

Washington Merry-Go-Round

By DREW PEARSON

LABOR CRISIS TESTS TRUMAN

The fast-growing labor crisis presents Harry S. Truman with the first big problem he has faced on a hitherto well-charted Roosevelt sea. Up until now, most policies, especially those dealing with war and peace, had been pretty well established by Truman's predecessor. In settling the current labor turmoil, however, Harry is completely on his own.

For some time, labor advice from White House insiders has differed. Truman's labor department has argued that labor troubles after wars were inevitable, that both Wilson and Harding had to call out U. S. troops after the last war, that labor has been in a strait jacket since Pearl Harbor, is bound to feel its wild oats now; finally that big business was equally in a strait jacket and equally willing to row with labor especially if it could get labor in wrong with the public . . . advice to Truman: Don't stick your neck out; let both sides battle it out for a while.

Opposite advice came from another wing of the White House . . . while admitting that all the above is true, other advisers urged that both labor and industry needed guidance. For four years both labor and industry have had the Little-Steel Formula as their guide. They were supposed not to go above this . . . Now labor finds itself losing its overtime wages, with take-home pay dropping way below lush war days, yet with the cost of living still high. Therefore, Truman was urged to step forward and set a national policy, suggest a wage increase which would partly offset the drop in take-home pay . . . It is this group of advisers which Truman finally has decided to follow.

FARMERS VS. LABOR UNIONS

Last week Florida citrus growers came to Washington, worried sick over the future market for grapefruit and oranges. They feared a return of the old days when their fruit was dumped into Florida rivers . . . The army has just cancelled orders for several million cases of orange juice. Simultaneously it has turned back on the civilian market several million more surplus cases. This backlog is bound to have a depressing effect on citrus fruit . . . Citrus fruit growers know that with wages dropping, the civilian demand for oranges and grapefruit will also nose-dive. When workmen get paid less, first thing they quit buying is fruit . . . Cattlemen also figure on a drop in prices. Not only will the army buy less, but workmen eat less meat, when wages are cut . . . Same is true of many other farm commodities, including dairy products . . . Never before has the average American eaten so well—despite rationing—as during the war years, largely because wages were high . . . Seldom before also have farmers been so prosperous . . . Seldom before, however, have farmers been so sore at labor unions. They were looking forward to buying new autos, new farm machinery. Now all this is delayed by strikes. Also they were looking forward to the return of cheap labor from cities to farms. So far this hasn't materialized.

UNIONS LOSE MONEY

Big industrial unions naturally don't want any trek back to the farm. It means loss of dues. The United Auto Workers' 1,000,000 dues-paying membership has now dropped to about half of that. The drop was so severe that the cost of running the union went in the red . . . UAW chiefs are going about their wage protests in an orderly, fair-minded manner, have done their best to stop the Kelsey-Hayes wildcat strike . . . But some union leaders prefer strikes. It helps increase their power in the union . . . In Schenectady, General Electric's Charles E. Wilson long has advocated higher wages. He says it helps him sell electric refrigerators, electric irons, etc. He has been ready to make upward wage adjustments voluntarily, just as wise Standard Oil of N. J. increased its pay immediately and automatically at the end of the war.

However, certain CIO Electrical Workers seem more interested in a strike than a voluntary or negotiated wage boost . . . some labor leaders, unfortunately, seem deliberately looking for strikes—among them John L. Lewis. They bring disfavor on the heads of other labor leaders, have given the entire labor movement a bad setback with public opinion . . . Public opinion in some areas is now so anti-labor that Truman would get thunderous applause if he called out U. S. troops as strike-breakers.

NEWS BEHIND THE NEWS

By PAUL MALLON

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ATOMIC BOMB CREATES SUPER-SPY SYSTEM NEED

WASHINGTON—Major General Wild Bill Donovan bowed out of the first real American intelligence service (OSS) with a somewhat cool-sounding response from President Truman to his idea of developing his line of effort further for peace. Mr. Truman cut up OSS, sending part to the War Department, but most to State. The Donovan notion of hiring someone like Sumner Welles, the ex-diplomat, to keep intimate and independent watch on the inner international world, was left hanging in air—somewhat foggy air.

