

Washington Digest

Defeat of Wheeler Marks Passing of Able Legislator

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There was something rather pathetic about it to me when I heard the President say two words that marked the obituary of a long career. The terse reply was made at a presidential press-radio conference when a reporter asked Mr. Truman if he cared to say anything about the senatorial primary in Montana in which Burton K. Wheeler was defeated by Leif Erickson.

There was nothing more that the President could say. He already had endorsed Wheeler with that remarkable loyalty that he has for his friends—a virtue which easily may go down in history as one of his faults.

Wheeler gave the freshman senator, Harry Truman, his first opportunity to show his mettle by letting him bat for him as chairman of the important Interstate Commerce committee. Truman made good, and a warm friendship developed.

But even presidential aid couldn't save Wheeler.

The other day I was looking over the autographed photographs with which Harold McGrath, superintendent of the senate radio gallery, had decorated the walls. It was just about the time that things began to look bad for the senator. We commented on the senators we had known who had ended long careers in defeat.

Of course, Sen. George Norris was the classic example. Five terms. Then he was replaced by an anti-Roosevelt man, Sen. Kenneth Wherry.

Senator Norris' closest contender for the longevity record in recent years was Ellison ("Cotton Ed") Smith of South Carolina, violently anti-New Deal. He was defeated by a pro-Roosevelt man the year after Norris lost out.

Up on the radio gallery wall is a picture of Henry Ashurst, the senator whose tongue fairly dripped epigrams. He came to the senate when New Mexico was admitted to the Union. That was 1912. He left in 1940, serving five terms, plus five years.

The year 1940 was a bad one for veterans—besides Ashurst, William King of Utah left us, having served since 1917, and Lynn Frazer of North Dakota, who came to Washington in 1923.

Senator Wheeler served only four terms, but his vivid personality made it seem longer. He made many enemies. Many people disapprove of his isolationism and some of his other views most thoroughly. But there are many, even among his detractors, who respect him for his integrity, for his ability as a legislator, something which perhaps is understood in Washington better than elsewhere, and also because they consider his pacifism sincere.

I remember a conversation I had with Jerry O'Connell, former representative who tried to take Wheeler's seat in a campaign somewhat similar to the one which brought victory to Erickson. Jerry was pretty sore. He had a copy of the *Anaconda Standard* in his hand as well as a clipping. The clipping was a report of one of Senator Wheeler's campaign speeches, made early in his career. I can't remember the phraseology, but the general idea (expressed by Wheeler) was that if the *Anaconda Standard*, which was supposed to represent the sentiments of the big copper interests, ever praised Wheeler, it would be a sign that he was no longer worthy of the support of the people of Montana.

O'Connell read that to me. Then he picked up his copy of the *Standard*, and read from it some very kind words for Senator Wheeler.

However, I think it would be grossly unfair to say that Senator Wheeler ever "sold out," even figuratively, to any interests. As far as I know, he is as sincere today as he was when he made his first fight on whatever issue had a side unpopular enough to attract him.

In February of 1935 I had a long interview with Senator Wheeler. I have the yellowing clipping before me. It is illustrated with a huge photograph (more picture than text) showing Wheeler, his fist clenched about to drive it into his palm—a favorite gesture. I remem-

ber when the picture was taken. Here are two paragraphs from the story:

"Last autumn (remember this was written in February, 1935), citizens of Montana sent the same young man to Washington as a senator for his third term with the largest majority ever given a candidate by the Mountain State."

A decade passes and new voters grow up.

"Wheeler (I observed this in the same interview) came back to his office in the Senate building with the pictures of the high mountains and the deep valleys of his adopted state on the walls, and a victory measured in the same magnificent dimensions. His hair is a little thinner than it was but he can wake the echoes with the same thunder he released when he first arrived. He is still up and at 'em. And the higher they fly the more anxious he is to make them fall."

Wheeler, Norris, Ashurst—they, too, flew high.

Matron Upsets Solon's Aplomb

It was during the day and night senate sessions on OPA. The senate recessed at 6 p. m. to continue deliberations at 8 p. m. Republican Sen. Styles Bridges of New Hampshire, bitter OPA opponent, and Mrs. Bridges went to a restaurant for dinner. Coming out, they were caught by a sudden sharp rainstorm. The dapper, white-linen-suited senator hailed a passing cab, and he and his wife piled in. Before they could shut the door (and in accordance with Washington's group riding) a huge and very damp Labrador retriever bounded in, landing in the senatorial lap. The dog was followed by his corpulent mistress. Some moments elapsed as the quartet arranged themselves in the cab's back seat. The dog continued to snuggle and drip on the white linen suit.

Suddenly the corpulent lady, glancing sharply at the senator, said: "Why, you're Senator Bridges, aren't you?"

Bridges, pleased to be recognized, nodded graciously.

"Well," said the lady, jerking the sycophantic canine away from the Republican senator, "I'm a registered Democrat!"

