

Washington Digest

National Topics Interpreted
By WILLIAM BRUCKART
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Washington.—Many spineless officials of the federal government were horribly shocked the other day when several hundred farmers took matters into their own hands and drove a bunch of sit-down strikers out of the great Hershey chocolate plants in Pennsylvania. They thought it was terrible that men who were striking for higher wages should be beaten and slugged as the farmers at Hershey, Pennsylvania, treated the sit-down strikers. The strikers had closed the chocolate plants, thus cutting off the daily market for thousands of gallons of milk.

Fortunately for the country the number of these spineless creatures, charged with official responsibility, is very few. But I mention the fact because therein is a key to some of the things that have been happening in the Roosevelt administration's treatment of the labor disturbances.

I believe no one can support violence but there can be no doubt that the federal government is charged with responsibility for protecting rights. Rights are possessed by everyone under our Constitution and under our form of government and when a handful of individuals assume to disregard the rights of others it becomes something more than a situation about which soft words and tears for the down-trodden worker are required.

The importance of the action of the farmers at Hershey, Pennsylvania, cannot be minimized. It is a straw that points which way the wind blows. It means that unless the headlong and unrestrained actions of John L. Lewis and his labor agitators are curbed, sooner or later we will pay with blood; we will pay with lives of citizens because the American people always have insisted and always will insist upon a square deal.

In treating of conditions within the country, it is well always to avoid inflammatory declarations. I hope I am never guilty of unfairness in anything I write. But the cold fact is that, in this country, the time has arrived when government must make a choice between its functions as government and allowing autocracy of labor leaders to destroy the rights and property of the other millions of our population. Labor has its rights and they must be protected, but it is equally important that the rights of those who are not members of any union, who want to work, who own property, be protected. Thus far in the present labor controversy, it must be said that the Roosevelt administration and the governors of most of the states have fallen short in their sworn duty.

There has been much praise accorded Governor Murphy of Michigan for "settling" the strikes in the automobile plants. Yet, I cannot help wondering whether the term "settlement" is correct when strikers thumbed their noses at the courts and when law enforcement officers were told by their superiors to hold off the execution of court decrees. It seems to me that we, as a nation, will have cause to regret "settlements" of that kind for a good many years to come.

I am inclining to the belief that there is only one word capable of describing the attitude of the Roosevelt administration in dealing with strikers of the sit down character. Labor has a weapon in the strike and it is entitled to use that weapon because too many business interests have refused to be fair. But when labor abuses, instead of uses, the weapon available to it, then the time has come to call them to account just as business interests are called to account when they violate laws. The difference is that the ranks of labor involve millions of votes whereas, the ranks of business involve only a comparatively small number of votes. Therefore, by any line of reasoning I have been able to follow through, it seems to me that the federal government's position thus far can properly be described as political cowardice.

There are a number of reasons why I think this term is appropriate. First, there was the famous night conference when Mr. Roosevelt returned from his Georgia vacation and talked things over with the house and senate New Deal leaders. They emerged from that meeting with the President, saying that the federal government could do nothing; that no federal laws had been violated and that no request had come from any proper authority for federal government intervention.

It makes one laugh, such statements as these. If President Roosevelt and his administration had desired to curb sit down strikes, does anyone believe that he could not have conveyed word to Governor Murphy of Michigan that he was willing to help? I think there are

plenty of grapevines by which word could have been sent to the Michigan governor and, I truly believe, that if there had been a request for federal troops, there would have been a distinct change in the attitude of Labor Leader Lewis almost overnight.

Further, I have heard from plenty of lawyers in the house and senate that the decision that no federal law was being violated was wholly questionable. Those lawyers were quite convinced that Mr. Roosevelt had federal statutes at his command to use as the basis for action in the various sit down strikes—if he seriously wanted to get mixed up in the labor row.

Then, I am reminded of the very frequent attacks which were forthcoming from the White House and other New Deal spokesmen when employers and banks and business generally failed to measure up to New Deal demands in the recovery programs. The President spoke with emphasis on those occasions. He has been completely silent in the current situation.

