

# MEN AND AFFAIRS AT WASHINGTON

★ National Topics Interpreted by ★  
★ WILLIAM BRUCKART ★

Washington.—With the national convention of the Republicans only a week away, New Deal strategists are bending every effort toward a program designed to make a knock-down and drag-out fight of that session. It is not disclosing any secret to say that the New Dealers are using this weapon up to the hilt because disruption of the Republican party would make victory easy for Candidate Roosevelt.

Predictions in politics always are perilous. Governor Alf M. Landon of Kansas seems to be in the lead at this time for the Republican nomination, but there are many observers throughout the country who contend that the "Kansas Coolidge" cannot win, and that various other aspirants for the nomination, men whose hats are in the ring, likewise must be counted out. This is to say that a feeling is growing that a dark horse will be nominated.

From the strictly Washington viewpoint, which may be different than elsewhere in the country, astute political observers are convinced that there must be a swift change in sentiment to keep the nomination away from Governor Landon. Yet, it must be said that politics is fraught with just such things and so it is entirely possible that the Republican nominee may be someone other than the present apparent leader in the race.

Those who feel that Governor Landon will be the nominee claim he has played his cards well. But others insist that the Kansas governor made a bad mistake in allowing his name to be linked with the Hearst faction in California. Indeed, I have heard comment that this fact alone will defeat Governor Landon.

It has been interesting to observe the maneuvers of the New Deal strategists with reference to the Landon boom.

## New Deal Strategy

Some observers contend that the efforts being put forth from New Deal quarters in an attempt to discredit Governor Landon were being engineered because the New Deal fears Governor Landon as a Roosevelt opponent more than it fears some of the other candidates for the nomination. Frank R. Kent, the Washington commentator for the Democratic Baltimore Sun, asserted that the New Deal activity against Landon's nomination constituted "the best evidence of the increasing probability" of the Kansas governor's nomination. Mr. Kent did not say that which some other informed writers feel, namely, that the Landon candidacy would mean a bitter campaign on the part of the Roosevelt forces to re-elect the President. Nevertheless, it has been interesting to note the various ways in which Roosevelt spokesmen and Democratic publicity men have been trying to show the country that Governor Landon is not the man who should be nominated.

I have no quarrel with these efforts. It is the game of politics. Virtually anything goes. It is to be assumed that present Republican maneuvers will be concentrated in a few weeks on Mr. Roosevelt personally as the Democratic candidate. In fact, one hears expressions around Washington that for the first time in Mr. Roosevelt's political career, he is going to be directly under fire.

Just in this connection, one can recall that through most of the New Deal administration, criticism of New Deal policies and plans, almost without exception, was directed at Roosevelt appointees. The President himself has been excep-

tionally free from the type of personal attack that frequently characterizes political opposition. He has had absolutely none of the kind of criticism that occurred in the Hoover administration and was directed at Herbert Hoover, personally.

So, as we look at the campaign picture just ahead of the Republican convention and only a month in advance of the meeting of the Democrats at Philadelphia where President Roosevelt will be renominated, without opposition in his own party, I think it can be said without fear of contradiction that both candidates this year are going to be smeared personally just as fast and as long as the ammunition holds out.

While we are talking about the forthcoming quadrennial conventions, the two keynote speakers naturally enter into any discussion.

Senator Alben W. Barkley of Kentucky will do the keynoting for the Democrats at Philadelphia and Senator Frederick Steiwer of Oregon will deliver the main address to the Cleveland convention of the Republicans. Senator Barkley was the keynoter at the Chicago convention when Mr. Roosevelt was nominated by the Democrats four years ago and, although it is a subject not freely discussed, it is said in high places that Mr. Roosevelt wanted the same man to do the job again, believing the Kentuckian to be an omen of good luck.

The selection of Senator Steiwer was one of those things that can be said to be a surprise and yet not a surprise. He is, without doubt, a good man for the job. Yet in some quarters there is a conviction that Senator Steiwer was picked by the so-called "Old Guard" of eastern Republicans. Some observers still hold the belief that the selection of Senator Steiwer was not wholly pleasing to the Landon forces, but be that as it may, there has been no particular ill feeling created by it. If it represents a piece of strategy by the eastern Republicans who were dealing with their problem by remote control, they apparently have played into the hands of the more liberal wing of Republicans. It is being predicted rather freely that the Oregon senator's keynote speech will lean strongly to the liberal side but that it will stress sound economics.

