

PROBE SLATED FOR NEW DEAL

Administration Set-up To Be Investigated by Two Committees

WASHINGTON, April 1 (Auto-caster)—Maybe there wasn't any politics in Senator Byrd's resolution for a Senate Committee to investigate the New Deal and find out how many of its agencies can be dispensed with—and then, again, maybe there was. Senator Byrd of Virginia, though a Democrat, has been one of the New Deal's most vigorous critics. But if he had any political motive in mind, the President proved himself just as good a politician, by appointing his own committee to make its own investigation and to cooperate with the Senate Committee.

At any rate, the New Deal is going to be investigated. The three men named by the President, Louis Brownlow, Charles E. Merriam and Luther H. Gulick, all have fine records of unselfish public service, though none of them has ever been active in politics. Not one of them has ever done anything to suggest that he could be influenced by political considerations to distort or suppress the truth. It seems probable, therefore, that before long, probably before election, the most thorough study yet made of the governmental set-up in Washington will be ready for public inspection.

Floods and Forecasts

The recent floods have played strongly into the hands of the advocates of public works. Look for a large number of projects for flood control, dams, reservoirs and dikes throughout the devastated regions.

The heavy rainfalls, coming on

the heels of the severest Winter in many years, have revived Governmental interest in the weather. It has just been disclosed that the Federal Weather Bureau has been for a long time exploring the possibilities of a long-range weather forecast, and believes it is getting close to a workable method of foretelling whole seasons, months ahead.

It is easy to imagine how valuable it would have been to everybody if the recent severe Winter and this Spring's heavy rainfalls, or last Summer's drought, could have been predicted months in advance.

While the Weather Bureau doesn't hold out any hope of being able to begin long-range weather forecasting for some years yet, nevertheless, it is issuing occasional bulletins and reports on the subject. Anyone who wishes to study the efforts that are being made can receive these bulletins free.

Lobby investigation

Nobody has yet figured out any political angle on the flood situation. It is seemingly about the only thing in Washington that has no political angle at this time. The activities of the Senate Lobby Investigating Committee, of which Senator Black is chairman, in searching the telegraphic files of more than 1,100 individuals and corporations in the hunt for evidence against lobbying, is beginning to have decided political reactions.

Nobody knows exactly what the Committee has uncovered, since only one or two of the telegrams, which it has had copied, have been made public.

There is a good deal of guessing going on, and many members are receiving letters from back home expressing indignation, if not alarm, over this invasion of what some of the home boys have heretofore regarded as confidential communications.

Nobody is talking much in public about the dissension inside of the Ways and Means Committee over the proposed new tax bill. It is an open secret, however, that there are very sharp differences of opinion as to what ought to be done in the matter of taxing corporate reserves, differences which are far from being confined to party lines. It looks now as if the House Committee would hold a perfunctory hearing, introduce a perfunctory bill and leave the real job of examining the whole situation and drafting the final legislation up to the Senate Finance Committee.

Those WPA Charges

With the approach of a Presidential campaign criticism of the Administration, then in power, naturally becomes more vigorous.

The alleged political activities of W.P.A. administrators, brought into the limelight by the charges of Senator Holt, of West Virginia, is one of the attacks.

Senator Holt accused the W.P.A. in his home state of all sorts of political skulduggery, a charge promptly denied by his colleague from West Virginia, Senator Matthew D. Neely, as well as by

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the W.P.A. administrator Harry Hopkins.

Some Senators have been unkind enough to say that Senator Holt's peeve arose from the fact that while he was waiting for his 30th birthday to come, so he could be sworn in as a Senator, Mr. Neely had grabbed off whatever political patronage there was in West Virginia.

Anyway, Senator Holt's charges started something. There's a W.P.A. investigation scheduled, and it will produce headlines, if nothing else.

There are internal dissensions in Administration circles over the whole relief problem. The workers employed to administer relief are mostly opposed to the present Works Relief Plan, pointing out that it is more expensive than a straight dole and more difficult to administer.

With the President asking for another \$1,500,000,000 for relief, there has been some talk of an effort on the part of Congress to prescribe how it is to be spent. That, however, seems unlikely. There is some valuable political patronage in the set-up, from which some members of Congress benefit in the strengthening of their local organizations, and they are not inclined to be sympathetic with any proposal to change the system.

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