And he has been able to maintain silence through protection given him by political maneuvering in the senate. As an instance of this, let me cite the efforts of Senator McNary of Oregon, the so-called Republican leader, in the senate, who attempted to put the question directly to the President. He sought, when the senate was floundering and dodging over a resolution condemning sit down strikes, to change the form of the resolution from one needing only concurrence of the house to a joint resolution which is a measure that requires the signature of the President. Majority Leader Robinson was quick to block that maneuvering. No one needs to tell you, of course, that Mr. Roosevelt did not want to have that resolution come to him.

So, as a second instance of federal government sissiness, we see a subservient majority of New Dealers adopting a resolution which said in effect, "You naughty boys! You know it is wrong to indulge in sit down strikes, to take possession of other people's property, and we are going to slap you on the wrist for it." Well, that was a declaration of policy but when the resolution was before the senate they could not resist the temptation to denounce business because they charged it was unfair to labor.

Then, we have another circumstance. Representative Dies, a Texas Democrat, proposed a resolution in the house for an investigation of sit down strikes. Mr. Dies was willing to condemn sit down strikes but he wanted to know what the facts were. Very quickly, many of the weak-kneed boys on the floor of the house smelled a thorough-going inquiry into labor organizations generally, into political activities of labor groups, into racketeering where local labor organizations are in the hands of irresponsible or scheming radicals. So, the house sneaked out from under and, as painlessly as possible, dodged this issue by depositing the Dies resolution on the table from which, of course, it will never be withdrawn.

I called these policies political cowardice in an earlier statement in this article. All of the elements seem to me to be present to justify that description. But there is another phase of the whole situation. It concerns the future of the politicians who have run away from the real issue this time. I am quite convinced it will rise up to hold them in the not too distant future.

In the course of the discussion of the labor controversy, I adverted on several occasions to the politics that is imbedded in the situation. There is so much of politics in the picture that one hears in the under current around Washington a discussion of President Roosevelt's future plans. It is curious, but it appears possible, that Mr. Roosevelt may be forced to run for a third term. Such a course obviously would break all precedents, but Mr. Roosevelt likes to break precedents.

He has stated on several occasions his ambition to leave the White House in 1940 with the nation at peace and economically prosperous. This observation has been repeated whenever the opportunity was propitious. On the last occasion, there were a number of observers in Washington who sustained the same reaction to the declaration, namely, that perhaps—and only perhaps—Mr. Roosevelt had a yearning in his heart to serve another four years after his present term expires. One writer, noted for his direct expressions, observed that only by constantly referring to his future retirement could the President invite groups to interest themselves in demanding him to run for a third term.

Western Newspaper Union.

NEWS NOTES OF THE NORTHWEST

A Brief Summary of Events of Special Interest to Oregon, Washington and Idaho Communities.

PAYETTE, Ida.—Payette's annual Apple Blossom Festival will feature a two-day celebration this year, May 3 and 4.

WEISER, Ida.—Voters at the city election, April 27 will decide as to issuance of \$15,000 in bonds for construction of a community swimming pool.

TOLEDO, Ore.—Edward W. Miller, secretary of the Oregon Coast Highway association, announced that the semi-annual meeting of that body will be held here, April 18 and 19.

CHEWELAH, Wash.—George M. Rasque, Spokane architect, has been awarded a contract for designing a grade school building with eight rooms at Chewelah, to cost, estimated, \$65,000.

NYSSA, Ore.—Gordon Barrie, representing Adams & Leland of Boston reports contracting for 23,000 fleeces in Lake and Harney counties at 33 cents, the highest price paid for wool in that area in 10 years.

SHOSHONE, Ida.—A flood of poorly counterfeited nickels has descended upon several Shoshone business houses. It seems that the lead coins were largely used for manipulating pinball machines.

ASHLAND, Ore.—Peach trees in the Ashland district are three weeks behind the blooming schedule this year and may escape frost, according to Mayor Wiley of Ashland. Last year they were damaged by frost.

WALLA WALLA, Wash.—Walla Wallans who scout about on the new motor scooters must first secure automobile operator's license and a motorcycle license. It was announced by Chief of Police J. F. Gemmill.

KELSO, Wash.—The state of Washington highway department assumed the responsibility for the maintenance of the bridge over the Cowlitz river between east and west Kelso this week under terms of a recently enacted state law.

