized by the guards and at the zero hour herded into the oval room where you stand, close-packed under scrutiny of the guards. As a rule Big Shots like Arthur Krock or Walter Lippman do not bother to attend. It's a routine for "leg men." Important questions must be in writing. The President may ignore them, usually does. He may terminate the conference at will, and does.

The days have gone by when the President of the United States had any very close contact with the working press—and it's too bad. He now and then may have some prominent publisher for lunch but with working press there is no basis of real friendship or intimacy—too many jealousies, too many risks.

The twice-weekly conferences are a carefully stage-managed show, at which the President "puts out" mainly for propaganda. Leg men can report to their chiefs that "he's looking fine" or "he's all in" or "in a foul mood." An old Washington hand will tell you:

"We get most of our real news 'around the back stairs.'"

Meaning that most of the important leads are picked up by contacts with White House secretaries or intimates, "informed sources," "authorized spokesmen." And many of these stories are obvious "plants."

Ain't it too bad!

Bloom Is Off the Boom!

With housewives staging "buyers' strikes" and Congress enacting measures to tighten up credit controls, there should be no need to emphasize that "the bloom is off the boom." The adjustments are likely to be exceedingly uncomfortable and even painful (to those who are over-extended) but they will be healthful (like going on a diet when overweight).

There are many, many signs of readjustment. Recently we wrote a piece about the falling off of tourist travel during July, and we doubted the wishful theory that Oregon was suffering because of adverse publicity on the Columbia floods. This has brought an immediate comment from a gentleman long connected with tourist trade and promotion

in the Northwest, but for several years engaged on the Atlantic seaboard. He writes:

Just in the way of a note suggesting that this situation is not peculiar to Oregon alone, I write to tell you that numerous eastern papers have recently had kindred rumblings on a decreasing tourist expenditure. Over the Fourth of July holiday, it was reported from many eastern tourist centers that large numbers of vacationists slept in their cars.

Dollar-ten beef and kindred items, I think, explain the situation to considerable degree.

I am suggesting to a friend of mine on the Wall Street Journal that it run a check of a dozen or twenty representative tourist centers.

I think an experience of mine last week is an index. A young man who works at a service station where I buy most of my gas asked me if I was interested in a new Mercury at \$2200. He explained that he had put in the order many months ago. His car was due up this week. He said that with his living costs the way they were he had come to the conclusion that no matter how much he wanted the car, he could not afford it. What he desired to do was to find one with a '46 or '47 car like mine (a Chevrolet) which the owner would let him have for around \$1200-\$1400. He would then take delivery of the Mercury and turn it over to the person selling him a second.

There are many factors which will tend to check the "recession"—the strength of organized labor in preserving high wage levels, the government's re-armament program, the housing shortage and the continuing pressures for building. There are no signs of the economic collapse for which our Russian friends are praying.

However, adjustments always show first in "luxury lines," then in the "soft touch" lines which exist only so long as eager buyers don't shop around and ask too many questions. There are some optimists who say that Eugene will continue to grow and boom while the rest of the country is taking the reducing medicine. Eugene will continue to grow but with its share of pangs and pains—and the growth should be much healthier than it has been.

Inexperienced investors who dally around the curb usually wind up out in the street.

Crime, says a scientist, is caused by glands. With second-story men maybe it's monkey glands.

With the long skirts, maybe the gals will go back to making poets out of men instead of rubbernecks.

WASHINGTON LETTER

BY PETER EDSON
NEA Washington Correspondent

Dewey's 'Larry' Action Raises Question of His Power Position

WASHINGTON — (NEA) — Presidential candidate Thomas E. Dewey's position on public power policy is being smoked out by recent developments on "Larry," as the St. Lawrence River project has been nicknamed.

This has come to light through the New York State Power Authority's filing of an application with the Federal Power Commission for a license to join with the Ontario Hydro-Electric Power Commission in building and operating a \$400,000, 2,200,000 horsepower dam and generating station across the St. Lawrence near Massena, N. Y. This action was taken on Governor Dewey's instructions after the U. S. Senate voted 57 to 30 against ratification of the 53-year-old U. S.-Canadian St. Lawrence Seaway project treaty.

New York and Ontario's new proposal raises a number of important questions in Washington, and their solution may seriously alter present U. S. public power policy. Ultimately, a show-down is in sight over whether electric power generated at government-built dams should be sold wholesale at the bus bar to private power companies for resale at a profit to consumers, or whether such power should continue to be sold by the government directly to preferred customers such as municipalities, rural co-operatives and industrial users.

The private power industry has for years been trying to block development of public power, particularly by valley or regional authorities.

