

New Era Makes Advent at Capitol

GOP Sweep Frees Truman Of Burdensome Program

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WASHINGTON. — There is a feel of Christmas in the Washington air which is prompted by more than the evanescence of the joyous spirit of Noel — just try to get onto a Connecticut avenue car headed for the F street shopping district. The White House presents its usual decor of pine and ribboned wreath. And, at this writing, the chief tenant is, I believe, dreaming of a Missouri Christmas among his friends.



Baukhage

Whether he spends the holiday beneath his own roof or the one which Uncle Sam so generously provides, it can be said that it will be a far merrier occasion than a year ago. He will be among his friends as well as his family, and as one of his official circle put it, with his "professed" enemies (the opposite party) in power his "unprofessed" enemies (officially his friends) having no further opportunity to toss bricks or bandy threats about his head.

I recall another crisp, cool winter day last February a year ago, when we wended our way to the President's weekly press and radio conference. Bemused pansies (I recorded in this space) showed frost-bitten faces in the garden of the White House grounds.

We were discussing the difficulties and differences which President Truman already was encountering at the hands of his own party in congress.

"Congress has to be realistic in an election year," I quoted someone as saying. "They are facing real issues. And the President's program isn't realistic."

"Whether or not it is realistic," another member of the group replied, "it isn't his program. He inherited it. It's New Deal and New Deal is Old Hat now. It doesn't represent Harry Truman's ideas at all, but he has to go through with it."

As we look back, it is plain enough that whether it was New Deal or what it was, the program of the President was one that the people rejected on election day, the moral obligations of the past, the effect of the pressure groups, the ukase of the party of bigwigs were swept away and Harry Truman, who didn't want the job that was thrust upon him when death commanded, was made a free man.

Presidential Bee Hums

Washington withdraws from official activity for the holidays without getting any real impact of the advent of the new regime. There has been the preliminary hurly-burly of reorganization in Capitol Hill but the same old faces are evident and the same old voices speak. The active Republican leaders in both houses of congress have been so much in the limelight for the last year anyhow that they merely appear to be stepping up, rather than stepping in. It all seems quite routine and casual.

There was just a touch of the excitement of the beginning of a new era when house and senate steering committees had their first



Senator Taft Politically Cautious

meetings and made their first official statements concerning legislation and policy. Most of the steps had been foreshadowed and the change of venue was not fanfare.

The last 14 years make up the longest period of lean years that any party has suffered. I witnessed the end of two 12-year droughts through which the Democrats thirsted; close of the one that began with William McKinley and ended with William Howard Taft, when Wilson accompanied the "new freedom" to the White House. And the next, another 12-year period, when

The President's satisfaction springs not from any spirit of "I told you so" hurled at his alleged supporters, not from any lack of loyalty to a cause well lost. It was simply the weary but happy flood of relief of a man who, having attempted what he knew was an impossible task, saw that task ended, and friend and foe forced fairly into the open.

War Terminated Honeymoon With Congress

My mind goes back to another scene shortly before the death of President Roosevelt. I sat in the office of the vice president talking of days when the caissons went rolling along and both of us — many miles apart — rode beside them. We talked also of the then forthcoming San Francisco conference of the United Nations and Mr. Truman's theme was what he felt to be his function. Paradoxically enough—as it turned out later—it was helping establish liaison between congress and the White House, complementing the highly successful effort of Secretary of State Hull which resulted in the forging of a bi-partisan foreign policy. And in so short a time, after Mr. Truman became President, that liaison between Capitol Hill and 1600 Pennsylvania avenue snapped in twain, never to be reunited.

Three months after the President took office I recorded: "The political armistice in Washington will end shortly after the President's (Truman's) return from Berlin—by that time domestic discontent will be crystallizing, the honeymoon will be on the wane. . . ."

And I then had the temerity to predict that if . . . "the Japanese war should end . . . within the year . . . President Truman will be stripped of the protecting armor of the Commander-in-Chief. Then the slings and arrows which even Roosevelt's enemies were wont to deflect to congress and other government agencies will be aimed squarely at the man in the White House."

That prophesy required no gift of the occult. Mr. Truman knew it then—or I wouldn't have.

From now on the President is his own man. The legislation he offers, whatever its fate may be, will be moulded to suit his own heart's desire. He has fought the fight to the best of his ability, assailed from the right and the left and the rear as well as the front. Now he will write his own ticket, be it good or bad. Few Presidents have had such an opportunity or faced a more severe test.

The New Deal followed Hoover's exit.

