

The Washington Merry-Go-Round

DREW PEARSON & ROBERT ALLEN

Washington, D. C. **TIN-DOGGING**
Unless the Roosevelt administration shakes itself free of red tape and really does something about tin, it may have a major scandal on its hands.

Months have passed since the nation first woke up to the fact that its supply of tin was desperately low. During that time, Japan has edged down closer and closer to the Malays and the Dutch East Indies, our chief tin supply, and now is at the gates of French Indo-China.

Meanwhile, the plan to set up a tin smelter in the United States using Bolivian ore and to save a dangerous ocean haul half way round the world, still is clutched in the large hand of Jesse Jones.

Jesse now is going through exactly the same routine that the state department followed four months ago—asking American metal companies how much tin they would smelt, what process they would use, etc. Last May several companies told the state department they were glad to co-operate: Phelps Dodge, American Metals, American Smelting & Refining and Vulcan Detinning.

From them the state department had secured all necessary information. But after it had finished, the national defense commission went into the matter all over again, asking virtually the same questions.

Now, at long last, the tin problem has come before Jesse Jones, who as federal loan administrator passes upon the \$2,000,000 loan which is to be spent on constructing the tin smelter. And Jesse Jones has gone into all the aforementioned red tape still again.

The tin situation is made even more difficult by the fact that although one of the busiest men in Washington, Jones declines to delegate authority, wants to know all the details.

Jones is now secretary of commerce, a department which Herbert Hoover once made one of the most important in the government. But Jesse also insisted upon keeping his hands on the vital job of federal loan administrator. This makes him, next to Roosevelt, the most powerful man in the government—also the most sought after.

Result is that state department officials, national defense commissioners and tin experts have to mark time waiting for a chance to see Jesse Jones. And after they get to him they have to wait for him to go through all the details—personally.

Meanwhile the threatened Japanese conquest of Asiatic tin supplies proceeds. Meanwhile also the United States lacks enough tin actually on hand to last a full year.

Note—Present molasses-like negotiations regarding tin have won the nickname "Tin-dogging."

BETTING LOWDOWN

"The Republican," sprightly, enterprising G. O. P. monthly, offers some interesting advice on how to place your money in the election.

At its request, and with the assurance of complete freedom of opinion, C. M. Oehler, a research specialist, prepared a betting "tally sheet." In offering it the magazine warns, however, that conditions may change abruptly.

"Election bettors must take into consideration," says the publication, "the possibility that a major 'emergency' may burst into bloom late in October or very early in November and may be a decisive factor in the outcome." With this in mind it presents the following tips on how to bet Willkie money:

"Cinch bet"—Vermont, Kansas, Maine, New Hampshire, Iowa, South Dakota, Massachusetts, North Dakota, Minnesota, Michigan. Total, 87 electoral votes.

"Give odds"—Rhode Island, Nebraska, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Ohio, Wisconsin (?). Total, 101 electoral votes.

"Even money"—Indiana, New York, Illinois. Total, 90 electoral votes.

"Ask odds"—Oregon, Wyoming, Connecticut, Delaware, California, Idaho. Total, 45 electoral votes.

"Ask long odds"—West Virginia, Montana, New Mexico, Kentucky, Colorado, Missouri, Maryland, Utah, Washington. Total, 67 electoral votes.

"Don't bet"—Nevada, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Arizona, Virginia, North Carolina, Florida, Arkansas, Louisiana, Alabama, Texas, Georgia, Mississippi, South Carolina. Total, 141 electoral votes.

MERRY-GO-ROUND

Assistant Secretary of State Berle believes Spanish is the coming language for Americans, is having his children learn it.

The Liberty league, moribund for the last several years, last week quietly folded up completely. The few remaining employees were paid off and told the league was giving up the ghost. Chief reason given was the Hatch "purity-in-politics" act. Jouett Shouse, league director, who in its heyday drew a \$38,000-a-year salary, is supporting Willkie but is not taking an open part in the campaign.

Minnesota's Gov. Harold Stassen has a leading role in guiding the labor end of the Willkie campaign.

GENERAL HUGH S. JOHNSON Says:

United Features WNU Service

PILOT TRAINING
WASHINGTON.—Five weeks ago I questioned the value and efficiency of the civilian pilot training program, which is a plan to train 50,000 pilots for military and naval service by farming the students out to civilian pilots in groups of from 10 to 40 to be trained at so much a head. I said that it was not properly supervised, was dangerous and unlikely to produce many military and naval pilots who would not have to start all over again in the primary training of the armed services.

