

Washington Digest

Labor's Interests Fused With Average Citizen's

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WASHINGTON.—"There never will be a Labor party in the U. S." In the aftermath of the election, I couldn't help cogitating these words, spoken to me several years ago by an official who helped write some of the most important New Deal labor legislation a decade ago.



Baukhage

The reasons given were that workers in America were individuals first and members of labor unions afterward—they were primarily citizens with group interests common to other citizens. They didn't look at themselves as a political unit.

In analyzing the new congress, some people have made the mistake of pointing to the defeat of candidates conspicuously endorsed by the CIO-PAC and the victory of those marked for purge. Then, because the PAC is an institution which has behind it one of the two big international union organizations, these people imply that because of the defeat of the PAC, labor itself was defeated. As a matter of fact, labor was not beaten by any opposing group. It was not a question of labor, politically organized, meeting organized political opposition. It was a case of a lot of men who happen to belong to unions plus a lot of others who don't going to the polls and utterly disregarding the wishes of a group which had tried to attach itself to the labor union and thus proving (as my friend said) that American labor is an American citizen first and a lot of other things next and when he sits in his union meeting he is a member of that local and not a member of a political party.

I haven't the slightest doubt that many an American citizen, who otherwise might not have voted, did so because of the energetic efforts of persons inspired by the CIO-PAC booklets and contacts, the chief aim of which was to get voters to the polls. I am equally certain that of these voters who exercised their franchise chiefly because of CIO-PAC nudging, many voted quite the opposite to what the CIO-PAC wished.

GOP Win Stems From Many Causes
But this election was something more than a revolt against the frank effort of CIO to reward those who had espoused specific measures or to punish those who didn't. When Guffy, Meads and Murdock were mowed down in the senate, men who certainly spoke the speech as labor considered it should be spoken, when 20 congressmen, marked for the purge at the PAC meeting in Atlantic City last spring, were all re-elected with one exception (and that was Representative Slaughter, beaten by the President's own special efforts in the primaries); when things like that happen, you know that plenty of perfectly good union members in perfectly good standing were voting against the preachments of the PAC. Perhaps if it had not been for two other circumstances PAC's views might not have been so vehemently opposed up and down the line. Both have to do with good old American customs which spring from frontier days when emergency situations had to be met with emergency measures for the sake of simple self-preservation. One of those customs which has precedent implied all through the constitution is that too much power isn't good for anybody, and in a republic you don't elect people for life, or put one party in power indefinitely.

That is one thing that accounted for most of the votes against the "ins" regardless of the candidates' persuasions. Another factor which added to the landslide quality of the vote is the old law of action and reaction. Americans have a habit of going to extremes. They have certain tastes inherited from pioneers that make them like their music loud, their horses fast, their stakes high, their goals worth winning. They are not as fast to start either a fight or a frolic as some nations, but when they do get "het up"—oh,

my! Failure to recognize that fact has caused what was the greatest military nation of its time to be licked twice in a generation.

It was this characteristic, I feel sure, which caused Americans of all sorts to swing much farther toward the conservative side than they normally would have done. Their patience had been exhausted by the efforts of a streaming minority to implant Communism on our soil and thus attempt to bring to this country the very thing from which America was supposed to be the escape, tyranny of the minority.

Of late it has become the style to sneer at the majority. The "vulgar herd" and the "mob" were the contemptuous epithets of kings. The modern majority-scorner is more careful of his language. He phrases it so that it will appeal to the "peasant and worker" or to the readers of persuasive and expensive page advertisements in metropolitan papers. The language differs when it comes from the extreme right and the extreme left, but its purpose is the same: minority rule. Totalitarianism as produced by a Hitler or a Stalin is not too different from that more subtly suggested by the powerful pressure group in a capitalistic country.

The 80th congress has a tougher job than the 79th. We hope it will be able to handle it. It was not elected to smash labor. It was elected to carry out a mandate (among others) to help keep labor from smashing itself.

Parties Split On Hot Issues

It may be that after the next election we can get down to the old party lines again, but it can't be done yet. There is still a pretty bad scrambling of Democrats and Republicans on many issues which will split parties as it has before.

It will be a relief if we do get back to honest labels again.