Schwellenbach Years for West

There's a persistent rumor that Labor Secretary Schwellenbach would like to desert the Potomac for Puget Sound. That's not hard to understand since heavy pressure is being exerted to make drastic changes in the labor department and since Schwellenbach is as popular as he is in his home state.

In 1934, when he was running for the United States senate, Lew Schwellenbach carried every county of the state—the first time this ever had happened.

Vicariously, as shown in the recent resounding success of his brother, Edgar Schwellenbach, in winning the Supreme court justiceship of the state—his popularity persists today. Edgar Schwellenbach, almost unknown outside his own community, filed against the incumbent. The court elections usually don't draw a very heavy vote—yet the man with the former senator's name received more votes than were cast for the Republican and Democratic candidates for the senate.

Senator in for Happy Returns

The eyes of Washington Post readers bugged out recently when they read in a story describing senatorial wives' experiences with rising prices that "Mrs. Glen Taylor buys groceries for a family of 10, the youngest of whom was an 18-year-old baby." I understood immediately that the reporter had meant 18-DAY-old baby, because just two weeks before I had the pleasure of smoking one of the 50 excellent cigars sent up to the radio correspondents gallery by the senator.

It isn't often that cigars are distributed in the senate for this particular reason, as most of the legislators have put aside childish things. But radio correspondents smoked Senator Taylor's cigars and congratulated him on his third son, as well as on the other honor recently tendered him by a panel of radio experts. They voted him the "legislator most likely to succeed in radio." The two honors had no connection.

BARBS... by Baukhage

A new bird-proof windshield has been approved by the Civil Aeronautics administration. Now, let us look for a bird-proof automobile top.

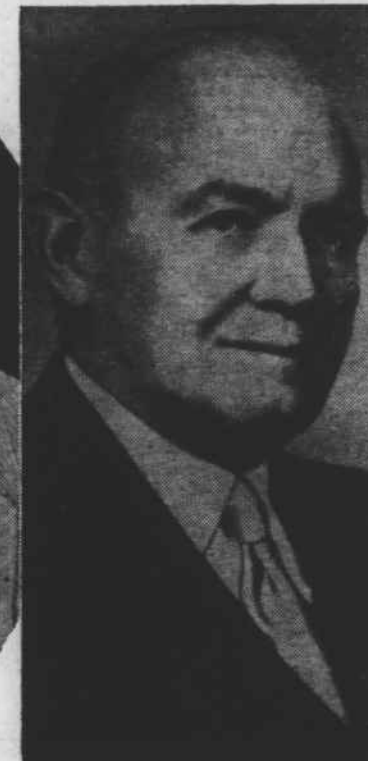
"The average person of 20 now has as many years of life remaining to him as a new-born child had in 1900," says the Metropolitan Information service. But can he use them to any better advantage?

Some 20,000,000 homes have no central heating system, says Petroleum Notes. But what is worse—several million veterans have no homes.

As late as 1880, 40 per cent of men's clothing was ready-to-wear, says the Twentieth Century Foundation. In 1946 it may be ready but it's already pretty worn.



FARMERS TAKE TO AIR . . . More than 500 flying farmers from Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and Indiana left their tractors and combines to fly to Lafayette, Ind., to attend the first annual flying farmers' field day at Purdue university, and to prove that the airplane will play an important part in Midwest agriculture. The new group, which has 1,056 members, watched demonstrations.



THREE-MAN DECONTROL BOARD . . . Future price control will rest with a three-man price decontrol board. Recently named to the board by President Truman are, left to right: Daniel W. Bell, Washington, D. C., former undersecretary of the treasury; Roy L. Thompson, New Orleans Federal Land Bank president, chairman; and George H. Mead, Dayton, Ohio, former chairman of the industrial advisory board under the NRA and member of advisory board of Office of War Mobilization.



EYE-DROPPER BABY—THEN AND NOW . . . When Richard Roseman was born in 1943, he weighed just 24 ounces. Doctors fighting to save the life of the tiny mite fed him with an eye-dropper, as shown at left. He was kept in an incubator. Today, Richard is a strapping young man of 40 pounds, of sturdy body and well-developed muscles.



BATTING FOR HAY FEVER SUFFERERS . . . Full war on ragweed, which is blamed for most of the miseries of hay fever victims, was opened in Brooklyn as a campaign got underway to eradicate the weed in vacant lots. Photo shows city employees spraying a luxurious growth of the pest weeds with a herbicide, dichlorophenoxycetic. In six to eight weeks, treated plants die from a .51 per cent solution of spraying. Complete control of ragweed is now possible.



REGAINED MEMORY AND RIGHTS . . . Rajah Kumar Ramendra Narayan Roy of India, who was believed to have died and been burned on funeral pyre, 12 years later regained his memory and was awarded his property rights. He reported that rain had put out the fire and brought him out of coma and that for years he wandered as a beggar over India. The Lord Privy Council now has ruled that he is the rightful owner of a huge estate with a yearly income.



