

Jap-Russ War—G. O. P. Principles—Medical Trust?

Bruckart's Washington Digest

MIXTURE OF RELIEF CASH AND POLITICS DANGEROUS

Candidates' Methods of Influencing Voters Scored by Washington Observer; Suggests Return to Election of Senators by Legislatures

By WILLIAM BRUCKART

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WASHINGTON. — I had finished reading my evening paper a few nights ago when I found myself quite down in the dumps. The news of the day was disturbing. It was vicious news in its implications. There was so much of it that was disturbing that I could not help wondering where we, as a people, are headed.

On page one, there was an account of the bitter factional fight within the Democratic ranks in Tennessee. Sen. George Berry was seeking re-election—rather, renomination—and Senator McKellar, his colleague, was fighting tooth and nail to prevent it. Party control in the state was the objective, and

And then, rather in disgust with the whole thing, I turned to a new book. The volume is titled "Notable Virginia Bar Addresses."

Among the 27 speeches listed there, I decided to read that by the late Thomas R. Marshall. His address, like all of the others, was intended to preach good government and the obligations of the lawyer as well as the layman. In reading that speech, I came across this passage:

"I have only one apology that I know of to make for my political life. I apologize to the American people for having been in favor of the election of United States senators by the people. My reason for it was different from the reason of many men. I had gotten tired of voting for some old rum-nosed Democrat for the legislature in Indiana because a United States senator depended on him for election; and I thought that I could raise the grade of legislators in Indiana by letting the people elect the United States senators. Now, it was an altruistic movement to make that change in the organic law of the United States; but, ladies and gentlemen, when it has resulted in the spending of half a million dollars to elect a senator, I want to know if the old fashioned government would not have been better."

Marshall's Apology

Thomas R. Marshall, Vice President of the United States in the Wilson administration, once said: "I have only one apology that I know of to make for my political life. I apologize to the American people for having been in favor of the election of United States senators by the people." There, thinks William Bruckart, is the key to today's problem. Let state legislators pick U. S. senators, he says, and we'll be rid of the demagogue who is elected by his ability to promise more than the opposition.

there were countless charges of the use of money, federal relief money, state payroll money, other money.

There was, likewise, a fight going on next door. In Kentucky, Gov. "Happy" Chandler was seeking the Democratic nomination to the senate and Sen. "Dear Alben" Barkley wanted to be renominated and re-elected. Also, the New Dealers in Washington, from President Roosevelt on down wanted Senator Barkley sent back, and the President had gone into Kentucky to tell the voters of his views. Again: money, federal relief money, state payroll money, charges of attempted trades of federal judgeships so that there would not have to be a bitter primary fight like that which came.

Mr. Hopkins' Idea on Relief Votes Backfires

Here in Washington, there was the greatest spender of all time, Mr. Harry Hopkins, head of the Works Progress administration and professional reliever of destitute persons whether they are politicians or the poor, popping off another idea. Mr. Hopkins was saying that 90 per cent of the relief clients would vote for President Roosevelt for a third term. It was a statement that immediately caused a backfire from Capitol Hill where Senator Sheppard of Texas was saying as chairman of the committee investigating the use of relief money in politics, that there must be something done about such methods of influencing voters.

In another place, I read how Governor Earle of Pennsylvania was calling the state legislature into special session there to enact laws that would prevent a grand jury from investigating some of the governor's acts. The call for the special session had been preceded, of course, by a terrific political fight over the Democratic nomination for United States senator in Pennsylvania, which was won by Governor Earle. The governor preferred to have the investigating done by members of the state legislature, if there was to be an inquiry, rather than by an independent group. The only way to prevent it was by a law taking away the authority of the courts and the grand jury.

There were other states involved, too. Senator McAdoo, who is seeking renomination as the Democratic senatorial candidate in California, was under fire. Some of his campaigners, it was charged, were using coercion as well as federal relief funds, while out in South Dakota opponents of Governor Berry, now the Democratic nominee for the United States senate, were bringing forth a new set of charges. They informed the senate committee here that the Farm Security administration in South Dakota had been sending out a press release that had nice things to say about Governor Berry. The press release was two years old, of course, but the FSA was mailing out many of them to voters—and paying no postage on them. It was another case of using the franking privilege, said the accusers.