The British are still having their troubles on this score. The Conservatives, who are the "outs," have discussed changing their name. They have done it before. They have been known as the "Tory," the "Unionist" and the "National" as well as the "Conservative." Sir Hartley Shawcross, brilliant British prosecutor, taunted them about this recently and even went as far as calling them "neo-Nazis."

This sounded strange from those dignified lips which hurled one of the most restrained and yet most devastating charges against the Nuernberg war criminals that I have ever heard in a courtroom. It would take a pretty inflated imagination to see in the great majority of American or British conservatives, a similarity to the Nazis—a different breed of cats!

Marianne Ready To Forgive Fritz

'Twas the day after Christmas in Frankfurt, Germany, 1945, when all through the ether there was static enough to make a trans-Atlantic broadcast impossible. I had an exclusive story, so I sent it as a dispatch to David Wills, my substitute, who was sitting at the microphone in Washington to cope with such contingencies.

The story (I said in my dispatch) would probably be denied, and I admitted it seemed incredible, for it revealed a plan of the French government to help re-populate France by admitting German war prisoners to citizenship. It seemed impossible, that, with the ancient Franco-German hatred so recently fanned to new fury, Marianne would take her "traditional enemy" to her bosom.

The story was broadcast and that was the end, until, some 10 months later, it was confirmed in a matter-of-fact statement of the French minister of population, then touring America.

A copy of the original dispatch which I exhumed from the files reflects my feeling in its incredulity as I stood amidst the ruins of a German city with the memories of a twice-devastated France clear in my mind. The idea now apparently is accepted without comment.

How well the plan will succeed, I do not know. But to me it is a comforting thought that it has been proposed because it shows so clearly how war hates are artificial things, and bear no part in the relationships between individuals.



BLAST WRECKS SCHOOL . . . Crowds of anxious parents and volunteer rescue workers gathered quickly at the Baroda consolidated school at Baroda, Mich., following a boiler explosion in the basement of the school which killed one child and injured at least 16 others. When reports were first received at Chicago rescue planes with medical supplies were rushed to the scene.



HONOR YANK PIGEON . . . Credited with flying 20 miles in 20 minutes with a message that saved the lives of 100 Allied soldiers during the Italian campaign, "G.I. Joe," a U. S. army pigeon receives Britain's highest award for animal valor, the Dickin Medal, in a ceremony at the historic tower of London. It was the first time a bird or animal ever received this medal. Maj. Gen. Sir Charles Keightley is decorating the pigeon. Insert is a close-up of "G.I. Joe."



ESCAPE IN FRANKFURT . . . Although it must seem unusually tame to people who have looked aloft in terror as Allied bombers showered down their loads of death and destruction, the aerial show in battered Frankfurt proved a main attraction for war-weary citizens who tried to forget a multitude of troubles that beset them.



IN THE GOOD OLD WINTER TIME . . . They are traveling a mile a minute on their water skis at Cypress Gardens, Fla., but Bill Sills, who hails from Anaheim, Calif. (and if this be treason, make the most of it) finds time to put "the eye" on Nancy Stille, Florida aquatic star. If the California chamber of commerce wants to know why Bill is vacationing in Florida, away from his own sun-baked ballpark, the Florida chamber of commerce will answer.



PORTIA'S PORTIA . . . Adele I. Springer, New York City, recently elected head of the National Association of Women Lawyers, has called upon men and women of America for united action to establish law and order.



ADMIRAL BYRD HONORED . . . Rear Adm. Richard Evelyn Byrd planning another Antarctic expedition, who was recently presented a gold star in lieu of a second Legion of Merit for outstanding secret service during recent war years.



NOBEL WINNER . . . Prof. Donald W. Kerst, 35, University of Illinois physicist, who has been announced as a 1946 winner of the Nobel prize for his contribution to physics on his research pertaining to atomic science.



FRENCH HOPE . . . Displaying his double might with which he hopes to take American pugilistic honors and earn some of the good old American currency, Marcel Cerdan, French boxer, shows his fists at American embassy while awaiting visa.



SWEDISH HEIR . . . Six-month-old Prince Carl Gustaf, third in line of succession to the Swedish throne, poses for first photo. The young prince is the first son of Prince Gustaf Adolf and Princess Sibylla.



PROSPECTIVE POLICY
WASHINGTON.—With Republicans gathering in the capital to begin organizing their own G.O.P.-ruled congress for the first time in 16 years, here is a merry-go-round view of what the country can expect during the next two years:

FOREIGN POLICY—On the surface there will be no outward change. Later, however, important changes will become apparent. The British already are worried over our swing to the right.

