

# The Washington Merry-Go-Round

DREW PEARSON & ROBERT ALLEN

## WARY GRAVY-TRAINER

Washington, D. C. You can write it down that Secretary of Agriculture Claude Wickard is going to be very chary about using that gravy-train veto power the farm lobby voted him in the price control bill.

He knows that the White House is still sputtering over his unauthorized endorsement of this lobby scheme at a crucial moment in the senate fight over the legislation. Also, that if he attempts to exercise the power he is liable to be slapped down even harder than when he fronted for the lobby.

Actually, under cover, Wickard has promised in effect to be a good boy.

It didn't leak out at the time, but during the secret deliberations of the joint senate-house conference committee on the bill, he wrote the committee a letter repudiating his previous endorsement and saying he didn't want the veto power over farm prices.

Wickard wrote this letter under White House pressure. He knew he was in bad and he tried to square himself.

But for the administration, the backdown was too late. The damage had been done, for the amendment was in the bill and the lobby's pals on the joint committee were in a powerful position to stand pat.

In this final bitter fight, two Alabama Democrats and a Michigan Republican were responsible for the retention of the gravy-train provision. They were Sen. John H. Bankhead and Rep. Henry B. Steagall of Alabama, and Rep. Jesse P. Wolcott of Michigan.

As the amendment originated in the senate, under the rules, it was necessary for the house conferees to propose deletion. Steagall, chairman of the house group, publicly makes a great show of being a red hot Administrationite. But behind closed doors of the committee room he adamantly refused to heed Roosevelt's pleas for elimination of the lobby amendment.

Backed by Wolcott, who fought the vital war bill from the start, and with Bankhead running interference in the senate group, Steagall forced the retention of the provision.

Note: The administration's fight was made by Sen. Prentiss Brown, Michigan Democrat, and Sen. John Danaher, Connecticut Republican.

### Another Row

Wickard's fronting for the farm lobby in the price control bill isn't the only row he's had on this score with inner administration leaders.

The papers are full of stories about a big crop expansion program this year to meet the food needs of U. S. war allies. Frequent press releases issue from the busy publicity staff of the agriculture department about grandiose plans.

The real inside is that Wickard didn't get busy on these plans until he was practically ordered to do so by Vice President Henry Wallace as head of the Economic Warfare board.

Wallace sent Wickard two sharp letters demanding prompt action to expand crop production and only then did Wickard bestir himself.

Certain farm elements are against crop expansion, on the ground that scarcity makes for better prices. Working through politically minded Triple A officials, who have a lot of influence with Wickard, the anti-expanders kept him on the fence until Wallace jarred him off.

Note: Secretly, the AAA politicians also had a lot to do with Wickard's endorsement of the gravy-train amendment in the price bill. The AAAers are jealous of Price Administrator Leon Henderson's authority, want to elbow their way into the war set-up as big shots.

### F. D. R. AXES LEWIS

The inside reason why John L. Lewis was not named a member of the three-man C.I.O. peace committee was because President Roosevelt personally blocked it.

When he and C.I.O. President Phil Murray discussed the counter plan that scuttled Lewis' blitz scheme, Roosevelt advised that the new A.F.L. and C.I.O. peace committees be limited to three members each. That would avoid turning the joint committee into a "mass meeting," he explained, and also make it easier to keep hostile Lewis out of the picture.

"If you have too large a committee, Phil," the President added with a smile, "you may appoint Lewis." "I guess you're right, Mr. President," laughed Murray.

Note: Lewis intimates say he would not have accepted appointment to the committee if it had been offered him.

### GENERAL MARSHALL

You weren't seeing things if you saw the news picture of Gen. George C. Marshall, army chief of staff, attired in the uniform of an air corps officer.

It was him all right and he had on an air corps uniform. Marshall is not a flier. He is an infantryman. But outside of the air corps, he is the flying officer in the army. Whenever possible Marshall always travels by air and is an authority on planes and aerial tactics.

## War Birds in Their Nest on Pacific



Planes on the deck of a U. S. aircraft carrier ready to take to the air on patrol duty, or to meet the attack of Japanese air or sea forces. This picture was made with a U. S. navy offensive patrol force somewhere in the Pacific ocean. They didn't run into any action, but were "looking for the real thing." (Approved for publication by navy.)

## Lost All on Ship



A crew member of the United Fruit company's freighter, San Gil, receives new clothing from Mrs. Higgins McBaugh, director of the Red Cross at Lewes, Del. The San Gil, hit by two torpedoes and 11 shells from an Axis sub, was the 15th victim of U-boat warfare along the Atlantic coast. Two crew members were killed.

## Fire Sweeps Boston Docks Near Navy Yard



This photo, made at the height of the conflagration, shows the fire which resulted in a four alarm at Boston's Mystic docks. Firemen brought the flames under control after a two-hour battle. There were no casualties. The building, which contained foodstuffs of a grocery chain, is near the Boston navy yard in the Charlestown district.

## Seized by Japs



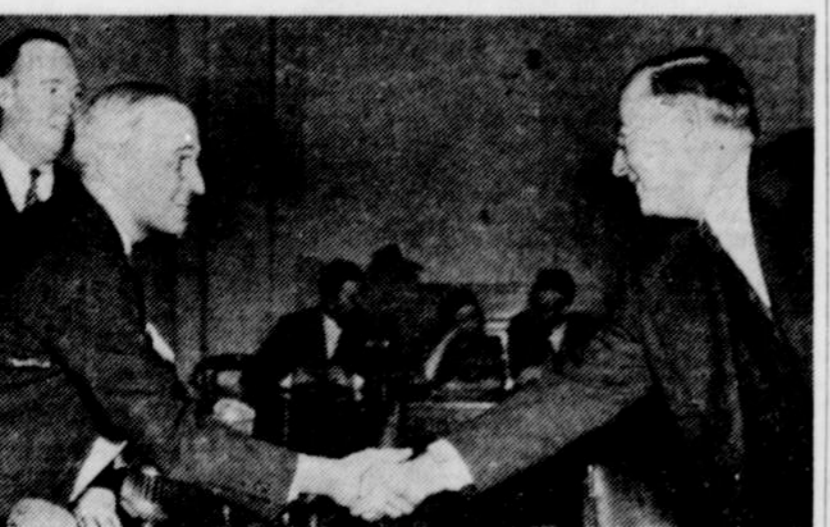
Comd. Donald T. Giles, U.S.N., who was assistant governor of the island of Guam, and who is in a Jap prison camp. His wife and son live in Annapolis, Md.

## Secret Army-Navy Headquarters in East



America's eastern seaboard is guarded by a closely co-ordinated defensive and offensive system, by land, sea and air, with leaders working in unison at secret headquarters somewhere in the New York area. Above are two views of army and navy commanders conferring in the plotting room of the secret joint headquarters. (Official U. S. army and navy photos.)

## Nelson Defends \$1-a-Year Men



Donald M. Nelson, war production chief, tells the senate Truman committee investigating defense that it is "hampering" him by frightening business men who have been criticized by the committee. Nelson is shown (right) shaking hands with Sen. Harry Truman, chairman.

## Succor for Wounded



In this picture wounded defenders of the desert fortress of Tobruk are shown approaching a hospital ship somewhere in Libya, after they had been relieved by the drive of the British imperials into Libya after months of siege. The British navy played an important role in the battle of Tobruk and the drive across Cyrenaica.

## Commands A. E. F.



Brig. Gen. Russell P. Hartle, who commands the force of U. S. troops that has landed in Northern Ireland. The war department refused to publicize the units or strength.

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