

# Washington Digest

## Democratic Leaders Fear Surplus Property Scandals

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WASHINGTON, D. C.—There is an old political axiom attributed to various national figures of the past which runs something like this: Never argue about charges of the opposition party; either admit them frankly and fully, or deny them with every tissue of your oratory.

Mistakes of the "ins" are the chief grist-of-the-mill for the "outs" in an election year.

There is a small but very earnest body of Democrats in Washington today which believes that unless certain mistakes of the administration are freely and frankly admitted and given a thorough airing, they will come back to haunt the Democrats even unto the third and fourth generation.

These mistakes, they say, are the ones which have been made by the War Assets administration. There is a segment of the administration, on the other hand, including some of the White House chief counsellors, who don't approve of this theory. They think that the best thing to do is to get rid of the surplus property as quickly as possible and forget all about the whole mess.

But the whole mess is not going to be forgotten. In fact, it is quite safe to predict some riotous headlines shortly after election, which will make the rather limited revelations of the Mead committee on war contracts look like very pale and limp prose.

The headlines are likely to concern that matter which already has emitted some rather noxious odors but which when exhumed, will cause a still stronger stench in the public nostrils. This is the disposal of sur-

monopoly and, positively, to establish a pattern which will stand as a standard of operations for the future.

### Disposal of Aluminum Plants Sets Pattern

They point out the distribution of facilities for the manufacture of the light metals, especially aluminum. It was feared that the Aluminum Company of America might benefit to the exclusion of competition or potential competition. But as a result of the co-operation of Stuart Symington, when he was Surplus Property administrator, there are now three lusty competitors in the field, all apparently having benefited from a fair distribution of the war enterprises made available to them on equal terms.

However, other Pharaohs came to Egypt. Haste and other incentives are said to have destroyed the pattern. Present WAA officials deny this, but the Small Business committee expect to prove their charges in open court.

The first step which the Small Business boys would like to see taken is the appointment of an administrator on whom they agree. They feel the official should be a civilian rather than an army man. The incumbent, at this writing, Maj. Gen. Robert Littlejohn, is said to have expressed the desire to be relieved of WAA responsibilities, but no successor has been indicated.

The next step desired, after the hearings, is a thorough reorganization of methods and, if necessary, an overhauling of the whole set-up of the agency. This, proponents of the idea claim, will not only be in the good of the veteran, the business man and the national economy but in the good of the party, as well.

### Smart Politicos Outsmart Themselves

When Senator La Follette raised a memorial to his senatorial career in the form of one of the most progressive pieces of legislation affecting the internal affairs of the congress, the reorganization act, something occurred which the liberal wing of the Democratic party didn't realize was being done, and which has caused them no little concern ever since its practical application dawned upon them.

What happened was not Senator La Follette's fault, but the result of that ancient evil, seniority, which the original reorganization measure would have eliminated. Congress couldn't accept that radical departure and seniority still operates. Under this procedure a senator automatically becomes chairman of any committee to which he is appointed if he has been a member of the senate longer than any other member of the majority party on the committee. This system has long been recognized as an evil.

Just having been around longer than anybody else is frequently less than a recommendation. Unfortunately there are too many cases where a stuffed shirt and an empty head, although they can win votes from a constituency, provide a contribution which contributes less than nothing to the highly important function of running a committee. And chairmen have become even more important now that there are fewer of them.

Administration Democrats might have acted otherwise had they realized what they were doing. Because of the seniority rule, only two northern Democrats will retain their chairmanships when the new and modernized congress organizes next January. They are Walsh of Massachusetts and Wagner of New York (provided, of course, they are re-elected and the Democrats hold their place as majority party).

The rest of the chairmanships go to the South and since some southern senators persist in voting against the more liberal measures of the administration and joining with the Republicans on others just to show their independence, it leaves the liberal Democrats in a somewhat precarious position.

There is another factor which doesn't sit too well with a number of northern Democrats, either. Under the new set-up, the chairman of a committee will be more influential than ever for he now is provided with a large and efficient staff. The work of his committee will be more important than formerly because committee work won't be spread as thin as it was.

Since the circle of chairmen is more exclusive and since a member's perquisites and contacts will be greatly increased, a chairmanship is a juicier plum than ever.



