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News Review of Current Events the World Over

Grand Jury Asked by Ickes to Investigate PWA Graft Charges—Future of NRA Hangs Upon Outcome of Suit Against Little Sawmill Operator.

By EDWARD W. PICKARD
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"HONEST HAROLD" Ickes has been subjected to lots of abuse by congressmen and others, but he does not intend to let anything be put over on the Public Works administration, of which he is the administrator. At his request a special grand jury has been summoned to meet in Washington on February 6 to inquire into charges of graft in the PWA. Assistant United States Attorney John W. Fihelly has the matter in hand for the government and will present first testimony concerning the \$4,000,000 canal project in Texas. It was asserted that the contract for this project was withdrawn after Mr. Ickes' investigators had uncovered evidence that there was a huge conspiracy to defraud the United States. Eight or ten persons, including federal officials, are said to be involved. Mr. Ickes himself said:

Sec'y Ickes

"The Public Works administration investigation division has made a long and careful study of the Texas project upon the direction of the administrator (Ickes) and presented to the proper prosecuting officials of the government a full report for such action as they deem proper to take."

ALMOST unnoticed among the spectacular issues of the day, yet of momentous importance, the case of the United States against Belcher will be set for hearing by the Supreme court within a few days. This case opens up discussion on the constitutionality of the heart of the entire NRA experiment—the power of the federal government to regulate wages and working hours through codes.

Upon this refusal of a small Alabama sawmill operator to comply with the code hangs the entire fate of the NRA, for if the government loses there will be nothing left of NRA except an empty statement of desirable business ethics. If the government cannot control wages and hours in the production of goods intended for interstate commerce, there is a strong likelihood that the course of legislation to extend the NRA beyond June 16 will be strongly affected. Other cases now pending before the court touch upon certain portions of the vital question, but this case goes straight to the basic power of the recovery act. It affords a clear-cut determination of the fundamental issues, because there is no dispute as to facts, no technicalities of law upon which the issue can be avoided. The case comes almost as an original case, since the attorney general took advantage of legal machinery permitting an appeal directly to the Supreme court from the decision of a federal District court without recourse to a Court of Appeals.

The defendant openly violated the lumber code. Instead of adhering to code provision requiring payment of 24 cents per hour for a 40-hour maximum week, he admitted paying his men 10 to 15 cents per hour and that he worked them as many hours as he saw fit.

What the government's line of defense will be is not known. The case involves all the constitutional objections which might be raised against the recovery act. Decisions of the court in the recent oil cases did not touch upon the constitutionality of the main body of the act, but involved only a special section.

WHEN the senate passes the \$4,000,000,000 work relief measure, as it certainly will after all the orators get through, there need be no fussing as to who is to administer the huge fund. President Roosevelt himself, according to an authority high in administration circles, will undertake that job and will allocate the money to the various agencies as he sees fit. There will be no new set-up for this purpose, unless it may be a small group of advisors selected by Mr. Roosevelt. These may be members of the cabinet or technical experts—more likely the latter. This information was given the senate finance committee as it began consideration of the bill, and was designed to quiet some of the opposition and also to curb the ambition of certain gentlemen who had hoped to handle the \$4,000,000,000. It did not, however, silence those senators of both parties who still contend that too much power is given the President when he is handed such a vast sum to dis-

pose of as he pleases. A strong possibility is seen that the bill may be split into two separate parts, so that the \$80 million dollars needed for relief purposes may be passed without delay, and the senate can then take its time in considering the extraordinary measure which gives the President such unprecedented powers in spending the four billion dollars. One development which was of interest to many was that the measure was prepared under the supervision of Mr. Bell, the budget director, thus making him a candidate for the "physical hanging" advocated by Senator James Couzens of Michigan.

FEARING the anger of their aroused constituents more than the administration's whip, the senate kicked over the traces to defeat ratification of the world court protocols. The final count was seven votes short of the necessary two-thirds.

Frantic efforts to force the measure through were made by the administration. Several revolting senators were called to the White House, and the President even agreed to amendments to the resolution, but was unable to overcome the effects of thousands of protesting telegrams which had been pouring into Washington from citizens all over the country.

In private, many Democratic senators who face re-election in 1936 heaved sighs of relief as the measure was defeated. Administration forces accepted the verdict, apparently without rancor, although the long memory of the man in the White House is well known. Seemingly the issue is dead, for the present at least.

Observers at the capital refused to view the world court vote as any indication of a spreading revolt against Roosevelt's policies, since the court controversy cut deeper than party lines. Several senators who opposed the tribunal will undoubtedly support the administration on other measures, although victory of the small band of irreconcilables who led the fight has undoubtedly added to their prestige.

THAT serio-comic "civil war" in Huey Long's domain is becoming more serious than comical and almost any day may develop into real warfare. It was centered for the present at the state capital. Two hundred armed men, directed by leaders of the Square Deal association, seized the parish court house in East Baton Rouge and held it until assured that one of their friends who had been arrested was released. They then dispersed with a warning from one John Appel to "be sure you have enough ammunition and be ready for the call at any time."

