

Looking at WASHINGTON

Armed Services Debate New Nation Shall Arm

The battle between the armed services over the relative position to be occupied by each in the scheme of national defense, has produced a situation in Congress which threatens, according to Secretary of Defense James V. Forrestal, to "unbalance" our military establishment.

With universal military training before them, many Members of Congress have declared themselves in favor of a seventy-group Air Force, which, the Secretary charges, "is a device to avoid U. M. T. and other aspects of a sound, long-range program."

As a result of the strong sentiment in Congress for a larger Air Force, the Defense Secretary has agreed to an expansion from fifty-five to sixty combat groups, but he maintains that the "real issue" is the balanced planning of our military program.

Mr. Forrestal takes issue with those who believe that the nation should have a large Air Force, with minor departments for the Army and Navy, asserting that the other branches are just as necessary for the national safety and maintaining that the Air Force, in the event of war, could not conduct sustained operations without the support of both Navy and Army.

The writer of this article has not seen an advocate of unification for the armed services. The present squabble illustrates one of the dangers. We now have an effort underway in which the various services are strenuously competing to dominate the preparedness program of the country.

If the advocates of air power win, the nation's defense will depend largely upon aircraft. This may be the correct solution of our problem, but the chance exists that it might not be. Consequently, we think the United States should maintain a strong Navy, a strong Army, along with a strong Air Force and thus be in a position to meet any military threat of the future.

The United States, which happens to be the richest nation in the world, can afford adequate defense. It can bear the burden of increased strength in all three branches to be prepared for whatever eventualities of war disclose.

We opposed unification of the armed services because of the belief that the three services, if left alone to develop strategy and tactics, would give the nation a three-fold defense. Quite possibly, one or the other branches might be totally in error as to what kind of war will occur.

Certainly, the French Army made this mistake and lost France. It is not probable that three armed services, each planning its own type of warfare, would each make a similar error. If our defense is dominated by one type of thinking, however, it is quite possible for the fatal mistake to lead to the defeat of this country.

Lobbyists Multiply And Seem to Grow Fat

One of the developments of the political life of the United States, both in connection with the Federal Government and the various state governments, is the sharp increase in lobbying as an occupation.

The background of a lobbyist is the belief that a genial, glad-hander, with an unlimited expense account, can "make friends and influence people," meaning those who have taken office to legislate for the good of the people. The additional background, is the admitted success of lobbyists, as a class, in persuading elected officials to vote this or that way on particular measures.

Lobbying as a political institution in the United States would wither on the vine if the elected representatives of the people were so set in their political principles that they would follow them whenever legislation is up for consideration.

Because many solons do not have a clear idea of the fundamental principles upon which the Government of the United States rests, it is comparatively easy for lobbyists to persuade them that "votes can be had" by following the helpful suggestions of the paid representatives of particular interests.

Some improvements in the situation has been made by the passage of legislation to compel lobbyists to register. Certainly, if men advise statesmen on public matters, it is just as well for the legislators to understand that they are performing a service for compensation. It is quite different, however, when lobbyists profess to represent the interests of the public at large when, as a matter of fact, they are the paid agents of a particular group.

We do not know that the problem of the lobbyists can be solved by legislation. We are quite sure it can be solved if the people who elect legislators make it their business to see that those elected are intelligent, courageous and ready to follow their convictions.

**Big Steel Cuts Prices
And Resets Wage Increase**
In April, 1947, the United Steel Workers of America and the United States Steel Corporation negotiated an agreement, giving the workers a

wage increase and providing that either party could reopen the question of wages at the end of the first year.

The steel workers, through their president, Philip Murray, asked for such negotiations. The company declined to make the wage increase, declaring that it would make necessary a general advance "in our steel prices." Thus, the negotiations come to an end but the union answers that it will abide by the two-year, no-strike contract.

In public statements, issued after the end of the negotiations, the leaders of both sides gave their views. Benjamin E. Fairless, president of the steel company, announced some price decreases, amounting to about \$25,000,000 a year, saying that "cost and prices" are too high and that industry and labor should cooperate to avoid further increases in costs which would further lower purchasing power.

