Washington Digest

President of the U.S. Has Biggest Job in the World

By BAUKHAGE

WASHINGTON, D. C .- Once more events bring up the so far unan-swered problem,

how can the White House be put on a business basis?

The White House executive offices are the headquarters of the biggest ganization in the world. The President of the United States is the head of this tremendous admin-istrative set-up.

Baukhage

ize the extent of his functions, most of which aren't even suggested in the constitution, and few laws define them. They have grown like

We are reminded of the scope of the presidential duties by Willard Kiplinger in his "Washington Is Like That." He points out that the President as leader of his party runs the party policies through the national committee. Some times the party line isn't working. You re-call the stew over meat? A meet-ing of Democratic party leaders, at moment when the President was preparing to announce at a news conference that he opposed remov-ing the controls on meat prices, passed a resolution asking Chair-man Hannegan to confer with administrative officials concerning the removal of such controls.

The President, as the top executive, heads the executive set-up and he appoints the men who run the executive machinery. He can't talk to each one every day. When there is friction a hot-box often develops. There are plenty of examples in history from Ickes and Wallace, to Lincoln and Seward, and

Chief Executive's Task Never Ends

The President issues "executive orders"-which someone has to write for him but which have the force of law - and the President must see that they are properly in-terpreted. Again there is trouble if these decrees tread on congressional prerogatives.

He has to get bills which he fa-vors, passed. Frequently he writes the first drafts of such bills with the help of his legal advisors. He is expected, if necessary, to "put the heat on" to get them through coness. This means a lot of work conference with congressional leaders on the phone and through his personal agents. A tactless agent can easily upset the apple-cart. Remember how Tommy Corcoran used to get under the skin of congress? Many others, well intentioned and otherwise, who came and went, might be named.

The President has to make up the budget, with the help of the budget director. If the director makes mis-takes or asks for too much or too little, it is the White House that takes the rap. This involves billions,

He appoints the Justices of the Su-preme court and federal judges. A bad choice may be fatal, and yet one person can't know the personal history of every likely candidate. In this sense the President forms the legal thinking of his era.

He is not only his own and his party's but also the nation's chief publicity man. A slip of the tongue publicity man. A slip of the tongue not only can lose an election, but also could start a war. If war comes, he has to run it, for the loyalty rather than because of their strategy in the field is based on broad objectives decided at home It was by no means merely miliopinion which decided and where the invasion of Europe

These are only a few of the things a President has to think about. We have omitted mention of many minor but time-consuming matters such as whether the architectural beauty of the White House shall be altered with a new wing, or where some visiting potentate shall sit at the table. All full of dynamite.

It was the death of Woodrow Wilworkload to public attention. He died, as much from overwork as from his disappointment over repu-diation of the League of Nations. Serious study of the problem of fur-nishing a means to lighten the presiburden began shortly thereafter, but it was not until 1939 that a specific plan was drawn up and roll your own?

WNU Service, 1816 Eye Street, N.W., submitted to congress. Among other washington, D. C. er suggestions for various departer suggestions for various depart-mental reorganizations, the plan created a presidential staff of "ex-

ecutive assistants."

About all the public knows about this corps of assistants is that they are supposed to possess a "passion for anonymity." The other thing for anonymity." The other thing about them, which isn't usually adabout them, which isn't usually admitted, is that they have never functioned properly. That, at least, is the private opinion of one insider who has watched them come and go from the beginning. The reason is simple; people who expect a decision on an important matter won't take it from anyone but the Presi-

Must Keep Close Check on Aides

A pitiful example of the breakdown of the White House machinery was the recent Wallace ruckus. The President never need have been placed in the position he was.

It is not a President's job to read over every document submitted to him. No head of a business as big as the government would dream of trying to do that. But somebody should have read both the Wallace memorandum on foreign policy and the Wallace speech and apprised the President of what they contained and implied. Whether it is the President's fault that he didn't have properly experienced hired help, is another matter. That his hired help didn't function, caused the damage.

An explanation, if not an excuse, has been offered in this case. The job of reading over public statements of administration menbers to see that they didn't conflict was handled by the OWI during the war. Before that the White House machinery had always taken care of such matters. That machinery had not been again set in mo-tion when OWI ceased to function.

