

# News Review of Current Events the World Over

## Irate Senate Rebukes Huey Long, Then Gags Him; Jobs and Wages Highest Since 1931; Senate Rejects Higher Normal Income Tax Rate.

By EDWARD W. PICKARD

HUEY P. LONG, the vituperative senator from Louisiana, was soundly spanked by the senate Thursday. Their patience exhausted, Democratic leaders united in administering a sound rebuke for his conduct on the floor. The proceedings were without recent precedence in the senate. Following the blistering remarks hurled at the Kingfish, the senate clamped upon him temporarily a parliamentary muzzle that reduced him to silence.

Senatorial veterans could not remember a similar occasion when a senator has been subjected to the humiliation of such a public chorus of disapproval from his colleagues. The Louisiana's behavior in the senate has disgraced him in the eyes of the nation, Senator Pat Harrison (Dem., Miss.), told Huey.

The Kingfish screamed his protests. He shouted that Senator Harrison was the kind of man who "would stick a knife in a friend's back and drink his blood." This brand of abuse brought Majority Leader Joseph T. Robinson (Dem., Ark.), Senator Bennett Clark (Dem., Mo.), and others to their feet and the senate rules were invoked to stop the mouth of the yelling Long. He sat down and sulked in his chair.

The senate has fumed for days as the excitable Long put on his typical exhibitions, shouting to the galleries. Thursday found almost the entire body in a wrathful revolt against these displays of temperament which have been hampering the consideration of important bills.

THAT Maj. Gen. Benjamin D. Foulois, chief of the air corps, and others acted in "violation of the law" in connection with the proposed purchase of \$7,500,000 worth of army airplanes, is the conclusion of a subcommittee of the house military affairs committee that has been investigating the matter. The subcommittee also found that Harry H. Woodring, assistant secretary of war, had attempted to assure competitive bidding for the air-



Gen. Foulois

planes and thereby comply with the law and the intent of congress.

The transaction in question dates back to the first of the year. Army officers, asking a public works allotment to buy airplanes, made arrangements to purchase them from special companies without competitive bids.

Woodring, the committee decided, intervened and demanded competitive bids be sought. Specifications were drawn and proposals submitted to the industry for bids. But the army judge advocate general held the proposals did not assure competitive bidding.

The committee contended that in so far as it had been able to find, Woodring's every act was to assure free competition, yet his desires were thwarted.

It mentioned, in addition to Foulois, Brig. Gen. Henry Conger Pratt, chief of the army air corps' procurements division. It said Foulois gave testimony before the Rogers committee and an appropriations subcommittee which seemed to conflict.

CONTINUED improvement in business activity during February and March and expansion of employment and pay rolls to the highest point since the latter half of 1931 were announced by the Commerce department in one of its most optimistic reports on business since 1930.

The average weekly wage was \$19.81 in February, the highest since 1931. The hourly rate of 55.8 cents per hour was within 4.1 cents of February, 1929. The employment improvement was general throughout manufacturing industries. Seventy-seven of the 80 manufacturing industries reported increased employment in February and 79 reported higher total wages. When classified into 14 major groups only the food group did not make an employment or pay roll gain.

"SOAK the rich" forces were defeated Thursday when the senate rejected an amendment to the revenue bill by Senator La Follette, Wisconsin Republican, for a big increase in surtax rates.

The vote was 47 to 36. The party lineup showed 25 Democrats, 19 Republicans and one Farmer-Laborite for the amendment, with 30 Democrats and 17 Republicans against it.

Estimated to produce \$185,000,000 additional revenue, the La Follette

amendment called for a boost in the normal income tax rate from 4 to 6 per cent, with surtaxes graduated up to 71 per cent on net incomes in excess of \$1,000,000.

IMMEDIATE comprehensive revision of the national railway labor act to expedite and enforce the settlement of disputes between the railroads and their employees and to safeguard the right of collective bargaining, was recommended by Joseph B. Eastman, federal co-ordinator of transportation, in a letter to Representative Sam Rayburn, chairman of the house interstate commerce committee.