BUDGET—The three largest expenditures of government are for army-navy, veterans and service on the national debt. These can't be pruned — unless the Republicans want to cut down the army and navy, which they are not likely to do. Easiest pruning job, therefore, is on foreign loans and relief. UNRRA will be the first to go. A 200 million dollar loan to Italy, planned by Truman, will be ditched next. Other loans to European and Latin American countries will be axed.

This is where one change in foreign policy comes in. The Italian loan was planned in order to help struggling Italian democracy and prevent Italy's swing to Russian Communism. Midwest Republicans, many of them still privately isolationist, will veto this.

However, the end of several wartime expenditures such as price subsidies and service separation payments should permit balancing the budget.

TAXES—Despite current talk of tax relief for small wage earners, there will be only minor tax cuts. One of two things will happen. Either expenditures will be such as to forbid major tax reduction. Or a cut will be made in the lower brackets, after which G.O.P. congressmen, pressured by higher-bracket groups, won't be able to resist the temptation to get aboard the gravy train. If they add tax reduction for the higher brackets, it means that Truman will veto the bill.

TARIFFS—Midwest Republicans would like to go back to the old Hoover high tariffs. Some of the eastern Republicans from manufacturing regions will go along with them. If they get going in earnest, however, there will be a stalemate. Truman will veto.

LABOR—One Republican faction favors immediate and outright repeal of the entire Wagner act. However, they know this would bring a veto and that the veto probably would be sustained. Another G.O.P. group wants to avoid antagonizing labor. Certain AFL leaders, especially John L. Lewis and Bill Hutchinson, carpenters' boss, helped them win the election, and they want to keep labor happy for 1948. Therefore, the following compromise is probable:

1. The Case bill will be passed once again, and this time will become law. Even if Truman vetoes, which is doubtful, southern Democrats and the strong G.O.P. majority will be able to override the White House.
2. Senator Ball's bill, putting labor unions under the anti-trust laws, also will be adopted.

IMMIGRATION—Republicans are traditionally hostile to immigration and minority groups, and the house immigration committee now is inherited by Rep. Noah Mason of Illinois, well-known witch-hunter. Displaced persons in Europe will get little comfort from Mason. A revived and stronger "Dies committee" can be expected—probably in both houses of congress.

AGRICULTURE—No major change in the farm program is in prospect for the next two years. However, you will hear the same cry for parity prices on farm products. Co-ordination of all farm agencies will be demanded.

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK—Prices generally will rise during the next six months, although not so rapidly, and with some commodities such as food and textiles dropping in the winter. Food prices should slump after the Argentine and Australian crops are harvested in February. Clothing and furniture prices should come down soon, certainly after Christmas. Autos will remain scarce for some time.

Rent control will be dumped within about six months, although the Republicans will be too smart to repeal it outright. They will pass the buck back to the individual states, which will mean the virtual end of rent controls, since state legislatures are notoriously susceptible to real-estate lobbies.

That, in brief, is the future G.O.P. congressional picture.

CAPITAL CHAFF
The big brass of the navy department has been pleading with Adm. W. M. Miller, retired, now TWA vice president, to return to his old job as chief of public information. But it's no dice. Miller quit because of meddling advice from Vice Admiral Carpenter. . . . Death in office is the only thing that has ever removed a president of the United States while serving his term. Andrew Johnson escaped impeachment by one vote in 1868, but no president has ever resigned.

Gems of Thought
TO LIVE in the presence of great truths and eternal laws, to be led by permanent ideals—that is what keeps a man patient when the world ignores him, and calm and unspoiled when the world praises him.—Dr. A. Peabody.

I find the great thing in this world is not so much where we stand, as in what direction we are moving.—Oliver Wendell Holmes.

Regret is an appalling waste of energy; you can't build on it; it's only good for wallowing in.—Katherine Mansfield.

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BARBS . . . by Baukhage

What's happened to the man who used to brag about never having gone to college but having three college men working for him? When the G.I. students get through, a man who hasn't been to college will be a rarity.

Some of the girls who want milk posts aren't really cold at all.

The reason some of the Democrats wanted the president to resign after the Republican victory may have been because they were too young to remember there were two parties in the country.

All's well that ends well, as the man said when he struck water in the desert.