

Washington Digest

National Topics Interpreted
By WILLIAM BRUCKART
NATIONAL PRESS BLDG. WASHINGTON, D. C.



Washington. — Some years ago, when New England's sharp-tongued George H. Moses sat in the president's chair as president pro tempore of the senate, I used to marvel at the speed with which he got rid of legislation. The Republicans were in control of the senate. The late Senator Charles Curtis of Kansas was the Republican leader. Between the astute Curtis and the nimble-witted Moses, the senate many times really ran in high gear.

To me, it was reminiscent of the old days, therefore, when I watched Vice President "Jack" Garner operate in the senate the other day to get the judiciary reform bill through that body without permitting a deluge of debate. I think Mr. Garner performed on that occasion with even greater finesse than did Senator Moses because Mr. Garner did not wait for cues from the floor of the senate; he simply took charge and, knowing what the job was, saw to it that things were accomplished in record time.

But the significance of this incident should not be overlooked. It was noteworthy, of course, that the senate should pass the court bill and send it to the house in a total of six hours. It was noteworthy that the Vice President established a precedent by granting permission to senators to include in the Congressional Record speeches they would have made if the debate had been prolonged. And yet it was the implication of the senate action that seems to me to be the most important phase of that situation.

The way I see the picture is this: The ease with which that bill was put through demonstrates that those who opposed the original bill to add six new justices to the Supreme court were objecting only to the court packing and not to the reforms in procedure.

The bill as it becomes law provides for a number of changes in court procedure to the end that adjudication of controversy can be accomplished much more quickly than has been the case in the past. It does not include any addition to the membership of the Supreme court and it does not include any provision for sending hand-picked judges into the various circuits and districts as the White House and the Department of Justice may decide. In other words, the new law leaves the judiciary system independent and again establishes it as a coordinate branch of the government, equal in all respects to the legislative, which is congress, and the executive, which is the President and the executive departments. There can be no doubt that this piece of legislation is worthwhile although to the layman the benefits may not immediately appear. It must be regarded, however, simply as a piece of legislation that cuts much legal red tape and those who must avail themselves of the courts or those who are forced under jurisdiction of courts will come more nearly obtaining justice than heretofore.

I have said in these columns before that when the senate refused to accept the President's orders and pass legislation that would permit him to appoint six new justices to the Supreme court at one time, the President suffered one of the worst political defeats he has ever encountered. He probably will never meet with another such disastrous setback.

It was obvious to the vast majority of senators and representatives and to observers here within six weeks after Mr. Roosevelt submitted the court packing bill that he could not force it through. He refused nevertheless to admit defeat. In consequence, it took nearly six months of bitter and futile wrangling in the senate to convince the President that he was on the wrong side of the question as far as public sentiment was concerned.

So, congress has wasted nearly all of the 1937 session on a proposition for which it was not responsible.

It may be said that congress should remain in session under those circumstances and give all of the time that is necessary to deliberation of measures before it. Yet, facts must be faced. One of these facts is that through all of the months prior to adjournment scores of members were wearing themselves down fighting against a proposition with which they could not agree. In the meantime, Washington's summer settled down. Washington's summer is a completely hot and humid summer. Most of the members of the senate and house are no longer boys of college age. They cannot withstand the physical rigors of heavy work under weather conditions that prevail in a Washington summer. Thus it is not strange at all that as July passed and August wore on, most of the members wanted to go to places more comfortable than the Capital city and that constituted a terrific urge to get rid of whatever legislation was before them with the very

minimum of effort. In consequence, there has been some very bad legislation and congress is now wholly to blame for it.

A friend of mine, a well-known doctor, who is not a politician, knows nothing about politics—a man, in short, who minds his own business and tries to do the best job of which he is capable, asked me a question the other day that precipitated this discussion. He asked me why the newspapers throughout the country were giving so much space, front page space at that, to the political fight over the Democratic nomination for mayor in New York.

My doctor friend observed that which is true, namely, that the mayor of New York is only mayor of that city and has no jurisdiction or power anywhere else; he observed as well that New York City is simply a subdivision of the state of New York and that New York state is only one state out of forty-eight in our nation. Further, he suggested that he, and he believed millions of others, could not possibly have any interest in whether Tammany or the New Deal faction of Democrats in New York City should win the nomination and their mayoralty candidate.