THE DALLES, Ore.—The caterpillars are on their way! This word of warning was flashed to Wasco county orchardists last week by W. Wray Lawrence, county agent, after an inspection tour had shown millions of the tiny insects now hatching.

PENDLETON, Ore.—Six hundred parents and friends saw 175 Boy Scouts and cubs do their stuff at the Scout circus and round-up at Pendleton, the biggest event in Pendleton Scouting and the best staged, because of the new Vert Memorial gymnasium.

EUGENE, Ore.—By the end of this week Chief of Police Bergman of Eugene predicts every school youngster in Eugene who rides a bicycle will have been examined by bike code authorities and licensed to ride. Enforcement of the bicycle control ordinance will then begin.

BONNERS FERRY, Ida.—O. W. Keller, a farmer near Naples, has a record-breaking hen. Last week a thoroughbred Rhode Island Red laid an egg measuring eight inches in greatest circumference, and the following day laid one measuring 10 inches end to end, and 8 1/2 inches in lateral circumference.

BEND, Ore.—Preservation of scenic strips of timber along the Santiam and McKenzie highway near Sisters, in western Deschutes county, appeared assured here with announcement that the department of agriculture has approved a proposed exchange of timber. The exchange plan is now in the office of the secretary of interior for final consideration.

FETE DATES NAMED
WENATCHEE, Wash.—Friday, April 30, and Saturday, May 1, will be dates of Wenatchee's 18th apple blossom festival, Ray Michael, festival director, announced.

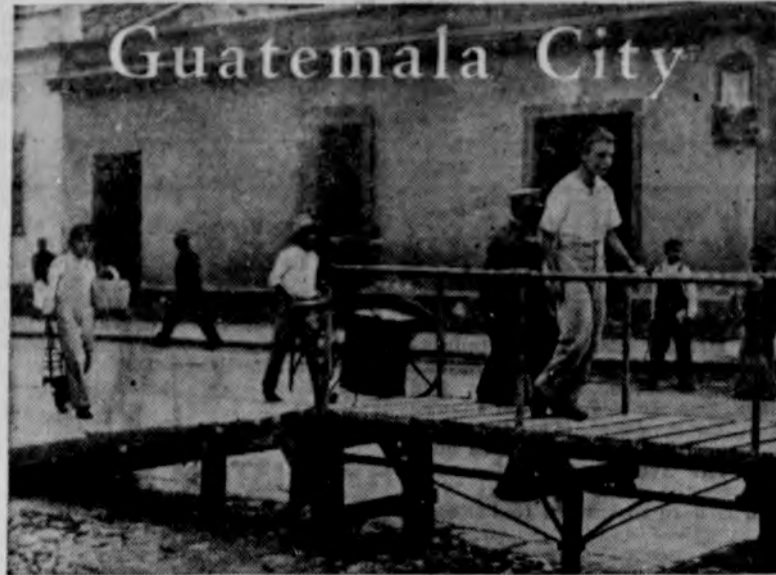
Queen Janet Foster and Princesses Mary Armstrong and Betty Kelley toured north central Washington to promote interest in the affair, which last year drew 25,000 visitors.

SEWER PROJECT OKAYED
BONNERS FERRY, Ida.—Residents of the south residential section were jubilant over news from Washington last week, announcing allocation of \$28,491 for a sewer project. This project is being sponsored by the town board under WPA. J. H. Cave, WPA engineer, recently perfected the plans. The project provides a trunk line sewer for the large residential district on the south bench.

The town will provide about \$8000 for material, according to Mayor Frank Speece.

WALLA WALLA, Wash.—The Walla Walla college board of directors has approved final plans for an auditorium-gymnasium on the college grounds, 44 by 116 feet, with gallery seating capacity of 3000.

SPOKANE, Wash.—About 85 maids and maid-aspirants have begun training at the WPA household arts institute here, in how to serve table properly, prepare food, buy household necessities smartly and use ranges and refrigerators and all latest kitchen and parlor gadgets.



Rainy Season Bridge in Guatemala City.

Prepared by National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.—WNU Service.