J. B. Eastman

His outstanding recommendations were these:

The creation of a new national board of adjustment, divided into four independent parts, whose awards would be enforceable in the courts.

The substitution of a new national mediation board of three members for the present board of mediation of five members.

The inclusion of all companies which operate equipment or facilities or furnish service included within the definition of the terms "railroad" and "transportation" in the interstate commerce act.

Provisions similar to those in the temporary emergency railroad transportation act of last year, insuring "the complete divorce of railroad employees and managements in the choice of representatives to deal one with the other" and providing adequate means for the enforcement of these provisions.

The national adjustment board would be divided into four independent parts to adjust disputes.

TO PREVENT extreme demoralization in the industry and not to create an artificial shortage, is the intent of the production control proposals submitted to the dairy industry by the farm administration, administrators asserted in an appeal for national support for the plan. The case for limiting milk supplies was presented in a series of articles prepared by the AAA. Officials said it would be easier for them to let the dairy problem work itself out by natural processes, but it would mean starvation for the farmer.

They pointed out that the proposed plan would affect some 4,500,000 farm families, whose income had been cut in half during the depression and whose products had been selling at 49 per cent below prewar "parity."

It is proposed that dairymen limit their output to conform with sales quotas to be allotted under the program. For their co-operation they would be paid benefits derived from collection of an estimated \$165,000,000 in processing taxes, \$15,000,000 of which would be earmarked for even distribution among three supplemental relief plans, involving tuberculosis eradication, purchase of surplus milk to feed undernourished city children and transfer of good cows to poor farms.

A "COMMON sense recovery plan" was laid before the country Thursday by France's aged premier, Gaston Doumergue.

The program, which was officially approved by a special council of ministers at Elysee palace, is comparable in scope with Russia's five-year plan and America's NRA. It reflects, however, the typical distrust of experiments by the French peasant. It is marked by the same simplicity and absence of ballyhoo which has characterized all of "Gastouet's" actions since the dramatic February morning when he arrived in the Civil war littered capital.

The French program is based on the theory that if the government puts its own house in order and minds its own business, industry will recover by itself.

It all boils down to a question of restoring confidence, but the methods laid down for achieving this purpose are nothing short of revolutionary for France. The keystone in Doumergue's edifice of recovery is the leveling of government expenditures down to income, which means eliminating imme-



Gaston Doumergue

diately the budget deficit of some \$270,000,000.

THE house of representatives got busy Wednesday, suspended its rules and granted quick approval to three important bills dealing with widely divergent subjects. They were:

The administration sugar bill—subject of heated controversy for months—which slid through to final approval without even a record vote. It includes sugar as a basic commodity under the AAA, quotas domestic production of sugar beets and cane, and gives Secretary of Agriculture Wallace power to quota imports of Cuban and insular sugar.

The so-called Johnson bill, prohibiting foreign nations which are in default on private or national obligations in this country from floating their securities in the American market. The measure is the upshot of a senatorial investigation several years ago into the nature of foreign borrowings in the United States.

A resolution ordering a federal power commission inquiry into rates charged for electric energy by private power companies throughout the country.

THE liberal Spanish republic has discarded one of the major pillars upon which it was built. Marshaled by the nominally moderate Radical party that once was violently anti-clerical, the cortes in an uproarious session put 7,500 clergymen back on the payroll of the state for life.

For three hours before passage of the law, which directly violates article 26 of the republican constitution, Premier Alejandro Lerroux's supporters and the shrunken left opposition hurled insults and waved fists at each other. Left filibusters were ready with some 300 amendments, but the gag rule was voted before a single one was proposed.

ACTING under the power delegated to him by President Roosevelt under an executive order, National Recovery Administrator Johnson approved an amendment to the bituminous coal code imposing a five-day week of 35 hours and revising its wage scale upward, figured on a \$5 base with differentials, on the entire bituminous coal industry. The amendment is subject to a hearing on April 9.



Gen. Johnson

Authoritative sources in Washington agreed that the operators would accept the amendment, at least until after the hearing and that the threat of a strike is avoided at least until after that hearing by the action of the NRA head.

