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EDITORIALS

THE NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

J. E. Jones. Washington, D. C., January 13. Inauguration Day on January 20 will restore pleasant relations between Congress and the Administration.

The President will attempt to replace the labor legislation of the outgoing Congress with the messy old Wagner Act. President Roosevelt interpreted that law to suit his own whimsical plans.

The Republicans and Democrats have worked together on international problems. Very few people oppose the Marshall Plan. BUT Congress will make a fight to tear down the Iron Curtain.

Our Western envoys in Berlin are down-hearted, and efforts by the Western powers to force a settle-



ment of the dispute with Russia in the United Nations have failed. So the row with Russia must go on. Millions of dollars of American money have been poured into the struggle for peace and the restoration of European Nations.

While America has gained some in the West, the Communists have made gains in the Far East. We have not tried to steal any territory or crush any Nations—but we have prevented Communists from destroying many Governments.

Our loss of leadership in Czechoslovakia has been about as bitter as anything that could happen—because the United States set up that Government and established it as a democracy after the first World War. France and England have stood shoulder to shoulder with us ever since the United Nations was established.

THE PRESIDENT AND CONGRESS

The new Mr. Truman speaks sharply about Russia and he says that he is bothered "that our great country in the North has a system of morals that are not moral." In his opinion "contracts are not sacred to the Soviet Government." He reminds the people: "I made certain specific agreements at Potsdam, one of which has been kept. I am exceedingly sorry for that because the Russian people are a great people. If the Russian people had a voice in the Government of Russia, I am sure we would have no trouble." The President shows how patient he is by adding: "I'll spend my time in the next four years to reach an understanding on the basis

at peace is possible with all Nations. I know it can be done. The welfare of the people is the first issue."

That is true Americanism, with all political theories trimmed off. The President will undoubtedly get what he is asking for: "I am counting on the entire backing of the people of the United States to persuade the Soviet Government that peace is all we want. We don't want any territory; we don't want to hurt anyone in the World. All we want is peace."

OUR people will approve of that position of the President.—J. E. J.

Economic Highlights

Of the many reports on governmental reorganization prepared by the Hoover Commission, that on the National Security Organization, made by a subcommittee headed by Ferdinand Eberstadt, ranks high in importance. It is clear that a very large part of future national budgets will continue to be devoted to security measures. It is equally clear, as the report emphasizes, that we are still a long way from a sound basis on which to build a defense establishment.

The report observes that the objective of a perfectly efficient and economical security system is ex-

tremely difficult to attain. It says: "The completely efficient security system will not be economical. The completely economical security system will not be militarily efficient." In an effort to be completely secure, the nation might turn itself into a military state; even so, there is no such thing as 'absolute' security, and the attempt to attain it by these means could lead only to disaster. It goes on to point out that "civilian control over military affairs involves some cumbersome and dilatory procedures and may even lead to serious technical mistakes; yet military power freed from civilian control would lead to even more serious mistakes—perhaps irreparable ones."

The committee adopted certain basic criteria as a guide to its study. Among the most important are these: 1. The primary objective of the national security organization is to preserve the peace, but it must at all times be ready to marshal all the human and material resources of the country for defense. 2. Civilian influence in formulating national policy and in controlling the military establishment must be dominant. 3. The nation is entitled to the maximum possible return for every dollar spent. 4. Wasteful duplication should be eliminated, but the preservation of a competitive spirit

and of service pride and tradition are basic to progress and morale.

The committee is most critical of the services' handling of money. It began with the statement that, "The costs of the military establishment—currently about \$15,000,000,000 a year—appear to be unduly high, in terms both of the ability of the economy to sustain them and of the actual return in military strength and effective national security." It goes on to say, "The committee failed to find in the military establishment a sense of cost consciousness or a general realization of the vital importance to our national security of utmost conservation of our resources. . . There must be a will to eradicate waste; the first step is to instill, through education and leadership, a strong conviction throughout all ranks that waste is harmful to our national welfare." It points to the "awful cost" of the instruments of modern warfare—bombers run as high as \$4,000,000 each; single tank costs more than \$250,000 and ships require expenditures of \$10,000,000 to \$150,000,000. It cites some illuminating examples of the lack of concern of the military mind with conservation. For instance, at the end of the war the Army believed it had about 25,000 tanks on hand. But it was able to find only 16,000 of these.

The report goes on, in considerable detail, to consider one phase after another of the complex security problem. It then lists "six major areas or aspects in which improvement in the interest of greater efficiency and economy is both possible and necessary." The six points run as follows: 1. Strengthening central authority in the military establishment—that is, giving the Secretary of Defense broader and more positive powers. 2. Overhauling the military budget. 3. Improving teamwork throughout the National Security Organization. 4. Relating scientific research and development more closely to strategic planning. 5. Expediting plans for civilian mobilization in case of war. This includes all economic, industrial and manpower resources. 6. Making adequate provision for and against—new and unconventional means of warfare.

The committee also considered and rejected three more proposals which have been very widely debated. It is opposed to: 1. A single

Military Chief of Staff and General Staff over all three services. 2. Merging of the three military departments into a single department. 3. Merger of the naval air arm with the Air Force. The fact that the committee turned these down is of unusual interest, in that all of them have been eloquently argued by men who believe that the total merger of the services is the ultimate goal. The committee is clearly of the opinion that service identification and esprit de corps should be maintained, and that the Navy required air power of its own if it is to fulfill its essential security missions.

What the committee has done is to present Congress with a blueprint from which it may create a security establishment with a maximum of virtues and a minimum of vices. It points out that the National Security Act of 1947 "is a long step forward." Yet that act inevitably created fears and confusions. In some cases it seems to have intensified inter-service rivalries and jealousies. As the committee put it: "One of our greatest needs is to elevate military thinking to a plane above individual aims and ambitions." That is obviously a difficult matter, and it will not be done overnight. But, if the committee is right, it must eventually be achieved, and in as short a time as possible.

A thinking driver doesn't drink; a drinking driver doesn't think.

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