General Donovan has never been a glamour boy. He is a rather crusty soldier-lawyer. Those who know what he did in the confidential special agent part of the war say his work in the Balkans particularly was excellent and could have been done by no one else as well. Into his organization, however, crept a number of persons who did not fit the best nature of the endeavor and gave it distaste with Congress. I think this fairly sums up OSS. It did great work, but was not popular. (I can never learn what accomplishes popularity in this era when a bank robber can possibly attain it by merely being for the 30-hour week or some such social innovation.)

In the wake of this peculiar condition, congressmen are arising to shout "There will be no American Gestapo," and I assume also they mean no OGPU or NKVD. Indeed there will not. But there is a grave danger that the first vital necessity for a secure postwar world will be ignored and shunted aside by muddleheaded political thinking about it.

If you thought Pearl Harbor a surprise and blitz warfare sudden as lightning, you are already old-fashioned and obsolete in your thinking. The next war will start like a flash—the brilliant blinding flash of the atomic bomb. If our defenses were archaic last time, they will be pitiful next time unless our officials know everything going on in this world. Advance knowledge is more essential to defense in a future world than a superior air force, an army or fleet.

Not the Fascists or the Communist nations, but the British, a democratic nation, have the best world intelligence. It was built up through generations. Their survival depended upon it, because their little islands had absolutely nothing to justify their superior position in the world, except an awareness of the facts of national existences and a superior shrewdness in using them. That is what we need—only a better one.

It cannot be an army enterprise because the army covers only one phase of world facts influencing peace and security. It cannot be navy, marine corps, or merely all three together, because diplomacy must be founded upon such information. (The British even move commercially from such realistic ground news.) It cannot be split, or you will have each department performing again the coordination they showed about Pearl Harbor—namely none.

INDEPENDENT BUREAU NEEDED

Consequently it must be an independent bureau covering at least these government elements and probably more (Justice Department and FBI.) Furthermore, the head must be a man whose character and personality guarantee full pursuit of the business to be done, and a complete disavowal of any political implications in the work. He must not be a leftist or right or even a professional Democrat or Republican. That service must lean over backwards to keep itself politically inviolable, and beyond even the faintest suspicion of political use. (The British know how to do it.)

The only limit on its appropriations should be our need of information. If we need the information—get it. If the spenders want to let Treasury money loose, here is one place where they could get something out of it. Some interested parties wish to limit the scope of activity to foreign information. It should be limited only by need. If it is found counterproductive in this country it requires action, no political softpedaling considerations should be allowed to stand in the way of getting it.

Veterans' SERVICE BUREAU

EDITOR'S NOTE: This newspaper, through special arrangement with the Washington Bureau of Western Newspaper Union at 1616 Eye Street, N. W., Washington, D. C., is able to bring readers this weekly column on problems of the veteran and serviceman and his family. Questions may be addressed to the above Bureau and they will be answered in a subsequent column. No replies can be made direct by mail, but only in the column which will appear in this newspaper regularly.

Small Business Aid

The small business division of the U. S. Department of Commerce is taking particular interest in veterans who are returning from the wars with the intention of entering the small business field.

The small business division has given the subject considerable time and thought and now has available for veterans a booklet, "Veterans and Small Business" which answers numerous questions in the minds of the returning soldier.

The booklet covers many facts of the highly competitive small business field and covers subjects such as, "Postwar Plans for GIs"; "Industry's Job to Place Servicemen"; "The GI Bill and Small Business"; "What About These Veterans' Loans?"; "Factors in a GI's Business Success"; "Getting Started in Your Business"; "How Long Can I Stay in Business?"; "Survival Chances of Retail Stores"; "Risk-taking in a Postwar World"; "Training Program for Small Business"; "Marketing Facts On a County Basis"; "Small Town a Most Important Market," and seven other factors or subjects.