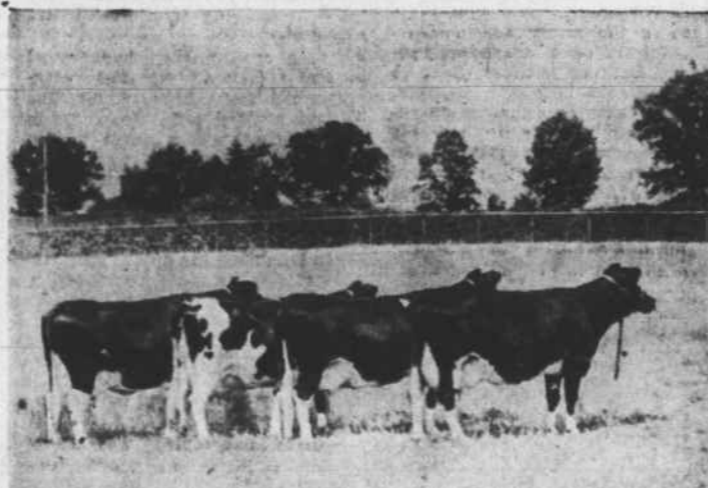
**THEY WANT LIGHT . . .** When Pittsburgh prepared for a "blackout" due to power strike, the young citizens joined in the protests of their elders. Left to right: Larry O'Connor, 2; Judy Tolusciak, 3, and Marilyn Jordan, 2. The strike lasted only 45 minutes, when it was brought to an end by an injunction. These youngsters don't seem to be worried about it, despite the wording of their signs. They had enough of "blackouts" during the earlier days of the war.



**HEAD NEW YORK DEMOCRATIC SLATE . . .** The three men selected at the New York state Democratic convention in Albany to head the state slate are shown from left to right: Erastus Corning II, Albany mayor, who will run for the post of lieutenant governor; Ex-Governor Herbert H. Lehman, senatorial candidate, and James M. Mead, present United States senator, the gubernatorial candidate. They have records of never having been defeated for any office.



**MISS AMERICA 1946 AND HER COURT . . .** Honey-haired, blue-eyed, Marilyn Buford, 21, of Los Angeles, Miss California, who won the title of Miss America, 1946, at Atlantic City contest, is shown in center, with the four runner-ups: Amelia Carol Ohmart, Miss Utah; Rebecca Jane McCall, Miss Arkansas, first runner-up; Miss America, 1946; Janey Miller, Miss Atlanta; and Miss Louisiana, third runner-up. Miss Buford also won the bathing suit division award.



**MOTHER PRODUCES FOUR WINNERS . . .** The all-American record of "get of sire," are the four daughters of Echo Helbon Mercedes, Baker farm, Exeter, N. H., shown above. These four, all classified Excellent, have produced a total of over 400,000 pounds of milk. This is not only a record for the Holstein-Friesian breed, but believed to be a record for all breeds of dairy cattle. One of the cows recently died, but the other three still are producing.



**QUEEN OF THE COURT . . .** Pauline Betz, Los Angeles, by defeating Doris Hart, Miami, Fla., won the women's national tennis championships at Forest Hills, N. Y. The score was 11-9, 6-3.



**KING OF THE COURT . . .** Jack Kramer, Montebello, Calif., who defeated Tom Brown, San Francisco, to gain the national men's singles tennis championship at Forest Hills, N. Y.



**YOUNG DEAD-EYE . . .** E.H. White Jr., 10, Atlanta, Ga., has his trigger weighed by Captain Castner at Camp Perry, O., preparatory to going on the small-bore firing line. Young White competed in the junior division of the national rifle and pistol championships.



**PAUL ALSO HAD A LAMB . . .** "Sambo" is the black sheep of the Whelton family at East Braintree, Mass. Every morning he accompanies Paul Whelton Jr., 13, to school, then returns home by himself. Risky with present shortage of meat. It looks like Paul is holding a bribe in his hand to lure "Sambo" on.



**TAKES TO AIR AGAIN . . .** Howard Hughes, motion picture producer and airplane manufacturer, as he left Culver City, Calif., for New York, piloting a bomber, a few weeks after winning a courageous fight for life following the crash of an experimental airplane he was solo testing.



### COOLS TOWARD PRESS

WASHINGTON.—Newsmen probably won't write about it, but President Truman's Bermuda trip climaxed a significant change in his relations with the press. The old days of intimate, chummy talks now have vanished! Truman was cool, aloof, even chilly.

And for good reason. Some of his supposedly most trusted news friends let him down. Off-the-record talks which the President thought were going only to half a dozen people leaked out and became the property of millions.

Most disillusioning of these was a reunion of the "Hard-Rock Club," a group of a dozen newsmen who covered Truman's vice presidential campaign when he was ignored by the rest of the country.