The fault was not that the President didn't prevent the Wallace-Byrnes clash, but that he was not prevented from preventing it.

I can think of only one similar bad mistake made by President Roosevelt which parallels the Wallace mix-up and it was due to a similar but not the same cause. It involved the highly technical question of the public debt. An "assistant," sup-posed to be an expert, furnished the figures on which the President based an important public statement. The eagle-eyed financial writers caught The "expert" was called to account; he furnished new figures, was wrong again and caught again. The President was forced to make a second public correction.

The duties of a President are simply too great for any one man. So Presidents have always had personal advisors, some times they were given an office, some times they had no official title-like Colonel House in the Wilson regime. To-day we hear little about presidential "administrative assistants" but we hear a great deal about a group of "advisors" who have failed to func-tion properly in spite of the fact that unlike the executive assistants they lack authority. These advisors are too "close" to the President. And they have been criticized by other members of the administration for standing between department heads, the congressional and party leaders.
They are all old, close, personal friends of the President. They are inexperienced in government.

Whether President Truman's little circle of, "cronies" has helped or experience. The question is whether presidential duties, as they exist today, can be delegated even

well-trained, highly capable staff. They can, is the answer, IF such a staff is not blocked by higher authorities who, from motives of love, hate, politics, religion, temperament, taste or previous condition of servitude, use such authority, other than in the public good.

When Oscar, pet seal of the California Academy of Science, died, it was found that he had swallowed \$7.54 in pennies, nickels and dimes, son which brought the presidential plus a Canadian penny and an workload to public attention. He amusement token. But it was the pennies which were fatal-the zinc ones developed poison.

A Russian engineer claims he has perfected ballbearings so small that 50,000 can be placed in a match box. But will that make it any easier to

BARBS . . . by Baukhage

A Holland-American liner departed recently with more than three says Chester Bowles. Will there be and a half million eggs aboard— any gravy? And if so, for whom? and a half million eggs aboard-first egg cargo of its size since

Government statisticians are leav-ing Washington in hordes, says Business Week. Maybe the political situation is so hot they think there isn't safety in numbers.

Plenty of meat after the elections.

Discords come from Russia, where critics claim Shostakovitch's ninth symphony doesn't follow the party lines. The point is that the counterpoint is counter-revolutionary and some of the semi-demi-quavers



EISENHOWER HONORED IN EUROPE . . . More and more honors were heaped upon Gen. Dwight Eisenhower on his trip through Europe. With Mrs. Eisenhower, he is shown chatting with King George of England at Balmoral, Scotland, where the Eisenhowers were guests of the royal family. General Eisenhower previously visited the eastle which was presented him by the citizens of Scotland. Every city presented him with medals and keys to the city. He was also given freedom of the city wherever he appeared in Scotland and England.



TURNS.NIGHT INTO DAY . . . Prof. Etienne Vassy, 37, expert on atmospheric physics at Sorbonne university, Paris, pictured with his wife in their laboratory as they announced discovery of formula for turning night into day. By means of radio transmission of optical waves directed at luminous strata. Professor Vassy says he will be able to capture enough light from the sky to read without lamps or to drive without headlights at night.



TRANSPORTATION PROBLEMS . . . Mo N. Y., potatoes, nearly 4,000 bushels on the Charles McVay ranch at Riverhead. They were purchased by the U. S. government at approximately \$1.67 a hundred pounds. While Suffolk county potato growers have enjoyed bumper crops this year, they are encountering difficulties in getting their yields to market. Many of the potatoes started to spoil in the field before freight ears were made available.



WHO SAYS THERE'S A MEAT SHORTAGE .'. . With retail butch shops closing in most cities, this is a rare scene at the Recvylown, N. J., abattoir, where owner, John Martiniuk, ex-G.I., decided to sell retail at OPA prices his big supply of all kinds of meat. Martiniuk, who employs 12 butchers, all veterans, opened his slaughterhouse to the public in order to keep his men on the job and at the same time give meat hungry customers their favorite cuts.



NEW CHIEF JUSTICE . . . When the United States Supreme court began its new term, in a brief but ceremonious session, Fred M. Vinson, was installed as the new chief justice. He is shown above as he took his place on the bench.