Politics Hits New Low With No Change in Sight

It was enough to make one sick at the stomach; here was politics in a new quagmire, and no signs to indicate that it is not a permanent condition. What, I thought, is going to be the type of men coming in to the United States senate with such background as these stories indicated?

Answer to Today's Problem Given in 1920

And right there, I believe, is the guts of the present day problem. Mr. Marshall had held many elective offices and the speech from which I quoted the above passage was made while he was vice president of the United States. He was an observer and a student of politics. He saw in 1920 where we, as a people, were going and I have no doubt that he could have predicted exactly the set of circumstances we are meeting now.

When Senator Norris of Nebraska, once a Republican, then a Democrat, and now labeled as something else, drove the constitutional amendment through congress and cleared the way for direct election of United States senators, he accomplished two things. (1) He made it possible for the purest type of demagogue to win elections by his ability to "promise" more than the opposition, rewards, political patronage, pork barrel returns to the state and (2) he assured that vast sums of money can—indeed, must be—used to influence elections. And, in amplification of the second item, he made it possible for any administration, any dominant party, in control of the federal government to build up national and state machines jointly by using federal money.

Too Many Senators Out for Greatest Amount of Swag

I grant that corporations, "vested interests," formerly had too much to say about the election of United States senators by state legislatures. But of the two, I have come to the conclusion that we had a better national administration and particularly a better senate under that condition than under the system where every voter casts a ballot directly for a United States senatorial nominee. That is why 75 per cent of the present senate members are nothing more or less than salesmen who are trying to collect for their states the greatest amount of swag which they can put over with their brother senators. That is why, too, day after day, we have watched cliques formed and trading done over legislation in the senate. The senators either are trying to make good on demagogic promises or they are building a storehouse to be used in the next campaign.

Senator Norris may have thought he was performing a great service to the American people and he may have felt that he was building a monument for his name, but I am firmly convinced he did quite the contrary. For, be it known, were it not for Mr. Norris' monumental amendment to the Constitution of the United States there could hardly be such an outrage committed as that by Mr. Hopkins. It must be remembered that Mr. Hopkins never was elected; he is an appointee of the President of the United States and is responsible to him alone. So when Mr. Hopkins flirts with a state electorate, there can be no other interpretation placed upon his action than that he is using the influence available as a result of his dictatorship over relief distribution.

It all depends, of course, upon how one views the functions and purposes of the United States senate. If one wants the senate to be just a glorified house of representatives, able to maintain itself solely on what pap it is able to lay in the laps of voters—then, we ought to keep the present system. If, however, one believes as I do that the senate is comprised, or should be, of senators of the United States instead of senators of a state variety unconcerned with the Union of states, then there could well be repeal of the amendment.

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WHO'S NEWS THIS WEEK

By LEMUEL F. PARTON

NEW YORK.—England pioneered the businessman-diplomat—shrewdly and effectively, it would seem. Many of her best fixers and negotiators throughout the world have been men who had a personal stake in the outcome of their operations. They were not disinterested, perhaps, but no more were the traditional diplomats who knew protocol, perhaps, but nothing about oil.

America followed with Norman H. Davis, a financier who became an effective European swing man under five Presidents, and then came Spruille Braden, engineer and industrialist who was our ambassador-at-large in Latin America until he became minister to Colombia last April.

President Roosevelt, agreeing to act as an arbitrator in the Chaco dispute, picks Mr. Braden to represent him. In his own private industrial diplomacy throughout South America, the husky and gregarious Mr. Braden has proved himself an excellent pacifier and trouble-shooter.

He knows the score in oil, copper, rubber, minerals, hides and what not, and this materialized and particularized diplomacy has made him useful in diplomatic representations at various South American conferences. He has been working on the Chaco settlement for the last three years.

In his youth, he did a short turn in the mines near Elkhorn, Mont., his native town, and then went to Yale and became a mining engineer.

