

# Congress Methods to Be Revamped

## Few Legislators Authors Of Bills They Introduce

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A bright young railroad executive who has his cum laude in law from a famed university was sitting with me in Burt's the other day.



Burt's is a sort of greenroom for radio folk and others who move a.d speak and have their being in what is euphemistically referred to as Washington's Radio center. Inspired (or infuriated) by the presence of so many of the few who say so much to so many, my friend launched forth into a tirade on the responsibility of the publicist.

"You can't play baseball according to football rules," he said, shaking a menacing fist at me, "and that is what Washington officials are doing. You studied political science 30 years ago. I studied it only 20 years ago. And you know perfectly well that the present generation is not following the rules laid down by our founding fathers. You ought to tell the public about it."

"Now maybe the principles of our government are wrong. I am not defending them. But I am saying that we are deserting them. Rule of the majority, a republican form of government operated by the representatives of the people, is a travesty, when legislation is jammed through by minorities. And I mean bureaucrats as well as lobbyists."

This happened when the senate was neck-deep in the final debate over the OPA and my friend claimed congress was revolting against what he called the high pressure methods of the administration. Since the congress was tearing the administration measure to shreds at that moment I pointed out that while it was true that congress was sore at Stabilizer Bowles for what they called propagandizing, the example was not a very good one. So he proceeded to develop his theme with specific references all too familiar to me and my colleagues of the microphone and typewriter.

### Town Seethes With Lobbyists

You, too, are familiar with the power of the "pressure boys" as my friend Kenneth Crawford called them in his revealing book by that name. Crawford estimated there were 6,000 active lobbyists in Washington when World War II started. There are many more now. Speaker Rayburn said the town was "seething" with them.

We all remember the seven-digit sum of money contributed to a campaign fund which came out of the members' dues of one great labor union. True, the head of the union later quarrelled with the president whom he had helped elect because the president refused to take his orders. Nevertheless, this example illustrates what "big money" attempts, and sometimes succeeds in doing.

We know, too, that when the entire economy of the country was locked to a dead center by strikes in two essential industries, coal and transportation, and that when the government itself gave orders, those orders were disobeyed. Mi-

nority rule was operating then. Minority groups nullified the wishes of the duly-elected representatives of the people.

My friend, with all his vehemence, with his allegiance to management, made no claim that the demands of the railroad men, the coal miners, were unjust. He merely said that in order to obtain what they considered justice, the powerful leaders of the organizations to which they belong were able to play baseball according to football rules—temporarily at least.

The theory that the creation of the laws of the land has been taken from the hands of the elected representatives of the people was put forth by Crawford in "The Pressure Boys" seven years ago when he said: "It is improbable that a single important law enacted in the last 10 years has been written by its congressional sponsor or its nominal author. Administration bills are prepared by New Deal experts in executive departments. Legislation independently inaugurated is almost invariably prepared in the office of a lobbyist. Congress maintains a legislative drafting service which writes bills for committees, but it seldom is called upon by individual legislators for assistance in writing any minor private bills."

### LaFollette Bill Would Revamp

Thomas Mechlin, writing on this subject in the current Virginia Quarterly Review, touches on the subject of readymade legislation. He tells how a lobby "gets its own staff together and knocks out a bill which the front office would like to see made a law eventually. It then runs the draft over to a large law firm which has one of its members in congress. Although the congressman cannot personally represent the client, the method used in submitting the proposed legislation through the 'body' of the firm takes care of that. . . . If the lobby is well-organized, it will exploit high-powered publicity from then on out."

I am constrained to admit that much in all of these assertions is true. But I would like to mention three hopeful signs on the horizon, minuscul though they may be. Two were measures introduced but not acted upon in this session of congress. They will be presented again and have a good chance of passing.

One is the LaFollette measure for revamping congress, one provision of which increases the technical assistance available to members. The second is a bill introduced by Representative Sabath of Illinois, which provides for an all-inclusive investigation of lobbies. Most congressmen don't like lobbyists and Sabath's bill, as Mechlin admits, was a crystallization of this feeling.

The third indication was a resolution introduced during the OPA fight by Senator Taylor (D., of Idaho) authorizing the publication of a document on how each senator voted on every measure. He said that the people are becoming more aware of their political responsibilities, that politics is no longer solely in the hands of politicians, ward-healers and lobbyists.

Congress is sensitive to the need of a restoration of majority rule, but the only real hope lies within the majority itself. Unfortunately, the giant sleeps.



HERE'S TEXAS FLOUR . . . Well, not flour, but the makin's. Ed Stallwitz, Moore county wheat grower (left), and County Agent J. B. Waide crawl up on a mountain of wheat. Newly harvested wheat has had to be dumped on the ground because the elevators are full to overflowing.

