

Washington Digest

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

Washington.—It has been stated frequently that 90 per cent of the residents of Washington are located here because it is the site and seat of the federal government. In other words, Washington is a great city because it is the capital of the nation. The statement is not completely the truth, but a bare analysis by whomever made cannot fail to demonstrate that there are thousands who live in Washington for the reasons mentioned.

I consequence of this condition, therefore, Washington news does not get into the newspapers of the country as does other news. The Washington date line in ninety-nine out of each one hundred cases is over a story that deals with some phase of government or politics. Since Washingtonians have no vote, Washingtonians cannot be in politics.

Nevertheless, sometimes there is news about Washingtonians that is of interest to all of the country. The observation is peculiarly true of a circumstance that has lately developed. Moreover, the case in point holds a lesson for the country as a whole.

Lately, congress passed a law establishing a minimum wage for women workers in the District of Columbia. The statute was rather loosely drawn, as it had to be if it were to work at all. It left much to the discretion of a controlling agency called a minimum wage board. One of the reasons why so much discretion was left to the local agency, however, was because the subject with which the legislation deals contains political dynamite and congress did not want to establish a precedent by going too far in fixing wages. So the District of Columbia was left a rather wide scope within which to build its minimum wage structure.

That was the basis for the circumstance above mentioned, the news about Washingtonians, the lesson for the nation.

The wage board started out to hold hearings to obtain facts about the wage level and what was needed by the women workers—stenographers, office workers, clerks in stores and this and that and the other type of employed women. Finally, the board got around to waitresses and their wages. That was where the lid blew off, because who does not know that waitresses collect considerable money in tips? Promptly, up bobbed a red hot question: should the tips, or the average monthly "take" in tips be considered as a part of the wage of waitresses?

Well, the question has not been settled yet and even when an order is issued, it will not have been settled. It will go on and on and there will be some racketeers who will organize a society or something to fight for exclusion of tips as part of the wage, if that be the order. If the board eventually decides to exclude tips and fix a minimum wage without regard to tips, the employers will carry on a drum fire of criticism about it. Why? Because the question strikes at the very heart of the relationship between employer and worker.

Any worker naturally wants as much of a return for his or her labor as can be obtained. Any employer feels equally that he is entitled to obtain needed labor as cheaply as is possible. The waitresses, therefore, took the position that the proprietor had no right to consider the tips as a part of the wage. On the other hand, the proprietor—probably with the same justification—said in effect that without the job the waitress will not get tips, and that the owner who takes the risk ought to be allowed to count those tips as part of the compensation.

Further, the customers of the restaurant were entitled to some consideration, said the proprietors. That is, they argued that the customers were charged prices for food and service that would yield the proprietor a fair profit. The tips, it was held, were gratuities on the part of the customer and they vary in amount, some large, some small. If the wage rate was to be raised and the tips excluded—somebody would have to pay more for food. The waitresses used the argument that the tips were gratuities, just as the owners did, but since they are gratuities, said the waitresses, in no wise was it fair to include them in the wage scale.

And so the argument went! But the lesson remains. No better illustration is possible, I think, than the Washington waitress wage controversy; there is no better way to show how utterly silly it is for government to mess into private affairs. Whenever government sticks its hooked nose into private affairs, just there begins an unbalancing of human nature. That is to say, there is no substitute for negotiation between humans, each inately fair,

each desirous of gaining justice according to his light.

Government can and does function admirably as the agency for protection of rights that are important rights of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness. It can and does prevent encroachment upon individuals where such individuals can not protect themselves. But in matters of earning a living, just plain making money, government, in my opinion, has no place. Labor has organization where organization is necessary. Such organization does protect labor, generally speaking, because it has the right to strike. And in all probability, fixing of wages will hurt more than help labor.

Butting Into Business

While on the subject of expansion of government into every cranny of the patch, it is interesting to note that some of the left wing New Dealers would like very much to put the federal government into the business of making small industrial loans. I think probably it will be some time yet before the nitwit section gets anything tangible into the open on the newest of their schemes, but it is true that they are now planning along those lines.