The Kingfish was in New Orleans at the time, but he hastened to Baton Rouge while Governor Allen called out some troops and proclaimed partial martial law in the capital. Huey immediately ordered the recently appointed Judge J. D. Womack to start an investigation of what he described as a plot to murder him, in which "four sheriffs and a district attorney" were involved. The senator declared:

"We picked up two men, one of them was going to drive the murder car. It was all fixed up. He was going to block my car on the highway between here and New Orleans, make it stop and force me in the ditch, and then 14 or 16 were going to come along in another car and kill me."

"We found all the stuff in the fellow's car. There was sheriff's equipment, and everything."

Maybe Huey was right, for one Sidney Songy testified at the inquiry that he had been given a gun, ammunition and gas bombs to kill the senator.

Long blamed the Standard Oil company for the armed assembly of his enemies in Baton Rouge and said that unless the company stopped the "violence" his compromise with it over the 5-cent oil refinery tax would be called off. Despite this warning another armed group of Square Dealers gathered at the Baton Rouge air field; but someone betrayed them and a detachment of the National Guard advanced on them in battle array. The sight of machine guns was enough for the citizenry; they surrendered, and were disarmed.

THOSE who view Russia's growing military strength with alarm were not comforted by a statement made by the vice commissar for defense before the seventh All-Union congress of Soviets in Moscow that the Red army has grown from 600,000 to 940,000 men in four years.

Fortifications along the eastern and western frontiers have been strengthened, and all branches of the military service, particularly aviation, have been increased, the vice commissar stated, and more will be spent for defense in 1935 than was spent last year. The delegates, who were meeting to review Bolshevik progress since 1931, greeted the vice commissar's speech with roars of applause.

IN AN effort to build up an alibi for Bruno Richard Hauptmann his attorneys have called a strange collection of witnesses—a minor league bootlegger, a speakeasy operator of various names, a young Swede whose stories have been somewhat vague and conflicting, and a man who has admitted that he served several jail sentences—a not particularly impressive lot upon which to depend when you are fighting to escape death in the electric chair.

One of the peculiarities of the trial is the number of persons who only saw Hauptmann for a few minutes or seconds, but who are able to identify him more than two years later. The man accused of killing the first Lindbergh child is not outstanding in appearance or one who would be likely to indelibly impress himself on a person's mind, but both the state and the defense have been able to produce persons who swear he was the man they saw the day the crime was committed.

The battle of handwriting experts has also begun, with the state producing experts to swear that the handwriting on the ransom notes does not resemble that on the admitted writing of Hauptmann. Their statements are just as positive as were those made by the defense witnesses, and it all proves just a little confusing to the jury.

Considerable comment was caused when one of the jurors, a woman, smiled broadly at Hauptmann as he left the stand following his examination, and some wagers have been made that a hung jury will be the outcome of the trial. Such predictions are hardly in order, since a single bit of testimony may yet change the entire course of the case.

DURING the debate in the house on an administration bill to increase by \$9,000,000,000 the amount of long-term securities the treasury can issue, Representative Reed of New York quoted Secretary Morgenthau as saying that the treasury could not finance the work relief program unless congress broadened its bond-issuing authority. So the house passed the measure at once.

The bill, prepared by the Treasury department, places the administration squarely against inflation. It provides authority to raise money necessary for the public works, social security and similar measures, meet federal deficits, and might even be used to provide funds for payment of the soldiers' bonus.

Under provisions of the measure there would be ten-year bonds in amounts as small as \$25, and as explained by the Treasury department, would be sold below par. There would be no interest, but each six months the bonds would appreciate in value at the rate of 2½ per cent, plus compounded earnings.

Huge sums are involved: first, the creation of a revolving bond authorization fund of \$2,500,000,000; and second, the consolidation of the two present revolving funds of \$10,000,000,000 each into a joint \$20,000,000,000 fund for bills, certificates and notes.

JAPANESE forces continued to advance in their drive. Two towns were captured by troops operating in weather 34 degrees below zero, and the forces appear to be converging on an area of disputed territory which lies south of Manchui and Hailar, where northwest Manchukou overlaps Outer Mongolia. The indefiniteness of the border is blamed for the contention.

Intimations that the Japanese garrison in Manchukou might be increased were made in the Japanese diet, based upon assertions that the Soviet government had continued to enlarge its army in the Far East, and that Soviet penetration into Outer Mongolia has resulted in virtual communitization of that territory.

RICHARD WASHBURN CHILD, former ambassador to Italy, attorney, and author, died of pneumonia at his home in New York. He left a post as editor of Collier's Weekly in 1921 to take that of Ambassador to Italy, where he gained prominence as the chief representative of the United States at the Genoa and Lausanne conferences in 1922.

Congress Keeps the Printing Presses Busy



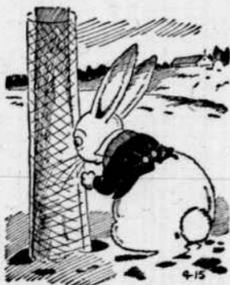
OUR congressmen are a loquacious lot, and their speeches, delivered on the floor and "extended" in the Record, together with the thousands of bills they introduce, keep the great government printing office exceedingly busy. The men in this picture are working on the Congressional Record, and as the session proceeds their labor grows heavier.