Several weeks ago the President invited the boys to an evening on the yacht Williamsburg. They played poker, drank bourbon and generally let their hair down—especially the President. He was indiscreet enough to tell all about the Russian situation and what he thought of Chester Bowles—then OPA administrator.

His remarks were not complimentary. Truman mined no words about either Bowles or the Russians and it was hard to say which he liked least. Although he favored OPA, he thought the fight to win its approval from congress would not have been so hard if Bowles had not issued so much propaganda and talked so much.

Shortly afterward, Time magazine published a brief account of this very confidential evening. Blame for the leak fell upon Edward Lockett, Time staffer who is a member of the Hard Rock club. Truman was so indignant that for a long time he would not speak to Lockett. Other club members virtually ostracized him.

Later, the Chicago Sun's Tom Reynolds, no member of the club, wrote another account of the President's off-the-record remarks on that memorable evening. Naturally, Truman's views got back to the Russians. This made him even more vexed—and worried.

So from now on the chief executive has decided not to be the naive and trusting gentleman he once was with his supposed close friends of the press. During the Bermuda trip, for instance, he gave press secretary Charlie Ross instructions that newsmen were to ask no questions which did not pertain directly to the trip. And when one man violated this rule to ask why Rhode Island's Sen. Theodore Green was not invited aboard the Williamsburg, the President nearly snapped his head off.

**LEARN OF SPEECH**  
Final decision for the Jimmy Byrnes speech on Germany was imparted to high officials in Washington about 12 days before he made it. The suspicion is that the Russians learned about it at the same time.

Byrnes phoned President Truman about 12 days in advance, told him the Russians were on the rampage, that nothing could be done to satisfy them. He therefore proposed that the United States and Great Britain try to set up a German government which could be won over to democracy and which could serve as a bulwark against Russia.

President Truman, who has come to put complete trust in Byrnes' judgment, agreed.

Whether or not the Russians tapped the trans-Atlantic phone, or whether they had other ways of knowing what was going on is anyone's guess. Maybe it was just coincidence.

Anyway, it was shortly after this that Foreign Minister Molotov made his sudden, mystery flight to Moscow. Simultaneously, inspired stories began to leak out of Poland that Russia would take Silesia away from Poland and give it to Germany. Obviously this was German bait to counteract the offer Byrnes was going to make to Germany.

If Russia goes ahead with this policy of "The Soviet giveth and the Soviet taketh away," it will cause the toughest showdown so far experienced between Moscow and Washington.

The categorical Byrnes-Truman position is that the Soviet can neither "giveth nor taketh" without the consent of its allies, that Germany's boundaries are to be decided only at the final peace treaty—which Russia so far has refused to call.

## ASK ME ANOTHER?

A General Quiz  
The Questions

1. What is the normal rate of respiration?
2. What is an antisesquipedalianist?
3. How many men are active hunters and fishermen?
4. The Assuan dam holds in check the flow of what river?
5. How long is the "big room" in the Carlsbad caverns?
6. At what point of the Fahrenheit scale does absolute zero occur?
7. What is the chief cause of ocean tides?
8. What is a heptarchy?

### The Answers

1. The average is 16, but this varies from 12 to 20 breaths per minute.
2. One who disapproves of the use of long words.
3. Sixty-eight per cent of all men between the ages of 18 and 65.
4. The Nile.
5. One and one-half miles.
6. At 459.6 degrees below zero.
7. The moon.
8. A government of seven people.

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WNU-4 39-46

## Kidneys Must Work Well

**For You To Feel Well**  
24 hours every day, 7 days every week, never stopping, the kidneys filter waste matter from the blood.  
If most people were aware of how the kidneys must constantly remove surplus fluid, excess acids and other waste matter that causes stay in the blood without injury to health, there would be better understanding of why the whole system is upset when kidneys fail to function properly.  
Burning, scanty or too frequent urination sometimes warns that something is wrong. You may suffer aching back-ache, headache, dizziness, rheumatic pains, getting up at night, swelling.  
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## BARBS . . . by Baukhage

The water-wagon is one of the few conveyances which is easier to get off of than on to.

I have no more use for these modernistic chairs than a toad for a toadstool.

According to the new law lobbyists have to register with congress. Can they register with the voter?

Bars keep crooks in jail and husbands from getting home in time for dinner.

Tolerance, says the rector of Heidelberg, is respect for the other man's conscience.

All the political applesauce in the world won't give us any more apple butter—or apples—or butter.