

New Legislative Setup Is Effective

Congress Putting Its Reorganization to Test

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WASHINGTON. — The 80th congress has been operating long enough under the new reorganization plan to note some of the latter's virtues and shortcomings. The first hotly debated issue in the senate had a fortunate effect on the plan. I refer to the fight over retention of two of the standing committees — the committees on war investigation and small business. Despite the fact that the 80th congress had expressed the intention to abide by the reorganization plan accepted by the 79th congress, and that one of the purposes of this plan was to eliminate the special committee, the senate Republicans fought hard to ex-



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tend the life of these two "specials" — and they won. But so much attention was directed toward the issue that Senator Taft hastened to make it clear later that creation of further special committees would be a very difficult job. Net result of the whole discussion was to strengthen rather than weaken the reorganization. One of the most important steps toward increasing efficiency of congress was elimination of overlapping committees but, like attempting to abolish the seniority rule, it just couldn't be accomplished. As a matter of fact, when the bill finally was passed, the house rejected the senate-approved provision which did away entirely with special committees. It was admitted at the time the reorganization act was passed that it fell considerably short of the original recommendations by the various bodies which had made unofficial studies of the situation. Indeed, the act did not carry out all the recommendations of the report of the joint congressional committee created to examine various recommendations and then to make its own.

Experts To Advise Solons

Probably the most important change yet to be made is to provide additional help for members. That is, providing additional experts to advise committee chairmen and committeemen. I recently heard it remarked that: "Senator Taft usually knows what he is talking about when he takes the floor. You may not agree with his policies but when it comes to facts he seldom makes erroneous or misleading statements. This is largely because Taft has the best staff of advisers in congress — he hires and pays for them out of his own pocket."

It is impossible to expect that more than a few members of either house can devote enough time to any single subject to become expert on it. It is true that we have had some outstanding examples of men and women who have been able to specialize and still carry on their other duties. For example: Senator George on finance and Mrs. Rogers on veterans' affairs, to name two widely different fields.

It is natural that most congressmen got into politics by way of the legal profession, which is a good basic training, but today, when many of the most important issues are economic rather than political, no professional training is in itself broad enough.

Some phases of the reorganization plan probably will prove impractical. One of its objectives was to reduce the number of measures passed by unanimous consent. This was recommended because frequently important legislation was adopted in this manner with only a small number of senators on the floor. The roll is not called — merely "no objections." Various steps were taken to check this custom but there is a human element involved that has to be taken into consideration.

One thing which helps attendance considerably is the reduction of the number of committees upon which a senator serves. This gives him time to participate in debate. It is not improbable that the filibuster will be curtailed, perhaps this session, if not entirely ruled out. But there never will be "a limit to debate" and "debate" easily can become largely a monologue when addressed to few hearers except a patient visitor or two in the gallery.

More Reforms Recommended

George B. Galloway, staff director of the Monroney-LaFollette congressional committee which drew up the reorganization legislation, recently proposed seven new fields of congressional reform:

1. Avoid legislation deadlocks and promote better teamwork between congress and the President.
2. Create unified, clearly located, responsible leadership in congress for the legislative program.
3. Reduce the non-legislative work load on congress so as to free congressmen from errand running and permit them to concentrate upon their legislative duties.
4. Choose committee chairmen other than on the basis of seniority.
5. Eliminate the filibuster in the senate.
6. Solve the problem of the powers and procedure of the house committee on rules.
7. Establish adequate safeguards against extension of the patronage system to the new professional committee staffs.

It will be a long time before all these suggestions are adopted. Meanwhile some of those already in the law will be modified slightly in use, just as an automobile or ship "shakes down" after a certain amount of mileage has been achieved.

One thing that simply won't work now and probably never will in the senate, at least, is the printing of the schedule of the next day's work in advance. There is too much freedom of action, too much deeply rooted senatorial courtesy to prevent a senator from obtaining "unanimous consent" to lay aside what was planned and introduce an entirely different matter.

But this is a small point. It is agreed that the advantages outweigh the minor disadvantages. The staffing alone even though not carried out to the full is a tremendous gain. Expert guidance of specialists who know their jobs and are not subject to political interference is invaluable.

The staffing, however, that has been done is invaluable. Now for the first time there will be experts instead of a new inexperienced set brought in with each chairman. More are needed.

Announcement by the department of labor that a special commission had simplified job classifications and ironed out rate inequities in the Big Five packing plants pointed up the growing acceptance of the principle of equal pay for equal work in U. S. industry.

Consisting of representatives of the public, government, industry and labor, the commission cleaned up differences between Swift, Wilson, Cudahy, Armour and Morrell and the AFL, CIO and independent unions over rate inequalities. The companies and unions had agreed on conditions for 90,000 jobs in collective bargaining procedure, and the commission acted on the remaining 10,000 jobs.

