

Washington Digest

Political Trend Points Return to Conservatism

Wallace-Jones Fight Indicates Movement in Congress; 'Regular' Democrats Vie With 'Leftists' in Party.

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As we contemplate the second month of the political calendar one thing is clear and that is the strong conservative trend in the congress as a whole and within the structure of the two major parties as well.

Many straws show clearly the way the prevailing winds have been blowing. One was the Jones-Wallace controversy which soon became a senate versus Wallace - Roosevelt controversy. Another was the turn taken in the battle over the national service bill which developed into a fight against the fair employment practices policy and the closed shop. Behind both these moves there was a play of forces which marks the beginning of a struggle which will make the biggest post-war story on the domestic front.

The opposition to Wallace had many and complicated ramifications but it revealed the conservative trend both in congress as a whole and within the Democratic party.

Within the party it was a struggle between the "regulars" and the CIO political action committee adherents, something which is being reflected in the conduct of the party organization, too. When Democratic National Chairman Hannegan was questioned as to whether he was going to work with the CIO-PAC he answered that he would welcome their assistance, but in the same breath added: "and other independent organizations." The inference drawn by the reporters was that the two groups would pursue their separate ways. It is reported that Wallace was offered a deal by which his confirmation as secretary of commerce would be assured and perhaps RFC powers left under the department of commerce, if he would agree to put a "safe" man in to administer the government lending. This would have meant breaking with his CIO-PAC following and Wallace naturally refused.

That illustrates what rivalry there exists between liberal and conservative elements within the Democratic party. It is also whispered that a campaign has begun by which the Democrats hope to pare down the influence of the CIO-PAC. The scheme is to build a strong coalition between the southern Democrats and the northern big city bosses.

Compare Wallace To Bryan

The Democratic "regulars" claim they have no fear of Wallace as a successful contender for the presidential nomination in 1948, although they admit that he is the one man in public life, now that Willkie is gone, whose leadership would be most likely to unite both liberal and radical support. But they claim he is another William Jennings Bryan, much more intellectual but with the same fate in store for him: often a bridesmaid, never a bride.

The Wallace supporters talk quite differently. They say any man who could rally 42% votes last summer at Chicago could get enough of the necessary additional 10% by 1948 and that every time bad, big business assaults him as it did through the friends of Jesse Jones, his stock with the "common man" and "little business" whom and which he constantly champions, will go higher.

In other words, the louder the Wall street "wolf-pack" howls the more the CIO "pack" grins. This reasoning is based on those two somewhat paradoxical observations "we love him for the enemies he makes" and "every knock a boost." That is the "leftist" reasoning, and whether or not the "regulars" think it is sound, they have to take it into consideration. In any case the opposition to Wallace on both sides of both houses of congress shows the conservative color of the legislative body.

As to the party organizations, they have indicated that they intend to put their faith in works. On the same day (January 23) both Republican and Democratic national chairmen announced that their respective political machines would start running on a full-time basis.

As I said, Mr. Hannegan revealed his attitude toward the left-wingers of his party by implying that Messrs. Hillman, Murray, et al would paddle their own canoes.

BARBS... by Baukhage

A headline says the Japanese Imperial Diet is to be strengthened. But where will they get the rice?

German Volksturm troops are now wearing museum uniforms.

There is a shortage of telephone operators at the capitol. The time has come for all good men to come to the aid of the party line.

GOP Stays To Right

There was a significant development at the Republican committee meeting, too. The single challenge to Mr. Brownell dealt with the question of thunder from the left and it apparently fell on entirely deaf ears. The one unfriendly voice at the meeting came from a supporter of Harold Stassen of Minnesota, the prospective liberal candidate for the Republican presidential nomination. The revolter arose to charge that Mr. Brownell had alienated the labor vote because of his connection with a law firm which handled the business of large corporations. Nobody in the committee denied the soft impeachment publicly.

It is whispered that the Republicans are not worrying about an appeal to labor for they have a theory that they can attract the vote of the returned soldier because they say he will lean to the right. This is the way one of the "regulars" expressed it to me.

"There is something about a uniform," he said, "that makes a man patriotic and conservative. He is anxious to settle down and raise a family. He wants to have property of his own. He's tired of being housed and fed and clothed on government issue. Also he is through taking chances; over there he thought of America as home and home means something solid, sane and safe. The Republican party is the natural place for him," the big-wig concluded.

I am not saying that the reasoning of either party is correct but I am reporting what appears to be the general atmosphere both on Capitol hill and elsewhere where the politicians gather to mull over affairs.

As to the temper of congress as a whole as illustrated in both the Wallace and the national service controversies we can see that the former southern Democrat-Republican coalition is working as smoothly as ever and keen observers predict that its hand will be shown whenever similar questions are at issue in the future.