"Little Stories for Bedtime" by Thornton W. Burgess

FARMER BROWN FOOLS PETER RABBIT

WHEN the snow is deep Peter Rabbit really has to work for a living. Perhaps this is a good thing. If he didn't he might grow too fat to keep out of the way of Reddy Fox. There are times when Peter has to eat whatever he can, and very often there isn't much of anything for him but the bark of young trees. It is at such times that Peter gets into mischief, for there is no bark he likes better than that of young fruit trees.

Now you know what happens when the bark is taken off all the way



All Around the Trunk of That Young Tree Was Wire Netting.

around the trunk of a tree. That tree dies. It dies for the simple reason that it is up the inner layer of bark that the life-giving sap travels in the spring and summer. Of course when a strip of bark has been taken off all the way around near the base of a tree, the sap cannot go up and the tree must die.

Not far from the Old Orchard Farmer Brown had set out a young orchard. Peter knew all about that young orchard, for he had visited it many times in summer. Then there had been plenty of green clover and other green things to eat, and Peter had never been so much as tempted to sample the bark of these young trees. But now things were very different, and it was seldom that Peter knew what it was to have a full stomach. He kept thinking of that young orchard. He knew that if he were wise he would keep away from there. But the more he thought of it the more it seemed to him that he just must have some of that tender young bark. So just at dusk one evening Peter started for the young orchard.

He got there in safety and his eyes sparkled as he hopped over to the nearest young tree. But when he reached it Peter had a dreadful disappointment. All around the trunk of that young tree was wire netting.

Petroleum By-Products

The products in the distillation of petroleum are gasoline, the lightest fraction, distilled off first, then kerosene, followed by distillate and gas oil. Finally there is left that fraction of the crude oil, commonly known as fuel oil, which cannot be further distilled.

HIS MOTHER

By ANNE CAMPBELL

ONCE, just as if she knew the years ran fast, His mother took his baby hand in hers. And in the attic way, where paint was fresh, She laid his hand, . . . Now, stealing through the firs The vagrant sunbeams come, and on the wall They trace that print of childhood first of all.

He is a man, and seldom does he go Back to the home his father's father planned; But once he told me, in a quiet way, Of that remembered imprint of his hand. "To think it is still there, and mother dead! And yet her love surrounds me still," he said.

"What's the matter, Peter," said the voice. "You don't look happy."

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QUESTION BOX

by ED WYNN, The Perfect Fool

Dear Mr. Wynn: I am a young man eighteen years of age. Because of my health I have to quit work a great deal thereby losing a lot of money. I am out of employment at present but have two positions offered to me. One job is for \$12 a week and one for \$17.50 a week. Which job shall I take?

Yours truly,
P. KULIER.

Answer: By all means take the job for \$12.00 a week because when you are sick and have to quit your job you will not be losing as much money as you would if you were getting \$17.50 a week.

Dear Mr. Wynn: I have been going with a young girl for about one year. We were always together until she graduated from high school about six months ago and secured a position. Now she passes me right by. If I talk to her she won't answer me. What can the answer be?

Sincerely,
G. OGRAPHY.

Answer: You say she was all right when you went to school together but now that she is working she won't answer you. Quite simple. She must be employed as a telegraph operator.

Dear Mr. Wynn: A friend of mine told me that he saw a man "run over himself." I told him he was crazy. Now he will not speak to me. Do you think it possible for a man to "run over himself"?

Truly yours,
I. BALL.

Answer: Sure it is possible. I know of such a case. A friend of mine was driving a car. He stopped it in front of a candy store and asked for a pack of cigarettes. There was only one clerk in the store and he told my friend that if he wanted cigarettes he would have to go across the street to the cigar store for them. My friend then asked the clerk if he would not run over to the cigar store for him, and the clerk told my friend that he could not leave

the candy store alone and run over to the cigar store for the cigarettes; so my friend "ran over himself."

Dear Mr. Wynn: I am a young man but am always in ill health. It may be the climate here in New York. I will go to any town you may suggest that is very healthful.

Yours truly,
D. PRESSED.

Answer: The healthiest town I know of is Crum City, Wyo. This town is so healthy they had to kill two people last week, just to start a cemetery.

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Here's a Record Shipment From Japan



THE Shobie Maru from Yokohama arrived at San Francisco the other day with a record shipment of two hundred tubs of goldfish from Japan, designated for distribution to cities all over the United States. On the trip across the Pacific the temperature of the water in the tubs had to be maintained at a uniform degree.

WITTY KITTY

By NINA WILCOX PUTNAM



The girl chum says that, as far as she can find out, no woman has ever made a practice of reading herself to sleep with a cook book.

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DADA KNOWS



"Pop, what is a junta?" "Tropical hot box."

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Dance Frock



A long separate scarf which ties in a bow adds charm to this classical dance frock. The waistline, high in front, slopes to the back where a jeweled clip accents the fan-shaped fullness of the skirt. American beauty chiffon is the material.