GOP Platform, Dewey Differ On Power
The Republican platform adopted at Philadelphia, however, declared, "We favor progressive development of the nation's water resources for navigation, flood control and power, with immediate action in critical areas. . . ." Later the platform declared:

"We favor a comprehensive reclamation program for arid and semi-arid areas, with full protection of the rights and interests of the States in the use and control of water for irrigation, power development incidental thereto and other beneficial uses. . . ."

Lawyers may find a sharp conflict between States' rights and Federal development, and another distinction between East and West, implied in these two sections. The St. Lawrence valley isn't what anyone would call an arid or semi-arid area. But the development advocated by Governor Dewey for the New York Power Authority in the St. Lawrence is decidedly a project for promoting the rights and interests of a state.

It is also somewhat at variance with the power policy set forth by Governor Dewey when he was campaigning in the Oregon primary. In his Corvallis speech, he was quoted as having said:

"River development should be on a regional basis. Such large scale, multiple purpose projects as those for the drainage basins of the Missouri, the Columbia and the Willamette are a natural responsibility for the federal government."

Private Power Foresaw End of "Larry"
Private power interests in general were quite happy when the St. Lawrence project was sent back to the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate last February. Public Utilities Fortnightly crowed in its March issue that maybe this was the beginning of the end for "Larry." This was before Governor Dewey revived the project as a New York State Power Authority development.

In a more recent issue, however, the Fortnightly, a house organ for the private power industry, takes a slightly different line. Examining Governor Dewey's record on power development, it finds that he favored "non-discriminatory" sale of St. Lawrence power to private utilities at cheaper rates than it cost them to produce power.

That, presumably, would make the St. Lawrence development more acceptable to the private power companies which face a shortage of generating capacity in the New York industrial area.

In granting the New York State Power Authority a license to build and operate the St. Lawrence dam, FPC could conceivably specify how the power generated on the American side of the river is to be distributed, giving preference to certain types of consumers.

When FPC finally approves the project, it will be referred to the State Department which in turn will hand the matter over to the International Joint Commission.

By the time all this red tape is unwound, Governor Dewey may be in the White House. In that event it will be interesting to see whether Dewey will continue to push the New York State-private power interest above the Federal interest.

Foreign Students Tell Activists Of Views on Marshall Aid Plan

For the first time in the Active Club's history the program continued Friday noon for two hours because of the intense interest in a debate on the Marshall Plan with a panel of foreign students from Northwest Christian College as speakers.

The students, from Bulgaria, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, and Cuba, took most objection to the plan's bilateral agreements which as Nicol Nissnoff observed, "would prevent reparations from Germany for other countries."

On Campus
Dr. Allen Cole, NCC professor of Far Eastern History and International Relations, as moderator, introduced the above-average students who are attending the International Service Seminar on the Eugene school's campus.

Karel Holbik, Czechoslovakia, spoke in favor of the plan which would help his country as well as "others inside the iron curtain."

He stressed that the greatest need of Europe is that of raw materials, leaving production up to European factories.

Raw Materials
"These nations that can participate are lucky there is such a plan," he observed, but added that Europe can, "with all means at her disposal," provide nearly 95 percent of what is needed by its economies if given the raw materials.

Recovery of Europe is hampered by the cut of raw materials.

He felt the bilateral agreements place the participating European countries under an "economic guardianship of the U. S."

That the peoples of Europe are tired of war was his opinion. He said that the people do not want to be "put in one camp or another" by the differences between the U. S. and Russia.

Comment
"The Marshall Plan is a by-product and major weapon in the general competition between Russia and the U. S.," he felt, also observing that the powers placed in one hand are "unprecedented" and similar to those of Sir Stafford Cripps, the "economic dictator of England."

He was reluctant to predict its success but saw danger in attempting to decide the type of government the participating countries should have.

"Leaving them free to choose their own government will see less danger of their turning toward communism," he suggested, in questioning the "wisdom of tying strings to the plan."

Those attending included Senator Barkley of Kentucky, the vice-presidential nominee; Senator McGrath of Rhode Island, chairman of the Democratic National Committee, and five former national chairmen.

The former chairmen were George White of Ohio, Robert E. Hannegan, Frank Walker, Homer S. Cummings and Edward J. Flynn.

Ross said all other living former chairmen, and James M. Cox of Ohio, 1920 presidential candidate, were invited but could not attend for various reasons.

Farley to Europe
Asked why James A. Farley did not attend, Ross said he understood Farley was on his way to Europe. About the only other party chairman of recent years who was not there is Cordell Hull. Hull is in very poor health.