He was a second-string halfback at Yale, but a first string engineer and promoter from the start, electrifying Chile for Westinghouse, organizing the Bolivia-Argentina Exploration Corporation, branching out widely in South American development and finance. He desperately wanted to be minister to Chile, but was consoled with Colombia.

He is forty-four years old, remembered in New York as the fastest and hardest-working handball player around Jack O'Brien's gymnasium, in which he combated a tendency to plumpness, creeping up on him a bit in late years.

He was married in 1915 to the beautiful and socially eminent Senorita Maria Humeres del Solar of Chile. They have three daughters and two sons. Their New York residence is the former George W. Perkins estate at Riverdale-on-the-Hudson.

CARL J. HAMBRO, burly president of the Norwegian parliament, is in America for a lecture tour. There is an interesting cut-back in his career.

At Geneva, in 1927, he staged a spectacular debate with Austen Chamberlain, in which, speaking for the small states, he vehemently insisted that the league must find a way to restrain strong aggressors, or else find itself impotent and discredited in a few years.

With equal vehemence, Mr. Chamberlain proclaimed the trustworthiness of the strong states and their humanitarian aims. Warning Mr. Hambro against overt restraints by the league, he said, "Along that road lies danger."

Mr. Hambro was the most distinguished recruit of the Oxford group movement in 1935, and has since been a leader of the movement in Norway.

Returning from a luncheon attended by Dr. Frank Buchman, founder of the movement, in Geneva, he told of the mystic exaltation of the company and later announced his adherence to the group.

Although a conservative, Mr. Hambro is the president of the Labor party of Norway. For many years, he has been leading the fight of the smaller nations in the league. Arriving in New York, he remarks dryly that Norway is old-fashioned—she has a surplus in her budget.

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Platinum Once of No Value
Old prospectors like to tell how they picked "native lead" out of their pans and sluicboxes, and what they said as they threw it away. They are still saying things, for this much despised substance was actually platinum, which had little value years ago. Counterfeiters used it extensively because of its heavy weight, and gold-plated platinum coins are still in existence. In 1828-45 Nicholas I of Russia issued platinum 3, 6 and 12 rouble pieces that are highly prized by the coin collecting fraternity.—Detroit Coin Club.



1—Warfare on the Siberian-Manchurian frontier has resulted in bloody encounters between the armies of Japan and Soviet Russia. Soldiers of the Mikado such as these have engaged the Red forces. 2—Formulation of principles for the guidance of the Republican party are discussed at a Chicago meeting of the program committee, of which Dr. Glenn Frank, left, John D. M. Hamilton and Col. Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., are members. 3—Dr. Irvin Abel, president of the American Medical association, now the target of a U. S. department of justice investigation to determine whether "organized medicine" has violated antitrust laws in opposing co-operative health societies.

BABE'S RIVAL



Threatening to surpass the great Babe Ruth's record of 60 home runs set in 1927, Hank Greenberg, the slugging Detroit Tigers' first baseman, is already well ahead of the pace set by the Babe in the year of his greatest glory.

Typical American Girl



Meet Miss Frances Donelon who has been chosen as the "Typical American Girl" following a nation-wide poll on the ten most beautiful and popular artists' and photographers' models. She is shown relaxing on the sands at Atlantic City.

Travel in Fair Style



Sitting pretty in the ricksha is Zoe Dell Lantis, model for the 1939 Golden Gate International exposition at San Francisco, Calif., as Ruth Peterson, another exposition beauty, takes her for a spin around Treasure Island, site of the world's fair of the West.

CZECH MEDIATOR



Viscount Runciman, former president of the British Board of Trade, who as an official mediator is attempting to avert an open break between Germany and Czechoslovakia over the Sudeten problem. The British emissary has urged the Czech government to make further concessions to the Sudeten German population.

82-Year-Old Watchman Father of 26th Child



George Boarman, eighty-two-year-old Washington, D. C., watchman, with his twenty-one-year-old wife and their newly born son. Mr. Boarman, who has been married three times, is the father of 25 other children, 11 of whom are living.