The Democrats had only a short interlude at the pie-counter between Taft and Harding and their return in 1933 came in the midst of such a domestic crisis, with the mad days of the NRA following on the heels of the bank holiday, that our attention was diverted from politics. But what the Democrats did to the Republican officeholders "wasn't good," as one Republican put it recently. He added: "We are going to do the same for them."

Congress begins with the Republican Presidential plum within easier reach than any which have dangled in many a year and it is no wonder many hands are reaching hopefully for it. In fact, Senator Vandenberg early sounded the warning that more thoughts should be concentrated on the responsibilities following the victory of '46, and less on the possibilities of '48, for the good of all concerned.

The battle between the Taftites and the anti-Taftites began even before election and the Ohio senator himself is so determined that this time he will win the nomination that he leans over backward to avoid criticism. He refused to go on a broadcast for even a three-minute statement of Republican policy and he took off for Central America shortly thereafter.

FORECAST FOR 1947

Survey Shows Rise in Building

NEW YORK. — Representing an increase of 35 per cent, 630,000 dwelling units will be constructed in the 37 states east of the Rocky mountains during 1947, according to an estimate made by Thomas S. Holden, president of F. W. Dodge corporation, fact-finding organization for the construction industry. The figure represents a gain of 35 per cent in number of units and 38 per cent in dollar volume from the anticipated 1946 totals. The estimates are based on elimination next year of present priorities and allocations of materials, Holden said. For all construction, Holden said,

an increase of 25 per cent is expected, bringing the dollar total to more than \$9,500,000,000 compared with \$7,700,000,000 this year in the states surveyed. Holden said it was probable construction activity would continue on an increasing scale without serious setback and added, "if this turns out to be true, construction may be the principal sustaining activity tending to moderate the impact of price recession on the general business structure." Decontrol of material prices will stimulate increased output of many scarce items, Holden said, with new

cost levels "lower than black market prices."

Sees Labor Shortage.

Declaring that "the major bottleneck will be shortage of skilled labor," Holden said that while apprentice training has been stepped up, "recruitment has not kept pace with needs in a number of important trades."

The estimated increase in residential building, he said, was based on assumption that new construction will be completely exempted from rent ceilings, which he described as "the principal deterrent to apartment building."



BARTER MART ESTABLISHED . . . To discourage the black market and to provide Allied personnel as well as Germans with a legitimate means of exchanging goods, a barter market has been set up by American military government in Frankfurt. The market has proved very popular.

NEWS REVIEW

Labor Ranks View Mine Dispute as Wage Guide

LABOR:

New Crisis

Once again it was John L. against the government!

This time, Washington appeared determined to force a showdown with the burly United Mine Workers chieftain, but it had its job cut out for it as 400,000 UMW members stood steadfastly by their leader and both the AFL and CIO threw in their support.

As in previous UMW walkouts, Lewis held a hand full of aces. Punish him as it might try, there were the 400,000 skilled and irreplaceable miners who refused to go down into the pits before clarification of the status of their contract; there were approximately 12,000,000 members of organized labor who looked with disfavor upon government use of the injunction to break a strike, and the courts were still to decide the legality of terminating the UMW-government pact.

But, encouraged by the country's overwhelming swing to the right in the recent elections and the possibility that the courts might decide in his favor in interpreting the legal

and hour concessions from the government.

Under the UMW-government contract, the miners received \$75.25 weekly for a 54-hour week, in contrast to \$23.88 weekly for a shorter week in 1939. Lewis' latest demands were said to call for a 40-hour week with earnings approximating those for 54 hours.

Arrival of the latest soft coal crisis saw the government prepared for emergency distribution of bituminous stocks. Only householders, hospitals, utilities and other essential public services were to receive deliveries. Railroads were scheduled to haul only food, clothing, medicine, fuel and other necessities and to reduce locomotive passenger service by approximately 25 per cent.

Humming again after the crippling strikes of last winter, industry faced another slow-down to conserve fuel supplies and spread them over the period of the walkout.

CIO Goal

Like the AFL, the CIO watched the coal strike with interest, not only because of the injunction proceedings generally condemned by labor but also because Lewis' acquisition of new wage concessions promised to blaze the way for boosts all along the line.

Meeting in Atlantic City, where John L. formed the CIO 11 years ago, CIO Pres. Philip Murray sounded the battle cry for another round of wage increases by lamenting the rise in prices which offset previous boosts and assailing the uneven distribution of wealth.