Just where the President stands is not yet discernible. But there again, there is a strong feeling on Capitol hill that when he replaced "Dr. New Deal" with "Dr. Win-the-War," as he himself put it, he had no intention of placing the country under the care of the former medico when peace returned. This is the way one old timer who has supported the administration on most issues for the last 12 years put it to me:

"The President says he is still steering a little left of center. He may think so. But I can tell you that whether he knows it or not the old ship of state is going to nose to starboard this session."

And that would seem to be what is happening if we judge from the first leg of the voyage. In any case there is going to be a fight to keep a conservative hand on the old ship's tiller.

SHANGRI-LA IN PACIFIC

The army air force has discovered a new nation, a tiny little community, high up in the mountains of New Guinea. No white man is known to have visited it before, and not even neighboring natives had been there. Surrounded on two sides by mountains rising to the height of 15 or 16 thousand feet, the third side by an impassable swamp, the valley is cut off on the fourth side by a jungle-like forest several miles wide. The river runs through the valley, which is about 5 by 20 miles, and then disappears, apparently into the earth. The lost tribe living in the valley has developed an extensive irrigation system, army observers report. At first they were frightened by planes - now they wave at our airmen, who come quite low and are able to report that the native clothing consists entirely of strings of beads worn around the neck.

Because the land is so extensively cultivated, there is no large stretch suitable for a landing, and the air force has enough to do these days to prevent it from landing troops by parachutes. But ethnologists and other scientists will make a bee-line for New Guinea as soon as the war is over.

Ice Fishing a Popular Sport



The "compleat angler" is undeterred by snow, sleet, ice or any of Mother Nature's vagaries. In the frozen wastes of Maine, the sport has become an institution. Climax of the expedition is, of course, the eating of the fish. The fire is built right on the ice and the fish cleaned and fried on the spot.

New Non-Stop Flight Record



Flying non-stop from Prestwick, Scotland, to La Guardia field, New York, completing the 3,315-mile flight in less than 17 hours, the crew of an air transport command Douglas C-54 established a new record and was the first regularly scheduled cargo plane to make the non-stop flight. The crew was made up of civilians.

Basketball Aboard Carrier



Navy pilots using the forward elevator well of a task force 58 carrier for their regular basketball game. These pilots took to the air daily, during the Guam occupation, to strike enemy troops.

Home Life on Western Front



Left, Pvt. Forrest Parker, Elizabeth, N. Y., and Sgt. Elmar Murar, Youngstown, Ohio, read an American comic during a lull near Guedorf, Luxembourg. Right, Pvt. Thomas O'Brien, Middleboro, Mass., enjoys his cold rations in the snow on the western front.

Under Luzon Fire



These drawings were made by Norman Millett Thomas, Portland, Me., as a member of the coast guard aiding in the landings at Luzon. They were drawn during the Luzon mopping up by American troops. This particular beachhead was secured at great loss.

Boy Hero Reenlists



Francis DeSales Glover, Pittsburgh, who was discharged from the army air force when officials learned he had enlisted at 14. He had won distinguished flying cross, air medal with four clusters, purple heart, Presidential citation and wings. Now 17, with his mother's consent, he has enlisted for combat air service.

Badge of Courage



Stricken with blood from wounds and burns, U. S. sailor reports at sick bay for treatment following a naval battle in the Lingayen Gulf.

Capture Clark Field



Capture of Clark field on Luzon with its 13 airstrips now gives the Pacific air force a streamlined land air base from which to attack the Jap-held bases of China.

SEWING CIRCLE NEEDLECRAFT

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ASK ME ANOTHER?
A General Quiz

The Questions

1. In what year did the Capitol in Washington, D. C., burn?
2. Through which country in South America does the equator run?
3. Which is wider at its widest point, North America or South America?
4. What was the nationality of the man who devised the universal language, Esperanto?
5. What is a limited edition of a book?
6. What did Sarah Bernhardt use as her motto?
7. What state in the United States is bound by only one other state?
8. What is the average depth of the ocean?
9. Which is heavier, the sun or the earth?
10. By what other name are the West Indies known?

The Answers

1. In 1814 (during the War of 1812).
2. Colombia.
3. South America.
4. Russian (Dr. L. Zamenhof).
5. An edition of which the publisher guarantees there will be no more copies printed after the first stipulated and comparatively small amount.
6. Quand meme (In spite of all).
7. Maine (by New Hampshire).
8. About 2 1/2 miles.
9. Scientists say the sun is 700 times heavier than the total weight of the 9 planets.
10. The Antilles.

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