The number of labor grades carrying varying pay rates was cut from 250 to 25 under the negotiations and wage boosts averaging 1.8 cents an hour were awarded to approximately 75,000 workers to iron out inequalities. In general, packing house employees doing the work in the same geographical area now draw equal pay.

Previously, the CIO-United Steel Workers and U. S. Steel corporation had ironed out wage inequalities for 175,000 employees. Retroactive to January 4, 1944, the cost of readjustment was estimated at 30 million dollars, with many workers receiving the equivalent of a 1/2 cent an hour wage increase.

CHINA: U. S. Out

Diplomatic eyes turned anxiously to the Orient following the U. S. decision to abandon its peace-making in China and withdraw most of the 12,000 marines on duty there.

Concern was expressed lest U. S. withdrawal would invite Russian intervention in China on behalf of the Chinese Communists. While Secretary of State Marshall had diligently sought to bring the Nationalists and Reds together during his special peace mission, the U. S. had proceeded on the assumption that the Nationalists constituted the legal government. In supporting the Nationalists, the U. S. has advanced an estimated 1 1/2 to 3 billion dollars of lend-lease, and also provided technicians for training their military forces.

Since the U. S. pulled out of China without making any strategic arrangements, the Russians maintain a distinct advantage in view of their half-interest in the Manchurian railroad and their joint control of Port Arthur and Dairen. Russia's strategic position thus leaves Moscow in a key position if it wishes to supply Chinese Communists entrenched in the north or actually intervene on the pretext of stabilizing conditions in the Orient.

BIGGER 'BURGERS

Increase Seen in Meat Output

WASHINGTON. — Meat production this year will approximate 23 billion pounds, providing 150 pounds for each civilian after allowing for military requirements and exports, according to a department of agriculture prediction.

The estimate compares with a 1946 production of 21,900,000,000 pounds, or a per capita civilian supply of 145 pounds. Average output for the 1937-41 period was 18 billion pounds while highest production on record was set in 1944 with 24,700,000,000 pounds.

The department said beef output



FOLLOW OLD ADAGE . . . Believing in the old adage about the way to a man's heart, 16 Chicago war brides are learning to cook "the American way" in a Red Cross nutrition class. Their No. 1 request is to learn to bake apple pie. War brides from Scotland, England and Egypt are shown above with a Red Cross instructor.

NEWS REVIEW

Packers Equalize Wages; U.S. Withdraws China Aid

LABOR:

Pay Equality

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CONGRESS:

Retain Luxury Levies

Bent on trimming income taxes, the Republican congress moved to preserve other sources of revenue to carry the huge 1947-48 budget and reduce debt by extending wartime rates on luxury items.

As a result, taxes on liquor were scheduled to remain at \$9 a proof gallon; 20 per cent on furs, luggage, jewelry and toilet preparations; 1 cent for each 5 cents charged on theater admissions; \$3 a barrel on beer; 25 per cent on long distance telephone calls and 15 per cent on local service; 15 per cent on transportation, and 20 per cent on light bulbs and tubes.

Meanwhile, Republican ranks were split on the proposal of Chairman Knutson (Rep., Minn.) of the house ways and means committee to reduce income taxes 20 per cent on earnings up to \$300,000. Increasing favor was shown for the suggestion of Representative Engel (Rep., Mich.) that exemptions be increased to cut the taxes of low income groups rather than offering broad relief which might chiefly benefit the upper brackets.

Declaring there are nearly 86 million people dependent on individual or family income of \$2,500 or less a year, Engel said that Knutson's bill would result in a tax cut of only 72 cents a week for a man earning that much or less. On the other hand, a person drawing \$300,000 a year would gain \$942 a week. "If the Knutson bill is passed," Engel said, "it will place into the hands of the Democratic party the most effective campaign argument any party can have; an argument which will appeal to 86 million people in the low income group . . ."

FREIGHT:

Want More Cars

For the fifth time in three years, Senator Reed (Rep., Kas.) acted to alleviate the shortage of box cars in the West caused by the retention of rolling stock in the East by seaboard railroads.

As elevators and millers clamored for cars to move grain stacked in the West, Reed threatened to draw up permanent legislation to relieve what has developed into a perennial problem in recent years. On previous occasions, the railroads shifted cars west upon Reed's demands.

The shortage of rolling stock resulting from inadequate additions during the war years has figured in the scramble for cars between East and West. Once cars roll in from the West with agricultural products, eastern railroads have sought to hold onto them as long as possible for shipment of industrial goods to seaboard points. Because the railroads also are loath to send the cars back empty, valuable time is lost by shunting them westward with short loads.