I wrote that after seeing the plan in process and talking with experienced and impartial training experts upon whose judgment I rely. From other such men that column received indorsement, but by some interested in that program I was told with various degrees of indignation that I did not know what I was talking about.

Wayne Parrish, editor of American Aviation, has watched this development closely, has recently made a study of it and has not, as a recent gossip column implied, the remotest political interest. In an editorial in the September 15 issue, he goes a lot further than did my column and even hints at the very odorous condition which may result in a congressional investigation.

Assistant Secretary of Commerce Hinckley wangled a total appropriation of \$37,000,000 to finance this program. It was presented as a defense move to train 50,000 pilots—perhaps for Mr. Roosevelt's 50,000 phantom planes.

The record is not clear as to whether congress was told that nothing in the plan commits any trainee to any kind of military service, but Mr. Parrish reports that prospects are assured that there is no such obligation and told to forget that part of it. Out of 77 graduates of the secondary course, 76 didn't seek military training.

No military or naval authority is very clearly on record, but privately neither branch believes that a satisfactory substitute for the service primary courses can be given in this haphazard fashion.

Those who doubted the wisdom of the transfer of the independent CAA to the political department of commerce, do not feel much encouraged by these developments nor by the increasing sabotage of the inspection service of the old CAA, which hung up so remarkably a record of air safety on the transport lines.

Veteran inspectors are being submerged, weeded out or resign in disgust to make places for less experienced men.

It is hard enough to understand how military and naval pilots can be trained by a slapped together hay crate organization of civilian pilots, but harder still to see how a safe and uniform course of instruction can be given in so many independent "schools" by instructors themselves of a wide variety of experience and training without an inspection service rating almost perfect efficiency. Many of the so-called "private flying specialists" who are "directing" this loose jointed organization for training military and naval pilots were examined and failed to qualify under the old inspection service as inspectors.

In this new "specialist" rating, they receive higher pay than experienced inspectors—\$5,600 a year, as compared with \$3,200, \$3,800 or \$4,600; the latter figure being the highest rate in the old inspection service. This and similar policies are stripping that service of competent men.

Much worse faults of carelessness and monkey business have been reported, but I have been unable to confirm them. What this situation needs is a congressional investigation. Maybe it will get it—but not until after the election.

DEFENDING BRITAIN

While I was in Chicago recently, the "Defend America by Defending Britain" committee staged a mass meeting—largely of Gold Coast intellectuals—in the Coliseum. It was harangued by several eminent breast beating war criers. All they ask now is to strip our inadequate army air force of 50 of its flying fortresses and detach from our navy the mosquito torpedo boats which congress recently prevented the President from sending to Britain.

How this kind of thing could be done lawfully—even under the attorney general's phoney opinion by which the destroyers were detached without even consulting congress—doesn't appear. These people don't care. They don't even worry about that, because they know the President doesn't care either.

After the terrible rolling we got for listening to our Anglophiles in 1917, I never expected to live to see the day when anybody would be dumb enough on the one hand and have nerve enough on the other, to defy the great weight of American public opinion and try to push us into another world war to make the world safe for anything but our own country. This Eastern Seaboard propaganda, apparently fully financed by somebody, is threatening to get away with it.

WHO'S NEWS THIS WEEK

By LEMUEL F. PARTON (Consolidated Features—WNU Service.)

NEW YORK—In Uncle Remus, Brer Fox said to Brer Tarripin, "You ain't seen no trouble yit. I'm de man w'at can show yer trouble."

'The Perfect Fool' And that goes for Ed Wynn **Once Again Is Fooling the Jinx** in whooping it for his new revue, "Boys and Girls Together," at its Boston tryout. His revue sounded extemporaneous, like everything else he does, and seemed to make people feel that even these dire days will end when an old master, who though he was licked, can thus improvise a knockout.

Set upon by a blizzard of troubles, financial and domestic, two years ago, Brer Fox Wynn retired to his Park avenue cave to sit around in his pajamas and bite his nails. Then something touched off a giggle or two and he began trying on funny hats, and working up a few gags. He began to feel better, and along came George Wood and Pat C. Flick with a bankroll.

That recent mess of trouble was Mr. Wynn's twenty-seventh upset, in the light of which his comeback is not so surprising. His radio chain was as fragile as a Vassar daisy chain and took \$300,000 of his money. A delayed income tax time bomb blew up a similar amount. Harassed by lawsuits and whatnot he found his wellspring of gags had dried up. He shopped around for new and used gags, but found none in stock. It was his own inner resources which finally reclaimed and reissued the waggish Mr. Wynn.