WHEN you enter Guatemala City, you are in the most populous place in all Central America. With a population of 120,000, including about 6,000 foreigners, Guatemala City is a thriving metropolis of well-paved streets, department stores, luxury shops, cafes, country clubs, busy factories, garages, and modern hotels. Its motion picture theaters, showing mostly American "talkies" with Spanish subtitles, advertise with big electric signs overhanging the streets in Broadway style.

At the capital's covered central market, the largest in the country, the array of foodstuffs, textiles, utensils, furniture, and other commodities is endless. Its long aisles, and the streets adjoining the market building and cathedral, are always jammed with a noisy, restless throng of merchants and buyers.

And the odors, strange, spicy and heavy! The fresh scents of vegetables and exotic flowers mingle with the greasy smell of cooking food, the aroma of roasted coffee, and the balmy fragrance of copal incense.

Those with weak stomachs may not like the appearance or odor of freshly slaughtered meat. Nor will they find appetizing the leached corn mash for tortillas; or aradillos roasted in their shells; or crude brown sugar pressed into dirty blocks and balls. But visitors are delighted with bright tropical fruits piled in artistic displays, graceful baskets and glazed pottery, and gay textiles woven on primitive hand looms.

Guatemalans are proud, and justly so, of the fine coffee grown in their highlands. Placards in English and Spanish remind the visitor at every turn that "Guatemala Grows the Best Coffee in the World."

On the days when tourist trains arrive in Guatemala City, the department of agriculture holds open house. Small packages of freshly roasted coffee, wrapped in glazed paper, are presented to each visitor. They are appropriate souvenirs of a nation which is the sixth most important coffee grower in the world, being exceeded only by Brazil, Colombia, the Netherlands Indies, Venezuela and El Salvador.

The second most important export is the banana, grown in the coastal plains bordering the Gulf of Honduras and the Pacific.

Airport a Busy Spot.
One of the busiest spots today in this busiest of Central American capitals is La Aurora airport. Here the trunk line of the Pan American Airways from Brownsville, Texas, to Panama connects with a half-dozen local air services to distant parts of the republic.

Many who do not come to Guatemala City by plane, come by boat, and dock at San Jose, a sleepy little tropical port. Between steamers this "back door" to Guatemala drowns in the shade of tall breadfruit trees and coconut palms, and carries on a desultory commerce with the Indians of the coastal lagoons.

Its dingy water front, ragged porters and fishermen, stifling heat, and main street pre-empted by railroad tracks give no promise of the color and activity of Guatemala's gay, modern capital, high up in the cool central plateau.

The first part of the 73-mile journey to Guatemala City follows a gently rising plain, whose black volcanic soil is planted thickly in bananas, sugar cane, cotton, cacao, and fruit trees. Guatemala City is nearly a mile above sea level, in the cool and healthful tierra templada, or temperate zone, and the train must gain most of this altitude in the last fifty miles.

Not far beyond Palin the line creeps through a narrow valley between two towering peaks and comes out on the edge of mountain-rimmed Lake Amatitlan. For several miles the railroad winds along the shore, passing groups of Indian women washing clothes in hot springs at the water's edge. It is a convenient laundry, for clothes may be boiled in the springs and rinsed in the cold fresh water of the lake without taking a step!

The train approaches Guatemala City through verdant suburbs which give way to warehouses and railroad yards, indicating the commercial activity of this busy Latin American capital.

"Winter" Means Rainy Season.
From the terminal, taxis which visitors over smoothly paved streets to their hotel, frequently a grandiose structure with a glass-covered

patio, mahogany floors and furniture, and very high ceilings.

If one remarks to the clerk that the air seems a trifle chilly, "Yes, the winter is just beginning," he may reply.

"Winter? In the tropics? And in May?"
He explains that "winter" in Guatemala is the rainy season, May to October, a period of clouds, dampness, and dismal rains, although, he hastens to add, "part of every day is fair and sunny." In "summer," November to April, there is little or no rain, the sun shines throughout the day, and the people are healthier and happier.

One may be awakened in the morning by the clamor of church bells, the rumble of heavy oxcarts, and the musical chimes of carriages bearing worshippers to early mass.

Guatemala City is compactly built. Stand on the roof of one of its modern buildings and you see a clean and pleasant community, most of whose white, blue, pink, and buff-colored houses and shops are one or two stories high. Only a few concrete business buildings and stone church towers rise above the prevailing flat, red-tiled roofs.