Superficially, the doctor was right. His thoughts, however, do not touch the root of that situation. Fundamentally, the battle between Tammany and the Democrats in New York is a battle between the old line, conservative Democrats throughout the nation and the New Deal faction of the party which is headed by President Roosevelt. It is vitally important also to the Republicans for the reason that the Presidential election of 1940 is almost certain to be a campaign in which we will find conservatives from whatever party aligned on one hand and radicals from whatever party aligned on the other side. To that extent, the New York primary and mayoralty election is the beginning of the 1940 presidential campaign.

The bitterness that is going to prevail from here on has been given something of a preview by the charge by Senator Copeland, the Tammany candidate, that President Roosevelt was interfering in a purely local fight. Senator Copeland's activities in the senate have been almost wholly antagonistic to the President and the New Deal generally. Where the President has been sound, as the conservatives recognize sound policies, Senator Copeland has fought alongside of the New Dealers. Otherwise, he has not concealed his opposition to radical New Deal proposals.

Thus, when Senator Copeland broke openly and accused the President of stooping to local politics, he opened the way for conservatives everywhere to strike back at the political machine managed by Postmaster General Jim Farley in Mr. Roosevelt's behalf. As one house member suggested: "Senator Copeland has put fire into the fight."

The selection of Senator Copeland by the famous Tammany organization in New York City was the signal for the New Deal faction of the great city to take off their coats. They promptly announced selection of New York Supreme Court Justice Mahoney as their candidate against Copeland. There are four burrough organizations behind Mahoney. There is only the Tammany group behind Copeland. On the face of it, it would seem that the senator cannot win. The fact seems to be, however, that there will be a rather close race for the reason that some of the four organizations behind Mahoney may not be able to control the Democratic votes in their bailiwicks as entirely as Tammany Hall will control Democrats so long affiliated with that organization. Certainly, according to the best advice I can get, the Copeland charge against Mr. Roosevelt is likely to swing a good many Democrats to the Copeland ticket. This will be so because New York City always has resented outside influences in its political battles. Senator Copeland can be counted upon as well to broaden the charge so that Mr. Farley's tentacles in New York City politics where he has long been active will be made to appear like the strangling, crushing arms of an octopus. In other words, the conservatives who are supporting Copeland will not let the charge of interference by the President become of less consequence any time it is retold.

True, Secretary Marvin McIntyre of the White House staff denied that the President had talked politics with the Mahoney leaders. But the denial was not accepted by Copeland as being sincere, for he added: "I am not afraid of Mr. Roosevelt's reprisals. The President enjoys a great personal popularity, but his political popularity is swiftly disappearing."

Irvin S. Cobb

What Irvin S. Cobb Thinks about

Japs Killing Chinamen

SANTA MONICA, CALIF.— The formula still holds good. A Jap kills a Chinaman. That's another dead Chinaman. A Chinaman kills a Jap. That's a war.

But before we get too busy deploring Japan's little way of disregarding pledges so as to gobble more Chinese territory let us look at some records closer home. Since the republic was formed we have deliberately broken 264 separate treaties with the original Red owners of this land.

From these violations of our solemn promises border wars frequently ensued. When the Indians started fighting we called it an uprising. When we sent troops forth to slaughter the Indians it was a punitive expedition to restore law and order. If the white soldiers wiped out the Indians that was a battle. If the Indians wiped out the soldiers that was a massacre.

Those who make history rarely get a square deal from those who write history.

Keeping Undercover.

THIS is the land where, in self-protection, you hide your place of residence and have your telephone privately listed. The result is, if your aged grandmother happens along and doesn't know your address, she can never reach you, but any smart stranger may approach the right party—let us call him a 'phone-legger—and, by payment of a small fee, get the number instantly.

So, in about two calls out of three, you answer the ring to find at the other end of the line somebody with a neat little scheme, because here in movieland neat little schemes grow on every bush and gentlemen promoting them are equally numerous.

Through long suffering, I've become hardened to this, but today over the wire came a winning voice saying the speaker desired to give me, as he put it, "a checking over for white termites."

I admit to a touch of dandruff and there have been times when I suspected fleas—we excel in fleas on this coast—but I resent the idea of also being infested with white termites.

I've about decided that, to modern civilization, telephones are what cooties are to a war—nobody likes 'em, but everybody has 'em.

Camera Sniping.