The thought of this group of so-called presidential advisers is that the federal government should start loaning money to small businesses so that those businesses will be independent of "the great banking trust." In short, it is proposed that the federal government should be equipped to make a loan of ten thousand or twenty thousand or fifty thousand to a small manufacturer so that he can expand his plant and take on new workers, etc., etc. It is suggested that perhaps there ought to be a new governmental agency created to handle this work so that it will be done "sympathetically" and with an understanding.

It all comes about apparently from the fact that the present administration has discovered, after five years in office, that there are great monopolies or trusts or something else in the way of combinations in existence. They have found that these monopolies are in control so far that the little fellow in business can not borrow money when he needs it to carry on his business. Something must be done for them, or else they can not have the more abundant life and the prosperity of plenty.

President Roosevelt has become intensely interested in having business become "home owned" or something of the kind. He has shown, for example, in his shots at utility holding companies how much he likes the type of operating company that serves its patrons and doesn't mix up in the tangle of corporations that operate in more than one town or city. They are good, according to the President, and they ought to have consideration. It might be that federal money loaned to them would save them from bankruptcy—or it might be that if they can't make a go of their business, they will go bankrupt anyway. If the federal government had a loan and a mortgage on their assets, they would become federal-owned after foreclosure. That surely would be one way for the federal government to enter the public utility business. It is just a possibility, I mean.

Every now and then some information leaks out about "emergency action" that was taken by government officials during the hectic days of the Hoover depression as distinguished from the Roosevelt depression. (The depression that was on when President Roosevelt took office in 1933 was labeled the Hoover depression in New Deal propaganda.) One of these incidents came out before the senate committee on public lands the other day. The committee was investigating the nomination of E. K. Burlew to be assistant secretary of the interior, and that formed the basis of an inquiry into general practices of the Department of the Interior which is headed by Secretary Ickes.

Mr. Burlew was answering questions as to how the department spent much of the three or four billion dollars appropriated to it for public works. Those were pump priming appropriations, if you remember, although as far as I can see the water has not started coming out of the pump yet. Anyway, Mr. Burlew let the fact drop that Secretary Ickes had bought two new automobiles in 1933. He said the purchases were due to the "emergency" and, of course, money for them came from the emergency appropriations. Senator Stewer of Oregon asked what was meant by the "emergency."

"Well, the secretary wanted the cars, and that was the emergency," Mr. Burlew replied amid laughter in the room.

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Newell Heights

BY MODERN PIONEER CLUB

Monday evening is a bright spot each week for the Boy Scouts. At that time they all make tracks for Adrian where they have a big time from seven to nine o'clock under the leadership of Mr. John Holly and Mr. Walter McPartland. The boys have acquired boxing gloves and wrestling mat and after the more serious part of the meeting, fists fly and the "bone crushers" get busy with Mr. McPartland as referee. Boys who go from Newell Heights are Harold Kurtz, Charlie West, Marlow Anderson and Maurice Judd. The boys are making a cement tennis court and spent Saturday hauling gravel.

Mr. Tuttle, Wenatchee, Wash., nurseryman, has this week taken several good sized orders in the community for trees and shrubs. The residents are planning their surroundings unpretentiously but judiciously and with great pleasure.

W. C. T. U. met with the president, Mrs. M. L. Kurtz, Thursday afternoon.

Mrs. Walter Pinkston lead the devotionals and was in charge of the program which dealt with narcotics. About fifteen were present including the following visitors: Mesdames Conrad Martin, R. R. Overstreet, M. M. Greeling, T. Shelton, Harris, C. E. Wood, Mary Nichols and R. Fredricks.

Harry Denny fractured a bone in his leg Tuesday as he was finishing his moving. He is about some with his leg in a cast.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert R. Overstreet and Mr. and Mrs. Maurice L. Judd and son and daughter went to Boise Sunday where they had birthday dinner with the C. E. Pecks. Mr. Peck and Mr. Overstreet and their families have celebrated their February birthday together for some twenty years. Mr. and Mrs. Overstreet remained in Boise for a few days visit at the home of their son Robert S. Overstreet.

Miss Betty Nelson made ten members of her Sunday school class very happy Saturday when she entertained with a Valentine party.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Denny called on Mrs. Roy Perry Sunday and report that Mrs. Perry is able to be about the house again after her illness.

Arlie Firestone has returned to Yakima after a visit with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Firestone. Several from this community attended the Farm Bureau meeting at Adrian Tuesday evening.