John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers, issued a statement praising the action of the administration and promising the co-operation of the union.

SAMUEL INSULL, fugitive utility magnate, has learned that Uncle Sam has long arms. He thought himself safe aboard the chartered freighter, on which he escaped from Greece, anchored at Istanbul, but Uncle Sam's long arm tagged him and he was arrested by the Turkish authorities. The council of ministers immediately ordered his extradition to the United States. Two eminent Turkish lawyers on behalf of Insull filed an appeal with the supreme court of Turkey against the extradition order. But the appeal was denied.

Unless the former utilities magnate is able to perform some new wonder, his year and a half flight almost halfway around the world has been brought to an end.

THE Civil Works Administration has gone out of existence, and this relief organization became the works division of the Federal Emergency Relief administration.

Under this title it will use some \$600,000,000 remaining from its recent grant of \$950,000,000 for the year 1935 to provide relief for states, which are in turn to pass the money along to cities and counties.

For a month district agents have been working to perfect the machinery for the change.

Meanwhile, administration officials made it clear that industry was not expected to take up the whole slack of unemployment, absorbing the former CWA workers, in a day.

REPRESENTATIVES of the flour milling industry decided to operate without a code of fair competition. Their rejection of the NRA and AAA marks the first refusal of an entire industry to accept the administration's recovery plans. The decision to go ahead without NRA affiliation came after nearly nine months of fruitless negotiations with the NRA and AAA officials.

Government officials were represented as considering a legal test if the millers do not reopen negotiations. There was some talk that the millers might be put under a license.

The millers contend that the code offered would have brought ruin to the industry and would have forced up prices of flour beyond the ability of consumers to pay.

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# Washington Digest

National Topics Interpreted  
by William Bruckart

Washington—Congress is showing every sign of wanting to be good boys and girls and play ball with President Roosevelt. It appeared when congress decided to slap the President in the face by overriding his veto of the veterans' compensation and government employees' salary question, that at last there was a definite and far-reaching breach. Many persons here thought the President had a recalcitrant bunch on his hands and that there would be plenty of trouble during the rest of the session. Such is not the case, however, and, although there will be differences arising, the remainder of the session will show few cases in which the wishes of the President will be absolutely disregarded.

The reason for this sudden change is simple. An election campaign confronts all of the members of the house and 35 members of the senate. As the thing has been explained to me by numerous representatives and senators, they were in a political situation where they felt they would rather slap the President than the veterans. The President can scold or spank them. It is explained, but the veterans have votes that are a good deal rougher than a spanking by the Chief Executive, from the standpoint of politics. Now that the potential candidates can go before the veterans of their respective districts and point with pride or something to a vote to restore the compensation, the campaigning members feel they are sitting in a good seat. They are ready to be good.

I am told that Democratic leaders in the house and senate have had innumerable visits since the veto vote from members of their party who wanted to assure the administration that they are "regular" again and will stay that way. Having obtained what they thought they had to have to insure their re-election, they will now vote according to direction once more. Then, when they start speech-making in their home balliwicks, they will talk loudly and long about supporting the President in one speech and in the next, if it be in a strongly organized veterans' area, they will shout about their friendship for the former soldiers, sailors and marines. From which it ought to be apparent that the whole thing was just a part of the great game of politics.

Democratic bolters could not have overridden the President by themselves, and that fact gave the Republicans an opportunity to play politics as well. The Republicans in the house and senate saw a chance to embarrass the President. They nudged the Democrats from every angle to override the veto and joined with the bolters on the vote just because it would put the Democratic leaders on a hot spot and would be offensive to the President. That is the way the game of politics is played. If one looks back over the records during the Coolidge and Hoover administrations, plenty of instances are shown where the Democrats, then in the minority, joined the bolting Republicans and so-called progressives in votes that were embarrassing to the President.