REDS MAY HAVE A BOMB

WASHINGTON. — It took breath-taking Bob Gros of California to do what no diplomat or newsmen so far has done regarding the A-bomb and Russia. He got a hint from Soviet Ambassador Novikov that Russia has either the secret of the A-bomb or an adequate defense against it.

Gros, a California lecturer who annually interviews more Washington bigwigs in 24 hours than the average newsmen does in one week, called on Ambassador Novikov the other day and at the end of his interview asked: "Do you have anything you wish to say to the American people?"

"Yes," replied the ambassador, "You Americans should not rely too much on the A-bomb. Against France, Italy, Germany, yes. But against Russia. No. You should not depend on it."

"That, Mr. Ambassador," suggested Gros, "sounds as if the Russians have developed a defense against the A-bomb."

"Yes," replied Ambassador Novikov, "this and more. I do not wish to say anything further."

This significant statement ended the interview.

MORE WOMEN IN GOVERNMENT

President Truman's failure to appoint more women to high office was tactfully laid before the President by a group of women.

Mrs. La Felle Dickinson, president of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, headed the delegation and told Mr. Truman quite frankly that women generally were disturbed because he hadn't appointed as many women to government jobs as Mr. Roosevelt had. She reminded the President that the state department had built up a roster of 80 well-known American women capable of handling important government work and urged him to bring the list up to date.

Dr. Katherine McHale of the Association of University Women, was equally strong in urging appointment of more women to government.

Mr. Truman replied that he would like to appoint more women to jobs but it was difficult to get the right person for the right job.

"I watched President Roosevelt work for a long time," Truman continued, "I knew then, but didn't realize fully, just how large a portion of the President's time was taken in finding the right people for the right job. I want you to know that nobody makes my appointments for me. I make them on the basis of my own judgment."

Mrs. Dickinson strongly urged appointment of a woman to the existing vacancy on the Federal Communications commission, but didn't suggest any names. The women's club leader pointed out that women make up the overwhelming majority of daytime radio listeners, yet had no representation whatsoever on the FCC.

Mrs. Dickinson also proposed that a woman be named assistant secretary of state, because of the enormous interest and great stake that the women of the country have in keeping the peace. Mr. Truman said the suggestion was interesting.

NO LAME-DUCK JOBS

Here's some bad news for Democratic congressmen and senators defeated in the last election who have been priming the White House for federal jobs:

President Truman has adopted a new policy — no lame-duck appointments, barring exceptional cases. This is the story behind the hope of Sen. Jim Mead's friends to land him a diplomatic post or some other top job.

Truman and Mead are old and close friends, fought shoulder to shoulder in many senate battles and when Truman became vice president in 1944, Mead succeeded him as chairman of the war investigating committee. However, several times recently when White House advisers raised the question of putting the able New Yorker somewhere on the federal payroll, Truman replied with a flat "no."

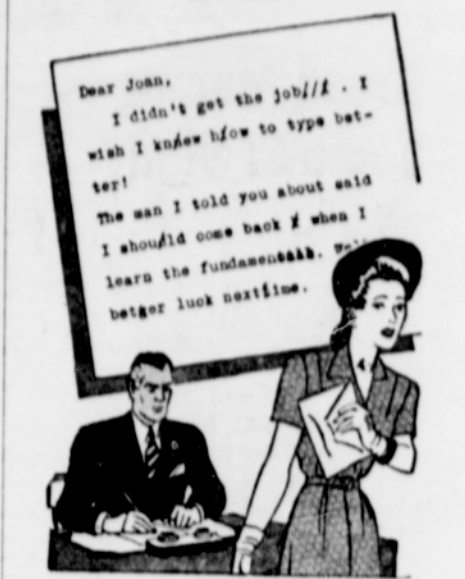
"If the people of a state or a congressional district have decided that they don't want a man in Washington by voting him out of office, why should I go against their judgment by appointing him to some job as a reward for being defeated?" the President said.

So far, none of Truman's advisers has thought up a good answer.

MERRY-GO-ROUND

Civilian secretaries of state who for years have ridden in ordinary Pullmans are wondering how come the military get the use of private railroad cars—in peacetime. General Marshall rode in a private car from Chicago to Washington after his war plane was forced down by bad weather, whereas Henry L. Stimson, two times secretary of war and once secretary of state, never got any higher than a deawing room. . . . General Eisenhower also has a yen for private cars.

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Normandy Beach

France has decided to leave undisturbed the wrecked ships, tanks and other debris of battle on the beaches of Normandy as a war memorial to the Allied troops who landed there to begin the invasion of Europe.

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