POTATO BLOSSOM QUEEN . . . Miss Yvette Gagne, Van Buren, Me., who was chosen from some 15 queen candidates and crowned Maine potato blossom queen by Gov. Horace Hildreth during festival at Houlton, Maine.



SPECTRE OF ANOTHER WAR

EN ROUTE TO PARIS. — Underway in the palace of Luxembourg is the conference on which so many mothers set their hearts, for which so many mothers' sons gave their lives — the conference to win the peace.

Some 13,000,000 men in the American armed forces alone fought four long years—with the hope that it might be the last time human beings would have to go through the terrible ordeal of war.

In the Paris conference comes the climax of their dreams, and already disillusionment has begun to set in. Already the dreams are tinged with nightmare — the spectre of another war.

Here are some of the distressing facts this conference has to face in trying to chart the peace of the world:

1. Historians criticized Woodrow Wilson because he was slow in negotiating peace. But he got started two months after the armistice and finished six months later, a total of eight months after the war. In contrast, it is now almost one year after the armistice with Japan and 15 months after the armistice with Germany, yet the final peace conference is only getting started.

2. The longer peace is delayed, the more the Allies fall out: the more the other nations forget their gratitude. So the longer the delay, the harder it is to negotiate a permanent peace.

3. Russia deliberately has endeavored to postpone the peace. This conference could have been held long ago if the Soviet had not said no.

DELAY TACTICS PLANNED

Moscow's delay tactics were by no means accidental. They were carefully planned, and with three motives behind them:

A. The longer peace was delayed the more time Russia got to nail down its hold on the Balkan satellites — Hungary, Austria. Anti-Russian factions had to be stamped out; pro-Russian factions trained to carry on. This could not be done overnight.

B. The more uncertainty and unrest occurred in the non-Soviet-occupied countries — France, Belgium, the Netherlands — the greater the likely growth of Communism.

C. Finally, Moscow did not want the Red armies converging back to Russia. There wasn't food to feed them, and their quick return risked economic, political turnovers.

Thus, ever since V-J Day, Russia has been the greatest obstacle to early peace.

AMERICANS NOT BLAMELESS

In this peace conference, however, not everything is black or white. There is some gray shading in between.

And in real fact, American diplomacy during the early stages of this greatest of all diplomatic endeavors was just as guilty of sabotaging the peace as the Russians—perhaps more so. I say more so, because we pride ourselves on being more advanced, more alert, more idealistic.

Yet actually, our diplomats were just as woefully unprepared for peace as the army and navy were for war at Pearl Harbor. When it should have been ready for the most important peace offensive in history of the world, the state department was caught completely napping.

Congress has spent several months of intensive study to ascertain who was responsible for Pearl Harbor; yet no one has lifted a finger to probe the equally important disaster of our unpreparedness for peace.

If senators probed the files of the state department, or even their own files, significant facts would come to light.

OUT-TRUMAN TRUMAN

Capital observers credit Sen. Jim Mead of New York with a new investigating verve which may out-Truman Truman. . . . Significant new venture in radio: 350 local streetcar and traction companies throughout the U. S. are inaugurating a coast-to-coast radio program. Working under American Transit association, they represent 23 billion annual streetcar riders. . . . No men from the Dallas naval air station were permitted to attend church the other Sunday. Officially speaking, they were not barred from attending church, merely barred from taking a bus into town. Since there was no chaplain at the station, it amounted to the same thing. Lieut. Comdr. Leif Johnson issued the order.

CAPITAL CHAFF

Assistant Secretary of State Bill Benton leaves soon on a good-will tour of Latin America. . . . U. S. broadcasters over 10 transmitters to Soviet Russia now are giving the common people of Russia the truth about the news. . . . Maxim Litvinov was considered for Russian ambassador to Argentina. However, Stalin decided Litvinov's appointment would arouse American suspicions. . . . Jim Newman, who piloted the McMahon bill in congress, resigns soon.

Gems of Thought

GRANT that I may not criticize my neighbor until I have walked a mile in his moccasins.—Indian prayer.

A penny will hide the biggest star in the universe if you hold it close enough to your eye.—Samuel Grafton.

Change lays not her hand upon truth.—Swinburne.

Government, religion, property, books are nothing but scaffolding to build man. — Von Humboldt.

We can all afford to give freely the best that we have, because in giving it we have it doubly.—Benjamin Franklin.

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When Your Back Hurts—

And Your Strength and Energy Is Below Par

It may be caused by disorder of kidney function that permits poisonous waste to accumulate. For truly many people feel tired, weak and miserable when the kidneys fail to remove excess acids and other waste matter from the blood.

You may suffer nagging backache, rheumatic pains, headaches, dizziness, getting up nights, leg pains, swelling, sometimes frequent and scanty urination with burning and burning is another sign that something is wrong with the kidneys or bladder.

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