Presumably, one purpose of the extraordinary confab was to talk over what kind of campaign should be waged.

Mr. Truman has made it clear that his own inclination is to keep hammering away at the record of what he calls at least the "second worst" Congress in history.

Defend Record
Most political leaders think that sooner or later Gov. Thomas E. Dewey, the Republican presidential nominee, will be put into the position of having to defend that record.

Republican leaders in Congress believe Dewey is satisfied with their anti-inflation and housing program.

One of these leaders, who asked not to be quoted by name, said this belief grows out of what he called the fact that Dewey has not sent any word to the contrary.

Kiwanians to Visit Local Cannery Plant

Great grobs of Lane County beans will be served to and probably will be consumed by members of the Eugene Kiwanis Club, when the group visits the Eugene Fruit Growers Plant Monday.

Ed Pitkin and Joe Heidenreich will host the group and after lunch will conduct members through the cannery, with visits to the assembly lines.

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'Phantom' Air Route Reported

SEATTLE—(U.P.)—The operation of a "phantom airline" between Seattle and Honolulu for the past several years has been revealed here by Frank C. Judd, western regional vice-president of Northwest Airlines.

The air carrier was recently authorized to start an actual route from the Northwest to the Hawaiian Islands.

Judd said the project, classified by the military as "secret," was launched in conjunction with the Army Air Transport Command and the Navy. Two pretended flights were run each day, one eastbound and one westbound plane taking part—on paper.

Judd reported that all details of the flights were worked out, including weather studies, flight plans, theoretical plane loadings, fuel consumption, and even estimated air time per trip.

The vice-president reported that Northwest plans to make its actual forthcoming flights in about 12 hours using DC-4's until larger Boeing Stratocruisers are available. He said the time was computed from data gathered during the phantom "Operation Honolulu" trips.

Eugene Moose Plan Trek to Convention

Several members of the Eugene Moose lodge are planning to attend the annual convention of the Moose at Mooseheart, Ill., home of the famed city for children.

Members who will be at Mooseheart Aug. 15 for two days and then at Chicago for the remainder of the convention are: Harvey Richardson, governor of the lodge; Lonnie Crawford, secretary; W. E. Heinke and Charles O. Beitel, past governors; and C. K. Clendenin.

Hal Young, past director of the Moose Chorus who recently moved to Spokane, will sing at Mooseheart and Chicago.

'Bride and Groom' Show Producer's Wife Sues

LOS ANGELES — (U.P.) — Mrs. Charlotte K. Masterson, 32, charged in a divorce suit Friday that her husband John, 35-year-old producer of the "Bride and Groom" radio show, treated her with extreme cruelty.

She asked custody of a son, Michael, 20 months, and reasonable alimony.

Realtors Talk On Lien Uses

D. T. Bayly, local attorney, was put on the firing line by members of the Realty board at the weekly meeting Thursday afternoon.

As is customary on the first meeting of every month, a round-table discussion was held on a subject of interest to the realtors.

Bayly gave a brief resume of the various types of liens which can affect property, and how they are filed or recorded.

Following the resume, members of the board asked questions concerning liens, escrows, and other action affecting property.

Previously, the board moved that a letter be sent to everyone in the area who has a realtors license asking that signs not be placed on property under "open listing."

There is agreement among board members, not always carried out, that this will not be done—to prevent a half-dozen signs from marring the property up for sale.

Prison Death Under Query

DENVER — (U.P.) — An inquiry was testified Thursday that the U. S. commissioner, before the time before he machine-gunned the slaying of Pvt. Earl J. Johnson, U. S. Army, was working, along with other prisoners, on a real life base.

Tuttle remarked to a guard that he had overheard Johnson, the threat the morning of the slaying of Pvt. Earl J. Johnson, U. S. Army, was working, along with other prisoners, on a real life base.

Johnson was slain July 27 at the base, along with other prisoners, on a real life base.

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Report as of June 30, 1948, of Transamerica Corporation, Wilmington, Delaware, which is affiliated with The First Bank of Eugene, Eugene, Oregon, Charter number 3438, Reserve District number 12.
Kind of business: Holding company, primarily of bank stock.
Manner in which above-named organization is affiliated with national bank, and degree of control: Transamerica Corporation owns directly 98% of the outstanding capital stock of above-named bank.
Financial relations with bank: Stock of affiliated bank worth \$2,254,387.00.
Other information necessary to disclose fully relations with bank: None.
I, W. L. Andrews, Vice President and Cashier of Transamerica Corporation, do solemnly swear that the above statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.
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