Funny hats have figured in his karma from the first. His father, a milliner, came from Czech-Slovakia and his mother from Turkey. In the millinery shop, he handed himself many a laugh, trying on hats. When he was 16, his father said it was time for him to take up the millinery trade, but he had other ideas. He tied a shirt and a Sunday suit into a Dick Whittington bundle and made his way to Norwich, Conn.

He talked his way into a roustabout job with a barnstorming company, presently got a small part, and burlesqued it just enough to reveal his genius for comedy. Twelve years of barnstorming and vaudeville followed. His recurring troubles have been such that interviewers or critics usually stress the Pagliacci note when writing about him, but it's rollicking, sympathetic laughter which greets his happy comeback.

WINSTON CHURCHILL stirs wide interest and approval with his demand for simple and precise language, official and unofficial. **More and More People Taking Up Word Gunnery** His own addresses have been models of clarity and force. He has risen nobly to the demands of the hour. All the more credit to him in view of his previous lapses. This department has dredged up an old speech of Mr. Churchill's in which he scolded certain offenders for "terminological inexactitude," and deplored the public trend toward ornate language.

Perhaps under the pressures and urgencies of the times precisionists are coming forward in the entire field of communications as they are in machine tooling. War casualties among pedants and mystagogues may be heavy. Over here, Charles A. Collin takes a long overdue swipe at the mystic word maze of life insurance policies, as he addresses the Insurance Advertising conference in Atlantic City. This writer has been thrown for a loss every time he tried to read an insurance policy and has had to take them entirely on faith.

Also in tune with the times is Judge Pecora's deep pondering and long-studied decision in that question mark or period case. Sixteen entrants in a civil service examination were sustained against their examiners when they picked the question mark as the proper ending for a certain sentence.

Just getting under way before the war started there was in England a society for general word renovation and fumigation and the furtherance of good diction. In these endeavors, Mr. Churchill now gets a putout, but something more than an assist should go to the mischievous and ironic A. P. Herbert, the parliamentary gag man who was far ahead of Mr. Churchill in blasting at over-elegant word setups. Half Irish, the author of about 20 novels, and a half-dozen plays, he has pinked much revered, but pretentious usage.

Chemical Plant Damaged by Blast



The burning ruins of two buildings are shown in the above photo of the Pennsylvania Industrial Chemical corporation at Clairton, Pa., which was damaged by an explosion of resin and oils. The blast resulted from "adverse chemical reaction" in an agitator. Six persons were injured in the blast. The damage is estimated at \$50,000. Flames were brought under control an hour after the explosion.

New Legion Chief



Milo J. Warner, attorney, of Toledo, Ohio, who has just been elected National Commander of the American Legion at their twenty-second annual convention in Boston. He is one of the Legion's founders.

Find Four Dead in Plane Wreckage



Four passengers who went up for a noon-hour flight plunged to their death within the city limits of Kansas City. Those killed were Ralph Howe, a flying instructor, and Ralph Irey, also two stenographers, Miss Juanita Clanton and Miss Georgia Yankee. At the left a doctor can be seen trying to find a spark of life in one of the victims.

Threatens F. D. R.



Twenty-two-year-old Lincoln De Cleyre, arraigned in Philadelphia on charges of threatening to kill President Roosevelt. De Cleyre has been threatening the President since 1936, according to government authorities.

Passing the Time in Air Raid Shelter



Here's a peek into a Ramsgate air raid shelter. The city of Ramsgate, in England, has been subjected to constant air raid alarms, and the people have, during these many weeks past, grown quite accustomed to spending long hours in air raid shelters. Girls are knitting as they pass the time. Housewives discuss the high cost of living and other home problems. Little boys suck on ice cream cones and wait, like the others, for the raid to pass over. London's loss of time every day because of air raids is a very serious matter, and the Nazis seem to know it.

Spruces Up for Army



A blanket serves as an extra pair of pants for Private Edward Tortolani, who sharpens a crease as he gets ready to enter the regular army of the United States. He's one of the 3,500 men in three New York city National Guard regiments who have dropped their civilian pursuits for a year's service in encampments.

President Signs Peacetime Draft Bill



President Roosevelt signs the nation's first peacetime conscription bill. Standing, left to right: Secretary of War Henry Stimson, Rep. A. J. May, chairman of the house military affairs committee, Gen. George C. Marshall, chief of staff, and Sen. Morris Sheppard, chairman of the senate military affairs committee.

New Speaker



Speaker of the House of Representatives Sam Rayburn of Texas, who succeeds the late William Bankhead. One of his first duties was presiding over Bankhead's state funeral.