These chapters were written by experts and information contained will be invaluable to the veteran contemplating entering the small business field.

These booklets are available to veterans by writing to the "Small Business Division" of the United States Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C.

Questions and Answers

Q. Can a mother who is all alone and in poor health, have a son released from the Army if he has been in since Jan. 25, 1943, and in the South Pacific since June 19, 1943, and has never had a furlough? Mrs. D. W., Greenwood, Wis.

A. The War Department says that the fact the mother is all alone and in poor health would not necessarily bring about the son's release. If the case can be considered a "hardship case" release might be given, but each case must be decided upon its merits and be recommended by the commanding officer. If your son, however, has been in the army since the dates you give, he possibly has enough points for his discharge now, or at least in the very near future. Without points for battle stars or decorations, which count five each, he has approximately 63 points. He is eligible for application for discharge now at 70 points and the number is fixed at 60 points November 1.

Q. My daughter wishes to know whether she will be entitled to services of a doctor and hospitalization benefits when her new baby arrives, if her husband who is now in the navy is discharged under the point system before the baby arrives?—Mrs. W. A. L., Mill Iron, Mont.

A. The Navy Department says that if she is now receiving navy medical care to which she is entitled, the navy will do everything it can to help her provided she does not move from the area where she is under treatment and the pregnancy is in the later stages. Suggest she contact the nearest navy hospital or dispensary for specific information.

Q. Is there a course of study in fire fighting listed in the educational program for veterans and are there any books available on this subject?—G. E. D., Philadelphia.

A. Many schools approved by State Boards of Education have instructions in fire fighting. For instance, the University of Maryland, College Park, Md., and Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill., have such a course. It may be possible that the University of Pennsylvania has such a course. Suggest that you write one of these schools.

Q. Will a soldier who has been in service for two years and 11 months in the States and 13 months overseas receive mustering-out pay if he is given a dependency discharge?—Wife, Treloar, Mo.

A. The War Department says that if his dependency discharge is honorable he is entitled to mustering-out pay.

Q. Please advise if an ex-serviceman can obtain a loan to join up in an open shop in one or more unions?—J. C., Coffeerville, Miss.

A. Can find no regulation which provides for a loan to join a union.

Kids Govern OPA Office in Brooklyn for a Day



Photo shows the price panel in session, when the students of Midwood High school took over the operation of the Office of Price Administration's local rationing board in Brooklyn's Flatbush section for a day. For twelve hours the enterprising youngsters ran the rationing and price control machinery, with, of course a little expert supervision by a regular aide in interpreting some of the knottier problems.

Japanese Sidewalk Salesmen



Customers crowd around the sidewalk stands in the Ginza District in Tokyo, which is similar to New York's Fifth Avenue. Shopkeepers, their stores destroyed by bombs, set up their wares in the street, and carry on their business outside the wrecked buildings. In the background is the famous Jap Department Store, Takashimaya, where only two floors are now in use.

Wants to Cross Atlantic in Barrell Had Kenny Treatment



Because "It is inevitable that some day, someone will cross the Atlantic in a barrel," Mark Charlton, discharged Canadian army veteran, wants to do it first. He is shown with the barrel in which he plans to make the attempt.



Mrs. John Rybolt, at home in Los Angeles, after a year of the Kenny Treatment for Polio, is shown as she greeted her children, Brian, 3, and Johnny, 6, while her husband looks on. Physicians say Mrs. Rybolt will be able to walk eventually with the aid of crutches.

Women's U. S. Softball Champions



The Jax Maids of New Orleans drove to the World Softball Championship to make it their third year in the last four that they have won the title. They won in 1942 and 1943. The bevy of beauties hammered out a win over the Toronto Crofton Club lassies by a score of 5 to 0, as Nina Korgan of the Jax allowed but two hits. Photo shows the Jax with their trophy.

Opens Trade Parley



Eric Johnston, President of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce addresses a plenary session of delegates to International Business Conference in New York recently.