### NEWS REVIEW

## Days of 'Easy Payments' Said to Be on Way Back

### CREDIT: Payments Easier

The old days of "a dollar down and a dollar every time we catch you" are not back yet, but time or "easy" payments have been liberalized on many items. It is expected that charge accounts will continue to rise also with relaxation of the 30-day rule under which all bills had to be paid by the 10th day of the second month after purchase.

Under regulation W, federal reserve system measure controlling credit, many items have been listed under group A which required a down payment of one-third and 12 months' maximum maturity. Attic ventilating fans, automobile batteries, tires and inner tubes have been removed from group A. Many household appliances are expected to be removed within a short time. Furniture is still under control when sold on credit.

### RUSS ENVOY: Says No War

The new Russian ambassador to the United States, Nikolai V. Novikov, in one of his first statements promised that the Soviet Union "will never start a war against the United States or anyone else."

While he insisted that all differences between the two major powers could be ironed out, he cautioned that solutions for many world problems will require time and patience.

### COMMUNISTS: In State Department

Charges of Communism in the U. S. state department is "more a matter of alarm than of fact," Dean Acheson, under-secretary of state, told the house foreign affairs committee, in Washington, Friday.

He denied that 300 of the state department personnel had been



RESIGNS . . . Chester Bowles resigned as economic stabilizer in protest of the OPA extension bill. In a radio address Bowles said the nation owed President Truman a vote of thanks for vetoing the bill.

### SHADES OF BRYAN

## Silver Ratio 16-1 May Prevail

WASHINGTON.—The senate has tacked a rider to the post office appropriations bill which would boost the price of silver to 90.3 cents an ounce for the next two years. After that the treasury may begin buying the white metal at \$1.29 an ounce.

If the senate bill comes through conference and becomes a law, the old William Jennings Bryan ratio of 16 to 1 may yet prevail. Before the devaluation some years ago, the price of gold was \$20.67 an ounce. One-sixteenth of \$20.67 is \$1.29. Silver producers of the western

part of the United States have always resented the old ratio of about 32 to 1, which was the relationship between the two metals when Bryan made his famous "Cross of Gold" speech. New mines had been opened and silver had become more abundant. The silver producers have tried for years to restore the old 16 to 1 ratio which prevailed before 1873.

The only stickler now is that gold is priced at \$35 an ounce. Even if silver advances to \$1.29, it will not be up to the coveted 16 to 1 ratio

fired because of Communist leanings, as intimated by Representative Cox (D., Ga.), on the house floor. They were let go for economic reasons, he said.

Of all the lists submitted by members of congress and other persons, raising the Communist issue against various permanent department personnel, he said, accusations against but one employee have been substantiated, and this person has been discharged. The employee was not identified.

### DEGNAN CASE: Killer Found?

The entire United States was shocked last January when little Suzanne Degnan was found slain near her home in Chicago. The case proved to be one of the most stubborn police, the FBI and others ever attempted to solve. Now, they believe they have found the killer.

William Heirens must face the music. He faces 21 burglary and 4 assault charges, to say nothing of the evidence piled up connecting him with the kidnap-murder of Suzanne.

Heirens, police said, once confessed the Degnan murder. But more often he steadfastly has denied every crime of which the police have accused him. He was a student at the University of Chicago.

### ATOM BOMB: And Human Beings

The extent of heat damage to some of the more distant parts of the target fleet in Bikini lagoon, where the atom bomb test was made July 1, showed human survival would have been doubtful. Ships a mile from the center of the blast were burned and blackened as though by a tremendous blast furnace.

Anyone on the decks of these ships would have burned to death in an instant, those who inspected the damage believe. While some animals survived on most ships, the fate of human beings might have been different. Studies of animals' injuries may show whether enough crewmen could have lived through the blast to operate the stricken ship. Making the study is Dr. Carl Compton of the Massachusetts institute of technology.

### U. S. FILMS: Shown in Paris

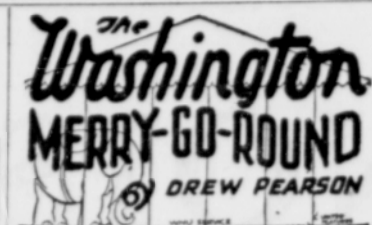
They were gayer than ever in "Gay Paree" when the first "new" American films to be imported to France under the terms of the French loan made their appearance. Well, maybe the films weren't exactly the latest but—

The pictures shown during the opening week included "Citizen Kane," "Kitty Foyle," "Too Many Husbands" and "Dangerous Adventure." All are in English with French subtitles dubbed in.

The new movies made their appearance in the middle of a bitter attack by some French writers on what they termed the "assassination" of the French movie industry.

which westerners believe is the proper balance in a world where bimetalism is used.