Founded in the year the United States declared its independence, Guatemala City is a comparative youngster among the communities of Latin America. Several times it has been damaged by earthquakes, and in 1917 almost the entire city was destroyed. It has lost its Old World air, although it still has many Moorish-type homes with iron-grilled windows and patios aglow with flowers.

Fascinating as is Guatemala City, however, it is but a prelude to that native Guatemala which is older in race, culture, and traditions. High in the Sierra Madre west and north of the capital, pure-blooded Indians still dress as did their ancestors, worship their old gods as well as the new, and live their lives almost unaffected by modern civilization.

Until a few years ago, when the government launched an extensive road-building program, travel in the highlands of Guatemala was slow and arduous. Now one may motor from the capital westward to the Mexican border and east to El Salvador.

Motoring Through the Country.

Speeding along the floor of the valley, one passes a steady stream of Indians and vehicles bound for the markets of Guatemala City. Stolid, earnest-faced men trot by at a half run, their heads held rigid by a tumpine across the forehead that supports the heavy loads on their backs. For miles, they have been jogging along at this peculiar, forward-falling gait. In cactuses, or wooden frames, they carry goods of all kinds—earthen jars, furniture, bags of grain, or fresh vegetables.

Their women hurry along beside or behind them, arms swinging freely, their burdens on their heads. Sometimes it is a basket of live chickens, a fat roll of clothing, woven fabrics, or a bundle of firewood. Almost always a baby bobs up and down in a shawl slung across the mother's back.

Each tribe, and almost every village, in the highlands has a distinctive costume. Designs have not changed in hundreds of years. To those who know the different costumes, the Indians of the highlands might be carrying signs around their necks reading, "I am from Solola," or "I am from Chichicastenango," et cetera.

It is regrettable, however, that many of these costumes are disappearing. Native garb has been replaced by blue denim and cheap imported cotton goods throughout most of El Salvador, and these materials are now penetrating Guatemala. Under the harsh treatment of the Indian's daily toil, such fabrics are quickly reduced to tatters. Unlike the half-naked aborigines of the jungle lowlands, or the itinerant tradesmen and servants of the cities, the Indians of the highlands of Guatemala have maintained a proud semi-independence as farmers, weavers and pottery makers.

Conquered but never assimilated, they are aristocrats among the native peoples of Central America, and they are sufficiently well organized to make mass petitions to the central government when local conditions demand it. They have had much less contact with other races than Indians elsewhere have had, and are not badly scourged with alcohol. Consequently, they have retained their self-respect and are neither subservient nor cringing.

Ask Me Another

A General Quiz

© Bell Syndicate.—WNU Service.

1. What is a Dutch auction?
2. In what countries is slavery still practiced?
3. What is the world's record of weight carried by man?
4. Does a watch gain time at night?
5. What is the highest price ever paid for a book at auction?
6. In what part of the world does the least rain fall?
7. Of what famous beauty was Menelaus the husband?
8. What is an oligarchy?
9. What does "polytechnic" mean?
10. In American politics what is a "favorite son"?
11. What is an animalcule?
12. Who wrote the song "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny"?

Answers

1. It is an auction at which bids are decreased instead of increased until a minimum price is reached.
2. No nation formally indorses slave trading, but it is believed to exist in Abyssinia, China, Eritrea, Hedjaz, Kufra, Liberia, Morocco, South Morocco, Rio de Oro, East and West Sahara and South Tripoli.
3. A. P. McCarthy of St. Louis, Mo., carried 2,250 pounds on his back in 1898.
4. If the temperature is lower a watch will gain.
5. In 1927 Dr. A. S. Rosenbach paid \$106,000 for a copy of the Gutenberg Bible, which is said to be the highest price ever paid for a book at auction.
6. Arica, Chile, has the minimum amount that has come under observation. The average rainfall for 17 years was only 0.02 inch a year and there were only 3 measurable showers within that time.
7. Helen of Troy.
8. A form of government in which power is restricted to a few.
9. Embracing many arts.
10. A candidate backed at a national convention chiefly by the delegation from his own state.
11. An animal of microscopic smallness.
12. James Bland, a negro poet.

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