Bill and Merle Kurtz attended the final game of the basketball tournament in Payette Saturday evening.

Mr. and Mrs. R. R. Overstreet entertained Mr. and Mrs. Heeb and Miss Crummett, Miss Nelson and Miss Bratton at dinner Wednesday evening.

The Misses Eulah Bratton, Betty Nelson and Joy Crummett attended the dinner meeting of the School Mistresses in Ontario Thursday evening.

Mr. Burton Burroughs had dinner with the Maurice Judds Friday evening. The winter has been so mild Mr. Burroughs has since he came in October, prepared two hundred acres for seeding and hopes to have more ready by planting time. His land is at Napton siding south of Adrian.

Mr. and Mrs. M. L. Kurtz and Bill

called at the doctors in Caldwell Monday. Tommie Russell had lunch with Mr. and Mrs. Louis Eachus Wednesday.

The Girl Scouts have been going in groups on Saturdays to visit Mrs. Wiedeman's unusual collection of cacti and succulents. Mrs. Wiedeman and her rangin from the ones from Africa that the natives poison their arrows with to fluffy white balls from South America.

ARCADIA NEWS

Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Splawn were callers at the Steve Krulik home on Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Al Bohy and son Bennis were guests of Mr. and Mrs. Otis Bullard Wednesday night.

George Campbell of Boise was a guest at the home of Steve Krulik Tuesday.

The Sew and Sew club will meet at the home of Mrs. John Zittercob February 17.

Mr. and Mrs. Vitery Tichago were callers at the Chas. Bullard home Tuesday evening.

Mrs. Dale Lakey and children were dinner guests of her sister Mrs. Theo Matherly on Wednesday.

Mr. and Mrs. Brooks and Miss Violet were callers at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Bullards Wednesday evening.

Miss June Halliday surprised her friends January 24 when she became the bride of Lewis Brocus of Payette.

Buena Vista News

Ralph Boyles returned from the Dixon Nursing Home Tuesday, after spending three weeks there ill with pneumonia. On Wednesday he came down with smallpox and Mrs. Boyles also has it.

Mr. and Mrs. C. C. Wyvoff and Dwight were Nampa visitors Saturday.

E. L. Jamieson, C. C. Wyvoff and A. P. Goodell were Vale visitors Wednesday.

The Chatterbox club was well attended at the home of Mrs. Jesse Blokiosky in the Richland district February 2.

Mr. and Mrs. Ed Nelson, Lois and Clifford called at the A. P. Goodell home Thursday.

E. L. Jamieson went to Boise Saturday where he entered the Veterans' hospital.

Several from this district attended the opera given at the Nyssa community church Friday night.

Mr. and Mrs. S. B. Hoffman returned from Calloway, Neb., Thursday after spending several weeks there.

Mr. and Mrs. E. P. Goodell and family were Friday night dinner guests at the Harland Maw home.

The George Cleaver children started to school in Nyssa last week.

Mr. and Mrs. E. L. Jamieson called at the Cheledian home Monday evening.

Dave Gilbert from Emmett, Idaho, an old time Nebraska friend called at the A. A. Jamieson home Thursday evening.

Mr. and Mrs. Claude Day moved to Wilder, Saturday.

Mr. and Mrs. Harold Robin and Mr. and Mrs. Claude Day spent Sunday at the H. L. Day home.

Frank Savage has moved back to his place.

ALPHA RHO TO MEET

The next meeting of Alpha Rho local chapter of the Delphian society will be held February 16 at Peterson's chapel. Mrs. Jackson of Nyssa, will be supervisor and the lesson will deal with the Barbizon School, pages 175-216. Mesdames A. M. Biggs, Chas. E. Palmer, Fred Bailey, A. K. Johnson, J. C. Bartlett and Frank W. Hall will be on the program.

"Picketing" Was Torture

Twenty-six soldiers of the United States army were placed on trial in Chillicothe, Ohio, in 1814 on charges of desertion. Five were sentenced to be shot, while most of the others were ordered "picketed," which meant they must stand with their bare heels resting on a sharp pointed stick that stuck up from the ground.

Man Only Sheds Tears

Although animals have tear glands naturalists agree, in general, that man only sheds tears of emotion.

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