Seeking to indicate the extent to which recent price rises have crossed out the 18½ cent an hour wage raise won by the CIO earlier this year, Murray said that steel workers now are earning \$13.04 less a week than they did last March. Pointing to the ability of industry to bear higher wages, Murray said that profits in the last quarter of 1946 would total 15 billion dollars compared with 10 billions for 1944.

HOUSING:

New Wrinkle

The public received its first good look at the Lustrom corporation's heralded porcelain enameled steel home in Hinsdale, Ill., outside Chicago, and the showing marked another step in the battle of the company with the Tucker automobile corporation for possession of the huge Dodge-Chicago plant.

The battle took a sensational turn with charges of Preston Tucker, the auto magnate, that a prominent Washington attorney had promised to use his influence in having the National Housing authority remand its order turning the Dodge-Chicago plant to Lustrom if given the Tucker corporation's legal business plus a stock interest. Named as the attorney, Theodore Granik vigorously denied the allegation.



MORE DUPLICATION

WASHINGTON. — President Truman is a sincere, hard-plugging advocate of unified armed services, but he should persuade his army to obey the policy of its commander-in-chief.

At present the army is building a special wing to Walter Reed hospital at 12th and Dahlia streets in Washington which will exactly duplicate the navy's.

This wing is to take care of the President of the United States.

Simultaneously, the navy also has a floor of its Bethesda Naval hospital reserved for the President. It is all set to take care of him at any time. However, medical officers have changed in the White House and a navy doctor isn't in command any more. The army now runs the show.

Roosevelt, always partial to the navy, appointed Adm. Ross McIntire White House physician. But Truman, who served in the army, selected Brig. Gen. Wallace Graham as White House physician.

And of course an army doctor does not like to practice in a naval hospital. Therefore the army medical corps, wanting to avoid the humiliation of sending the President to a naval hospital, authorized a new wing to the Walter Reed Army hospital. Thus, at the expense of thousands of feet of scarce lumber, tons of strategic metal and several thousand bricks, the special wing for the President is being built.

U.S. VS. U.S.S.R. DEMOCRACY

Secretary of State Jimmy Byrnes has been telling the following story about the difference between democracy in Russia and the United States.

"An American soldier," he relates, "was talking to a Russian soldier in Berlin. The American said that in his country, he could go to Washington without a permit, go to the White House, wait his turn, get in to see the President and tell him that he doesn't like American foreign policy. 'That's democracy,' said the G.I."

"That's nothing," the Russian soldier replied. "In my country I can go to Moscow, knock on the door of the Kremlin, walk in, wait my turn, see Stalin, bang on the desk and say, 'Mr. Stalin, I don't like Truman's foreign policy either!' And nothing would happen to me. That's real democracy."

SUPPRESSED REPORT

While President Truman and other high government officials continue their enthusiastic support of the new Philippine government of President Roxas, there remain locked in the files of the White House and Attorney Gen. Tom Clark two copies of a report which, if made public, has explosive power nearly as great as that of the suppressed Rogge report.

The Philippine report was written by a special investigator sent to Manila last winter to determine what action should be taken against islanders who had collaborated with Jap occupation authorities. Inside fact is it pins guilt on nearly all the leaders of the present Philippine administration. Documentary evidence of collaborationist records of a large part of the present senate, cabinet and President Roxas himself is included.

The charges include such criminal acts as aiding the Japs to wipe out patriot guerrillas, conspiring to seize food from famished Filipinos for use by the Jap armies, in addition to the declaration of war against the United States in 1944.

Although the vast majority of the Filipinos hated and resisted the Japs, corruption spread through the top layers of political and industrial leaders. Result was that the justice department investigators recommended that the most important collaborationist clique be tried not in the Philippines, where it would be difficult to find a native court completely free of bias, but in San Francisco.

Reason this recommendation was never acted upon, officials say, was largely Gen. Douglas MacArthur.

UNDER THE DOME

Speaker Sam Rayburn doesn't want the job of minority leader. . . . Southern congressmen are not enthusiastic over continuing the leadership of Massachusetts' John McCormack and they have the votes to put him in or out. . . . One fixture in the capitol regardless of political turnover will be the Rev. James Shera Montgomery, the house chaplain. Appointed by the Republicans in 1921, he was continued by the Democrats.

MERRY GO ROUND

All cabinet members are strengthening their legal staffs, knowing they face the most exhaustive series of congressional investigations in the last 20 years. . . . Retiring Speaker Sam Rayburn tells friends that he will serve in the house only one more term. Sam has been a congressional fixture for 35 years, now wants to retire. . . . Nine members of the new senate are former newspaper men and publishers; three are former teachers. Sixty-four senators are lawyers, the largest group.

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