While most countries are now off the gold standard, silver is still used in almost every country. In some countries, such as India, nickel and other metals are used. For many years the U. S. treasury did not purchase silver in quantities sufficient to hold prices up. The silver purchase act of 1934 was designed to aid the white metal regain some of its old prestige.



### BIG BUSINESS AND TAXES

WASHINGTON.—Juiciest gravy in the current tax legislation is the continuance of the carry-back of unused excess profits credit. The senate finance committee, always friendly to big business, not only knocked out the excess profits tax last year, but retained carry-back refunds. This permits corporations whose current earnings do not proportionately match their 1936-1939 earnings, to claim adjustments in their 1946 tax payments.

This is one reason some firms didn't worry too much about prolonged strikes. General Motors alone will probably hit the treasury for a refund of 80 million dollars. To head off this drain on the treasury, Rep. Cleveland Bailey of Clarksburg, W. Va., Democrat, introduced a bill last January to repeal the carry-back provisions. On January 23, the house ways and means committee asked the treasury for a report.

Recently impatient Rep. Wilbur Mills of Arkansas, Democrat, proposed that congress act independently, without waiting for the treasury report. He pointed out that large credits can be claimed by corporations which actually make more money this year than they did in any of the years from 1936 to 1939, simply because their capital investment is now larger.

Mills charged that many large corporations are taking advantage of this loophole, and as a result the taxpayer foots the bill for the expansion of private industries. He also listed a long series of "abuses and transactions which will no doubt be resorted to in order to create carry-back refunds or tax credits."

### KANSAS ATOMIC STRAW

The Eastman Kodak company has been having trouble as a result of the first atomic bomb test in New Mexico—one year ago. Eastman found that, for some mysterious reason, some of its film was turning black before exposure. Finally experts discovered that the film had been packed in straw which came from western Kansas.

After the Los Alamos bomb test, radioactive dust from New Mexico settled on Kansas wheat fields, and is still so powerful that the Kodak company has had to stop using Kansas straw for packing film.

### TRUMAN WRITES A VETO

President Truman was convinced that the half-breed price-control bill would not work. The Taft amendment, he especially argued, was absolutely impossible, and he cited accountability experts of various big manufacturing firms, all of them against OPA, who branded the Taft cost-plus formula as likely to bring chaos to industry.

"I just have to put what I consider the country's welfare first," the President told his congressional leaders. "Let's not fool the country and give them something that won't work."

When they told him that they would not be able to persuade their reluctant colleagues to pass any sort of price-control bill, the President replied:

"If it's this or nothing, then we'll just have to take nothing."

Among other things, the President figured that during the chaotic period sure to follow if the polyglot price-control bill were passed, congress would claim it was his fault for not making the bill work, when, in actual fact, the bill was unworkable. He felt also that if congress did dare to go home without a price-control bill, things would be hotter for them in their districts than in Washington. He also warned that in this case he would call a special session of congress.

### WHO WON THE WAR?

It is now getting close to a year since the end of the war with Japan and yet the strategic bombing survey for Japan has not been made public. Inside reason is a vigorous backstage tug-of-war between the army and navy which boils down to the basic question: "Which of them won the war in the Pacific?"

Civilian members of the survey staff, however, summarize the situation:

1. Heaviest damage to Japan was inflicted by U. S. submarines. They had just about shut off all Jap supplies toward the end of the war and Japan was paralyzed.
2. Next greatest damage was done by long-range army land-based planes.
3. The navy's carrier-based planes were important, but ranked second to the B-29s.

### DIPLOMATIC POUCH

It's only been a short time since the war, but two former enemies, Italy and Austria, now earnestly seeking to become democracies, will be proposed by the United States for admission to the United Nations next September. Truman o.k.d this move last week. . . . Prime Minister De Valera has decided not to apply for Irish membership in the United Nations. . . . The pro-Soviet Mongolian peoples' republic, however, thinks otherwise about the United Nations.

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### Divides Spoils

Following a centuries-old custom the British Admiralty will divide among the members of the Royal Navy money derived from the disposal of enemy ships and cargoes captured or surrendered during the war, says Collier's. The total fund, whose distribution is to include the Royal Air Force, will amount to approximately \$85,000,000.



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### When Your Back Hurts

And Your Strength and Energy Is Below Par

It may be caused by disorder of kidney function that permits poisonous waste to accumulate. For truly many people feel tired, weak and miserable when the kidneys fail to remove excess acids and other waste matter from the blood.

You may suffer nagging backache, rheumatic pains, headaches, dizziness, getting up nights, leg pains, swelling. Sometimes frequent and scanty urination with smarting and burning is another sign that something is wrong with the kidneys or bladder.

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