SNAPSHOOTING of famous folks from ambush may be upsetting to the victims of the sniping, but the subscribing public certainly gets an illuminating eye-ful every time one of the photographic magazines appears.

I've just laid aside the current copy of a periodical which could be called either "The Weekly Expose" or "Stop, Look and Laugh." Among other fascinating, not to say illustrating, illustrations, I note the following:

A reigning movie queen with her mouth so wide open that her face looked like a "gates ajar" design. If I had tonsils like hers, I'd have 'em right out.

A political idol taken in a brief one-piece bathing suit. Next time they snap him, he would be well advised to wear more than a mere g-string. A Mother Hubbard would be better. Or, anyhow, a toga. A statesman is greatly handicapped when he suggests a barrel of leaf-lard with the staves knocked out.

A close-up of Mr. John L. Lewis with the lips pouting out and a congested expression. Would not this tend to confirm the impression that lately Mr. Lewis bit off more than he could chew?

This candid camera stuff is transcribing into the pictorial fact the nightmare all of us have had—that horrid dream of being caught outdoors with practically nothing on.

Field Days for Reds.

UNDER the warming suns of tolerance and indifference in certain quarters, many of our hot-house communists are changing from the pallid, timorous flowerlets of discontent into full-blown advocates of the glad new age when Lenin will take over Lincoln's niche in the gallery of the immortals and government everywhere will be of the Trotskys, but the Trotskys, for the Trotskys.

True, there still remain some wavering souls who are so pink they'd be red if they weren't so yellow!

But these quivering aspens shrink in number as their bolder comrades openly profess the blessed doctrine which is doing so much for the undertaking business in Russia.

IRVIN S. COBB.
©—WNU Service.

Scenes and Persons in the Current News



1—Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia of New York shaking hands with Thomas E. Dewey, the young racket-smashing special prosecutor who is running-mate as candidate for district attorney on the Republican ticket with the mayor. 2—Panoramic view of Shanghai's famous Bund which was rocked by explosions of bombs during the attack on the city by Japanese troops. 3—James Mattern (left), famed aviator who flew from California to Alaska to join in the search for lost Russian polar flyers, shown conferring with his navigator.

Robert Ballard Is Soapbox Derby Champ



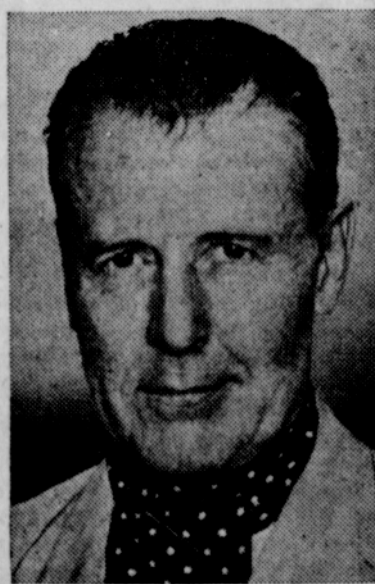
Robert Ballard, twelve, of White Plains, N. Y., smiles as he receives the International Soapbox Derby championship trophy from Felix Doran, an official of the race. The contest, held at Akron, Ohio, was attended by a record crowd of more than 100,000. A handsome cash prize and a scholarship to college when he is old enough were the rewards for Robert's skill in piloting his soapbox vehicle.

