

Looking at WASHINGTON

Correspondents Comment

On Truman's Press Talks
The press conferences being held by President Truman at the White House do not rate many compliments from the newspaper men attending the gatherings.

One frequently reads the criticisms of Washington correspondents, who suggest that the Chief Executive is somewhat inept in handling the press. The conferences, they intimate, have degenerated into dull and worthless occasions.

Mr. Truman has made some rather serious blunders in his conferences. The most notable was his approval of the entire Wallace speech prior to its delivery in New York, and his embarrassing wriggle after the full import of the address was assessed. Now, according to the correspondents, the President rarely commits himself on a controversial issue and dodges clear-cut statements on subjects suggested by the reporters.

While we sympathize with the desire of the correspondents to secure news, we do not agree with their conclusion that the chief business of the President is to provide them with sources of copy. While some Presidents, like the late Franklin D. Roosevelt, have used their conferences with the reporters, with good results, it is too much to expect that every individual who occupies the White

House will be able to accomplish the same results.

Commission Begins Work On Executive Reorganization

A special commission has been set up to provide for the reorganization of the executive branch of the government. Headed by former President Herbert Hoover, the commission has twelve members, four appointed by the President, four by the Senate and four by the House.

The commission, of course, will divide itself into committees. Each will have some field of inquiry and recommendations. The findings of the committee will be made public eventually and may have considerable influence upon schemes to reorganize the executive department.

Not much of the work of the commission will be done by the twelve members but the study will be parceled out to "experts." For example, former Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson has been appointed as adviser to the former assistant secretaries of state who will make a study of foreign affairs activities. Neither of the former secretaries are among the twelve members of the commission.

The chances are that the report on this phase of the activity will reflect the views of Messrs. Harvey Bundy, James Grafton Rogers and Mr. Stimson. They are, we presume, thor-

oughly familiar with the practices and procedures of the State Department and, consequently, well-fitted to make recommendations for reorganization. The scope of the commission's work, however, does not involve critical appraisal of policies and personnel. **Hindsight Spurs Critics Of U. N. Veto Provisions**

It is very easy for us to look back at the San Francisco Conference, which organized the United Nations, and criticize the representatives of the nations there assembled for their inclusion of the right to veto among the powers to be exercised by the five major nations of the world.

The criticism is somewhat silly, however, if we turn back to the days at San Francisco. Everybody was anxious to get a world organization which would include all nations, great and small. The Russians made it abundantly plain that, without the veto, they would not be interested in such an organization. The choice before the delegates was failure at San Francisco or the chance that the new organization might work, regardless of the veto power.

Experience with Soviet Russia demonstrates that the Soviet uses its power ruthlessly. This was not available when the United Nations was formed. There was a general understanding at the time, however, that the peace of the world depended upon the friendship of the five great nations, with especial emphasis upon the friendship between Russia and the United States. Consequently, the delegates at San Francisco took a "calculated risk" in regard to the veto.

Even now, there are few people who suggest that the United Nations organization should be thrown into the ash can. There still lurks a strong faith, even on the part of some Americans thoroughly familiar with the workings of the international organization. The idea persists that, in the course of years, the United Nations will function in the interest of peace and the chance exists, at least, that, in the course of years, Russia will become more cooperative.

Says U. S. Air Force Is "Hopelessly Wanting"
After five months of hearings, the President's Air Policy Commission, composed of five members, recommends a substantial increase in the Air Force, asserting that January 1, 1953, would be the ultimate date on which the United States might consider itself relatively secure against atomic attack.

Up to this "A Day," when the nation is relatively free from the danger of sustained attack, the Commission found the Air Force inadequate and said that it "is hopelessly wanting" in respect to the time when a serious danger of atomic attack will exist.