In addition, Mr. Fairless asserts that increase in the prices of steel products, announced since the agreement made in 1947 with the workers, had not kept up with costs and that the profits of the company for the first quarter of 1948 will be lower than the same period in 1947. Moreover, he cited figures to show that the pay of steel workers advanced 91.7 per cent between 1940 and 1948 and that this advance was in excess of the increase in the cost of living during the period.

Philip Murray, in his statement, points out that the company enjoyed profits of \$153,000,000 last year after paying Federal income taxes and that the decrease in prices, announced by the company, does not even equal the increases made in February, 1948, alone. Mr. Murray stresses the fact that in 1947 steel industry profits increased between \$450,000,000 and \$500,000,000.

The union leader also says that price increases made by the company since the agreement was signed with the workers had raised prices of finished steel by an average of \$11.32 per ton. This is equal, he says, to an increased revenue of approximately \$230,000,000. The decreases proposed by the corporation amount to less than \$1.24 per ton.

Mr. Murray also asserts that the man hours worked by the corporation's employees in 1947 increased by 18 per cent over 1946, but that "steel

output increased by nearly 34 per cent."

We call attention to the positions taken by these industrial leaders because steel plays a dominant role in American industry. It is important for the people to understand the arguments advanced because, in the long run, public opinion is the final arbiter of economic disputes.

The steel company, in reducing prices and rejecting a wage increase, moves on the assumption that similar action by other industries will lower the prices and the cost of living. This, it says in effect, will result in an increase in wages because the money

received by workers will have greater buying power. Obviously, if the course of events in the next year demonstrates that American business leaders effectively implement such a policy, with the economic results cited, there will be some basis of fact to support the argument advanced by Mr. Fairless.

If, on the other hand, the industrial tycoons of the nation fail to cooperate to stop inflation, there will be little justification for the argument advanced by the steel company executive. If, at the end of the year, the cost of living does not move downward in response to what the

industrialists undertake to do, the stage will undoubtedly be set for a strike in the steel industry. Moreover, if the profits of the corporation increase because reduced prices are not far-reaching enough, there will be ample justification for the steel workers, at the end of their contract, to demand substantial wage increases or go on a strike.

FAMILY REUNION

An Umphlett family reunion was held at the home of Seth Umphlett on Sunday, May 9, honoring their mother, Mrs. Mattie Umphlett on Mother's Day. A delicious picnic

dinner was served in the yard of the home. Those attending were Mr. and Mrs. Freeman Umphlett and children, James, Gladys and Billy, Luther Umphlett, Mr. and Mrs. Earl Russell, Mr. and Mrs. Seth Umphlett and children, William, Seth, Marjorie and Dickie, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Lane and son, Julian, Mr. and Mrs. Jim Stokely and family, Kay Frances, Jimmy and Ruth Anne, Mrs. Mattie Umphlett, Mrs. Trim Sawyer and Master Gene Banks.

Man's real life is happy, chiefly because he is ever expecting that it soon will be so.

—E. A. Poe.

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1. Salaries: "First of all, I wish to see the State pay salaries that will attract and hold in the State's service the most competent and consecrated teachers. To accomplish this, there must be a substantial increase in teachers' salaries."

2. More Teachers: "We must lighten the teacher's pupil load . . . A reduction in the pupil load can be accomplished only through the employment of more teachers. This will cost money but it will be money well spent."

3. State School Building Aid: "Some of the surplus now on hand in the State treasury, should be used in aiding less fortunate communities, particularly rural areas, to provide adequate school buildings."

4. School Health: "We should have in North Carolina a school health program that will insure to every child in every section, however disadvantaged, a fair chance at a healthier life."

5. Additional Progress: "A State School Commission, composed of intelligent and public-spirited citizens, is now making a thorough survey of our state school system, of our educational needs and of our ability to meet them. Its recommendations will have my sympathetic consideration."



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