As a matter of fact, there still is some doubt in the minds of many observers here whether Mr. Roosevelt had sound reason for his veto. He charged that the bill, as passed before the veto, would add \$228,000,000 to the regular budget of the government. That is true. But I cannot help recalling that there are two budgets, now. One of them is the regular budget and the other, many time larger, is for emergency expenditures. At least some of those Democrats, who broke with the President on the question, are asking why the government has to cut down on its regular budget while it expands and "throws money away like water" from the emergency budget. It does cause one to pause and think about it.

In other words, the thought of those men is: why is it such a crime to spend about one-fourth of a billion dollars the way congressmen want to spend it when the administration is spending some five or six billions the way it wants to spend that tremendous sum.

Further, I cannot help recalling that, when the economy act was passed during the extra session last spring, I reported to you that the curtailment of expenditures for veterans and for several other purposes under the regular budget, was to be short-lived. I said at that time that it would be given back in pieces. Two acts of congress since have restored a total of

75 per cent of the amount taken away from the veterans, and the last act of congress restored one-third of 15 per cent pay cut to the government workers and will give them another one-third beginning July 1.

There is trouble brewing for President Roosevelt in another political direction. It is not a

**More Trouble Brewing**

direct result of the overriding of his veto. That fact does appear to have accentuated the difficulties, however, according to most of my informants. The question that is before the administration and leaders of the Democratic party is: what is the attitude to be toward the progressives and other insurgents. It is known, of course, that there are members of the house and senate, elected as Democrats, who have no more right to call themselves Democrats than some of the radical group of the minority can claim to be Republicans. They are insurgents. There is no other proper label. They have not, do not and will not stand hithered to any progress for any great length of time.

President Roosevelt and "Big Jim" Farley know full well that the Democrats must have the help of the so-called progressives and the radicals in some parts of the country. This is especially true in the Middle West. But the administration cannot turn against the militant and fighting young Democrats who have fallen into the moldy behind Roosevelt and the New Deal. If it snubs them, "It scorns the steps by which it did ascend" and that is never good politics. The younger group of Democrats take credit for the smashing victory of 1932 and Mr. Roosevelt cannot ignore their clamoring for recognition.

Like a ghostly shadow across the path, however, floats the forms and faces of numerous powerful men who broke away from Hoover and supported the Roosevelt candidacy. The Roosevelt blessing already has been bestowed upon Senator Hiram Johnson, a Californian, who was elected as a Republican but who supported Mr. Roosevelt's candidacy. Senator Johnson is up for election this year. On the other hand, there is young Bob La Follette, of Wisconsin. Surely, he was a liberal all the way. He supported Mr. Roosevelt as against Mr. Hoover. But young Bob has had no such blessing from the administration. Indeed, "Big Jim" Farley has strongly intimated that he wants to see Wisconsin elect Charles Broughton, a regular Democrat. And so it goes.

When President Roosevelt announced settlement of the labor controversy between the automobile industry and the American Federation of Labor, and proposed creation of a board to adjudicate the questions, every one here thought naturally enough that he would select a representative of the industry and one of labor, with the third man being neutral. The natural conclusion was that the third member of the board would have no ties with either capital or labor. There was much surprise, therefore, when he named Dr. Leo Wolman, of Columbia university, New York, as the neutral member. From what I can gather around Washington, the appointment of Doctor Wolman was a bit disappointing to those who wanted a real neutral to sit as a member of the board. Frankly, the President did not meet legitimate expectations in the Wolman appointment, except, of course, among those who sympathized wholly with labor's contention in the controversy.

Doctor Wolman's knowledge of labor questions cannot be denied. He has demonstrated his ability and his capacity to understand the problems. The objection that I hear, however, does not run to that phase of his ability. Doctor Wolman has been associated directly or indirectly with William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor, for many years. However he may desire to be impartial, however basically honest he is, the thought in many places in Washington is that Doctor Wolman cannot be neutral as that word is accepted by the general public. He is human and he has sentiment. Those two factors make it appear to many observers that the settlement of the automobile-labor controversy amounts to nothing more than a postponement. It will flare up again, but probably will not take place until after the middle of June when the President will not have a law in effect that will permit him to license the industry.

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