POWER PLUS



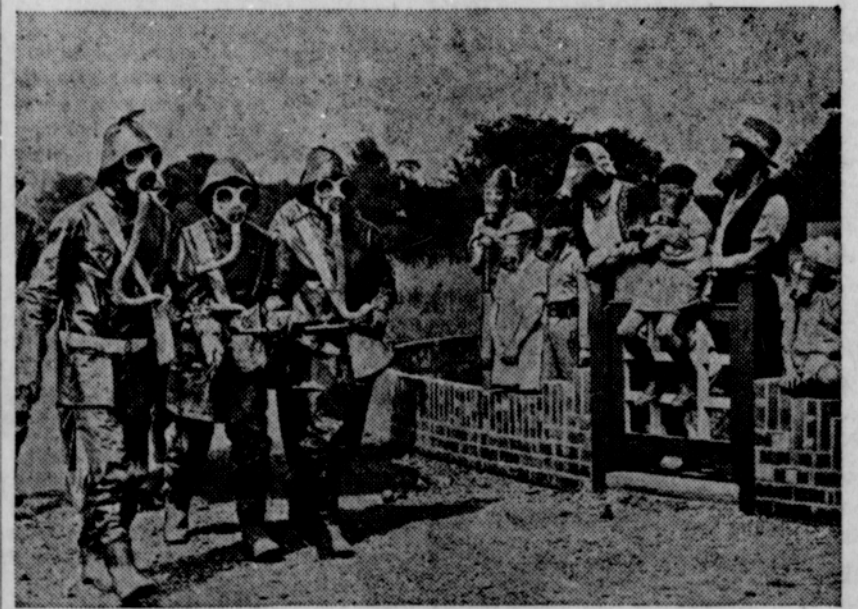
Although her skill and technique deserve full credit for Jadwiga Jadrjewska's recent victory over Alice Marble, American tennis champion, in the tennis finals at Rye, N. Y., the power and determination of the Polish star, demonstrated graphically in this picture, were the major weapons in her armament. Here, too, is evidence of the great stamina that enables Jadwiga to maintain a killing pace in the pinches.

ENVOY TO ERIN



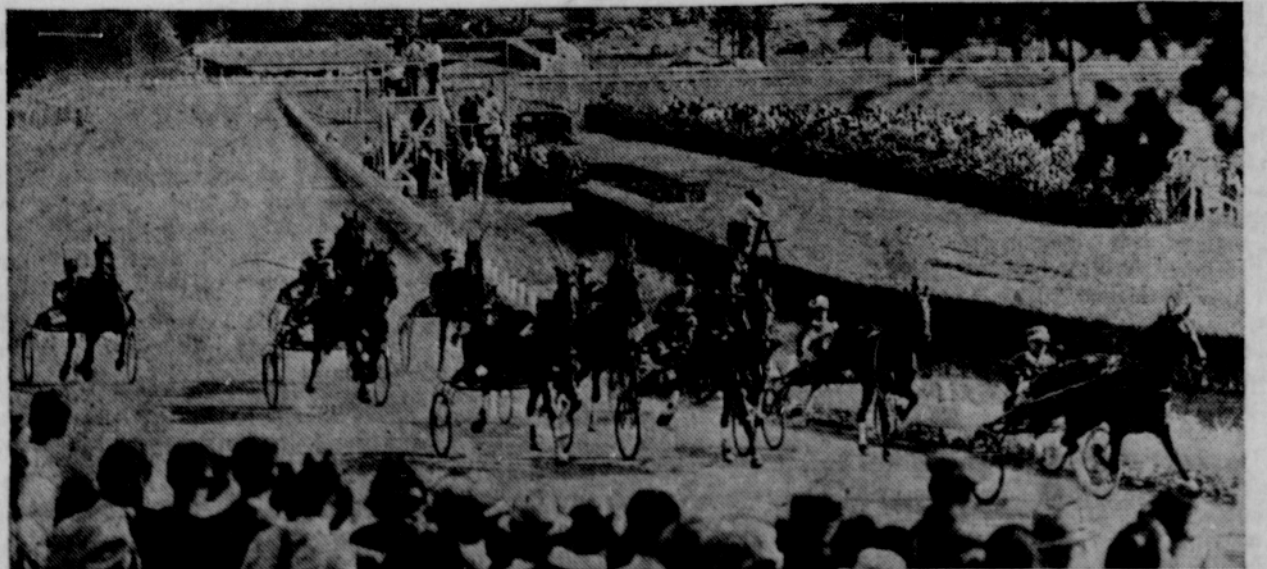
John Cudahy, newly appointed minister to the Irish Free State, is shown as he sailed aboard the liner Manhattan to take up his ministerial duties. Until recently he was the minister to Poland.

Here's a Brand New English Custom



A sign of the times in Old England is this photograph, made during Chatham Navy week, which gives you an idea of the extent to which Europe is suffering from war jitters. The oilskinned gents at left are members of a "decontamination squad," who are rehearsing the duty they hope they'll never have to do—mopping up after a gas attack.

\$40,000 Hambletonian Stakes to "Shirley Hanover"



First heat of the \$40,000 Hambletonian stakes run recently at Goshen, N. Y., is pictured above with Twilight Song leading the field around one of the turns. An outsider, Shirley Hanover, owned by Lawrence Shepard, upset the dope and won both heats to capture the coveted prize.