The Commission recommends that the government spend, in 1948, \$1,300,000,000 in addition to \$2,850,000,000 currently scheduled and that, in the calendar year 1949 the total be increased another \$1,300,000,000. Suggesting that our whole defense program be reviewed at the end of 1949, the Commission recommended that, if no changes for the better occurred in world affairs, the military program of the nation be increased progressively. By 1952, it added, the Air Force should have seventy active groups, supported by large National Guard and Air Reserve armadas—a total of more than 12,000 first-line planes, plus more than 8,000 held in reserve. **Veterans Cost Nation One-third Of Income**

Expenditures of the Veterans Administration were \$7,805,355,201 in the fiscal year that ended last June 30th. This compares with \$639,126,697 in 1940. It might be interesting to point out where the immense sum goes. Payment on death claims under National Service Life Insurance was \$256,732,165; vocational rehabilitation of 211,800 disabled veterans cost \$190,103,992; education and job training for 1,862,633 veterans cost \$1,534,683,005; for subsistence allowances and \$569,841,035 for tuition and equipment; readjustment allowance, sometimes termed 52-20 pay, cost \$1,447,916,418, and compensation and pension benefits to 2,354,297 living war veterans cost \$1,365,399,805, plus \$366,572,976 paid to dependents of 566,468 dead veterans. These items are interesting. They do not cover all of the payments made by the Veterans Administration but give the reader a fair idea of where the government is spending about one-seventh of its present income.

Truman's Requests Put Congress On The Spot
President Truman has given the Republican-controlled Congress something to think about in connection with his request for price control, rationing and other anti-inflation powers.

The Republicans, one may assume, are overwhelmingly against giving the President the powers that he requests. In this, they will be joined by a considerable number of Democrats. Nevertheless, those who fail to support the President will have to accept responsibility for a "destructive" slump, if it comes about.

The President's opponents will undoubtedly accuse him of playing "politics," but, nevertheless, with prices rapidly advancing to a height which guarantees a disastrous drop in the future, the President can do little more than request whatever powers he thinks it necessary to deal with the disquieting economic situation. Congress can grant the President

the authority he requests or, on the other hand, Congress can take the responsibility for arresting the inflationary trend and preventing the deflationary disaster.

Many Members Of Congress Are Fighting Marshall Plan

There are very few members of Congress who are outright in their opposition to the European Relief Plan proposed by Secretary of State George C. Marshall. Public sentiment, it seems, is strong enough to convince most of the politicians that they should approve the idea "in principle."

This does not mean that the Congress will follow the recommendations of the Secretary of State, who suggests that at least \$6,800,000,000 should be made available. Mr. Mar-

shall, who should be in a position to know the needs of Europe and the extent of assistance necessary, proposes that the United States extend such economic assistance as will accomplish the rehabilitation of the democracies of Western Europe. The amount of the appropriation is a detail but an important one.

As the Secretary of State suggests, dollars will not save Europe, but without dollars, Europe cannot be saved. Consequently, those who espouse the relief plan in principle are centering their opposition not upon the plan, but upon the amount of the appropriation, arguing that the sum

suggested is unnecessarily large and should be reduced.

BIRTHDAY SUPPER

Miss Dianne Hurdle, who is now living with her aunt, Mrs. Calvin Banks, at New Hope, entertained a number of friends at a birthday supper January 22. A beautiful birthday cake formed the centerpiece for the table. Little Dianne, the daughter of Mrs. Margaret Hurdle of Hertford, was four years old. She received many useful gifts.

Public Notice

The Perquimans County Baseball Club, operating as a member of the Albemarle League, hereby announces it will accept sealed bids for the concessions at the Memorial Field baseball games to be played during the 1948 season.

It is the desire of the Perquimans Club that three or more bids be submitted. All bids must be made for the entire lot of concessions.

All bids must be submitted to the Club Secretary, or the undersigned not later than February 15, 1948.

F. T. MATHEWS, President

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June Allyson and Peter Lawford in "GOOD NEWS"

Saturday, February 7—
Al Lash Larue and Al Fixxy St. John in "GHOST TOWN RENEGADES"

Sunday, February 8—
Gregory Peck and Joan Bennett in "THE MACOMBER AFFAIR"

Monday and Tuesday, February 9-10—
"MOM AND DAD"
Shown to Segregated Audiences Only—No Children Admitted. Women 2 and 7 P. M. Men 9 P. M. All Seats 60c

Wednesday, February 11—
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Penny Singleton in "BLONDIE IN THE DOUGH"
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