The best advance information obtainable on Senator Barkley's plans is that he will devote the bulk of his time on the convention platform to a review of Roosevelt accomplishments in the belief that such a review will take his presentation out of the class of a "defense" speech. Those with whom I have talked concerning the Barkley speech believe he has adopted a smart political course; that he feels there is no need to defend anything that has been done and that the record itself is the thing upon which the Democratic party can make a plea for re-election of Mr. Roosevelt.

Having observed Senator Barkley in action in the senate for a number of years, I believe I am justified in saying that he is a square shooter and a fighter. In this respect, he and Senator Steiwer, the Republican keynoter, are much the same type of man.

Concerning the record of the keynoters in the senate, each stands foursquare. Senator Barkley has consistently battled in behalf of the President and New Deal policies throughout Mr. Roosevelt's administration. Senator Steiwer has been just as consistent in his opposition. Certainly, Senator Steiwer has been much more outspok-

en against New Deal policies than most of his Republican colleagues, and much more so than Senator McNary.

For many months Washington has heard the plaint of business leaders who wanted to fight socialistic "Crack Down" schemes and unsound economic

policies given birth by New Deal brain trusters but were afraid to do so because of "retaliation." Almost constantly, information has filtered into Washington to the effect that if a corporation undertook to oppose New Deal plans vigorously, there was danger that some agency of the government would "crack down" on them. Much of this information has been taken by Washington observers with a grain of salt but a different aspect has been placed on the situation lately.

It was in the senate that a New Deal Democrat, Senator Homer T. Bone of Washington, broke loose with statements that seemed to substantiate the fear voiced so frequently by business. Senator Bone charged that there was a veritable and "budding OGPU" organized within the government. The OGPU, as most persons realize, is the secret spy system of the Russian Soviet and I think no one in this country has a complete knowledge of its vicious character. So, when Senator Bone likened the espionage system in our government to the OGPU, he was making, to my mind, one of the most serious charges yet leveled at the Roosevelt administration.

Of course, Senator Bone was attacking this espionage system because of a feeling that it might be used to coerce members of congress and even executive or administrative officers of the government who were opposed to plans propagated by Presidential advisers. His thought obviously concerned the political phases of such a system, but the fact that he brought the matter to public attention serves, in a measure, certainly, to substantiate some of the claims that business interests have made.

I am unable, however, to reconcile Senator Bone's position respecting the OGPU which he charged was in operation within the government and his utter silence when the obnoxious senate lobby committee, headed by Senator Black, Democrat, of Alabama, engaged in the wholesale seizure of private telegrams. It will be recalled that I reported in these columns how Senator Black and agents of the Federal Communications commission went into the files of the Western Union Telegraph company and carried off literally thousands of private telegrams. I was convinced then and I repeat it now that the Black seizure was nothing more than an attempt to dig up dirt on anybody against whom they could find discrediting information. Yet, Senator Bone, by his silence, condoned that course only to denounce later the systems of so-called "inspectors" used by Secretary Ickes of the Department of the Interior and reputedly by several other agencies of the government. I can only hope that if Senator Bone's charges are true that the usual condition will result, namely, that there will be other spies to spy on these spies.

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## Hens in Egg Race to Cackle on Radio

Dallas, Texas.—The hens entered in the international egg-laying contest at the Texas Centennial exposition probably won't understand or care, but their nests will be wired for sound. Also for publicity. The hens will settle to their task June 1. When the first egg drops into the super-comfortable nests which the exposition will provide a buzzer will sound and an attendant will hurry into the henery with a microphone, and the hen's cackling will be picked up for a waiting radio audience.

Uncle Phil Says:

## That's Advancement

As men in a crowd instinctively make room for one who would force his way through it, so mankind makes way for one who rushes toward an object beyond them.

Always practice thrift, no matter how freely you spend. That is, don't waste money.

Nothing is more wearying than the "honest opinion" of a man who "doesn't know."

A man's wife is his best "guide-book on etiquette."

## Beware of Idleness

Many of the wrong things men do are done in idle moments because they can't think of anything else to do.

If diamonds could be found by the bushel, they would still be as beautiful as when they cost \$5,000 apiece.

A word out of the dictionary makes a lowbrow suspicious; but he picks up greedily all the slang words going.

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