NEW LEGION COMMANDER... Paul H. Griffith, Uniontown, Pa., newly elected commander of the American Legion. Twenty-eight years ago he was rolled in an army blanket and left on road-side for burial after being report-



gora, seven-time winner of the world's championship typing title, is shown at the National Business show, New York City. He set a record of 142 words per minute for an hour straight to make rec-



KING OF PICKERS . . . Eugene grins delightedly at the \$1,000 first prize which he won as champion picker at the National Cotton picking contest at Blytheville, Ark. He picked 109 pounds in two



LEGION AUXILIARY HEAD ... Mrs. Dorothy W. Pearl, Detroit, Mich., who was recently elected president of the American Legion Auxiliary, succeeding Mrs. Walter G. Craven, Charlotte, N. C.,

WASHINGTON. - U. S. intelli-tence officials have sent the White House a highly important report on Soviet operations in Germany show-ing how the Russians have convert-ed large segments of the old German army to the Communist ban-

Nucleus of the new Red-Nazi army is the old German Liberation committee, organized by the Russians when they captured several thousand Nazis at Stalingrad. Field Marshal Frederich Von Paulus, who surrendered at Stalingrad, was chairman of this committee and appealed by radio to the Nazi army in Germany during the war, urging them to desert Hitler and come over to the Russians.

Today thousands of Von Paulus's men and officers have been put through Russian indoctrination schools designed to sell them on sympathy for the Soviet and are ready to govern the Soviet zone of

Germany.

Here are other salient points in the U. S. intelligence report:

1. The Russian zone is now more than twice as efficient as a productive unit as the American zone and three times as productive as the British zone.

2. The Russians are prepared to set up a government of their own in Germany if the Americans and the British set up an autonomous German government in the western part of the Reich. It will be under Von Paulus.

3. The Russians are not retaining

Germans for slave labor, as generally expected. They have already sent a million and a half captured Nazis from Russia to the Soviet zone of Germany, where each has completed one year's schooling under Soviet and German Communist instructors. Only a half million Germans still are being used in labor battalions in Russia. These are the leading Nazis whom the Russians know they can't either convert or trust.

The U. S. intelligence report strongly recommends against an autonomous German government in the Anglo-American zone, as proposed by Secretary Byrnes, and urges instead agreement with the Russians on the control of Germany. It points out that unless agreement is reached, Germany again will be the source of a new world war in the not too distant future.

LA GUARDIA SEES STALIN When UNRRA Director La Guardia and aides visited Moscow on their recent tour of Europe, the entire party was eager to see Stalin. The Kremlin invitation, however, permitted only La Guardia and two other UNRRA officials to call on the

top Soviet leader. La Guardia, therefore, suggested to his aide, Joseph Lilly, that he divert the rest of the party by taking them to Lenin's tomb, where the body of the father of the Russian revolution

is still perfectly preserved.

Late that night, the party reassembled, and Lilly eagerly asked La Guardia what he had learned from Stalin. Replied Fiorello:

"I got as much out of Stalin as you did out of Lenin."

NO MONEY FOR FINLAND

Finland has been known to Americans as the little country which always paid its debts. Now, however, the U. S. is getting the repu tation among Finns as a country which breaks its financial promises.

What happened is that a year ago Finland sent a trade delegation here to arrange for a 70 million dollar loan from the Export-Import bank. The loan was promised, and on the basis of this promise, the Finns made purchases amounting to 35 million dollars in the United States, with partial commitments for the remaining 35 million dollars.

Part of the deal was that Finland was to secure coal from this country, which in turn would help increase her newsprint production Many American newspapers made arrangements to buy this extra newsprint.

However, something has caused the state department to reverse it-self. The Export-Import bank loan to Finland has been held up.

Actual, although unannounce reason for the reversal is the fact that Finland is now in the Soviet sphere of influence and it's feared that any financial help indirectly would aid Russia. However, there is considerable difference of opinion regarding this.

So far, however, - Finns still are waiting.

ADMIRAL HALSEY GETS BORED Admiral William (Bull) Halsey is beginning to fidget in his new job on the President's super-advisory board of five-star army-navy offi-cers. Since his semi-diplomatic mis-sion to South America, Halsey has had little to do. Privately, the tough little skipper hankers to take that job as vice president of Pan American airways, which is still open to him. He isn't interested in the extra money. His sparkplug tempera-ment craves action, in or out of the

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