Current Events in Review

By Edward W. Pickard

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Supreme Court Upholds Three New Deal Acts

THREE New Deal acts of legislation were upheld by the Supreme court in decisions that indicated that tribunal was becoming almost liberal enough to suit the administration. Two of them were unanimous. The third and most significant was rendered by five of the justices, with four dissenting. This last opinion was given in the case of the Washington state law establishing a minimum wage for women and the court reversed its position taken a year ago in upsetting similar legislation passed by the New York legislature. Justice Owen J. Roberts had swung over to the other side, but Justices Sutherland, Butler, McReynolds and Van Devanter dissented from the present judgment, declaring that "the meaning of the Constitution does not change with the ebb and flow of economic events." This was a slap at the majority opinion, which was read by Chief Justice Hughes.

The court unanimously upheld the provisions of the railway labor act requiring railroads to engage in collective bargaining with their employees for the purpose of settling labor disputes. The opinion was read by Justice Stone and was closely studied by leaders of the administration who hoped to glean from it an indication of what the court might decide concerning the Wagner labor relations act, now in litigation. The Wagner act does not apply to railway workers.

The decision was handed down in the case of the Virginian Railway company and upheld a ruling by the Fourth circuit court of appeals directing the company to engage in collective bargaining.

"In considering the propriety of the equitable relief granted here," Justice Stone said, "we cannot ignore the judgment of congress, deliberately expressed in legislation, that where the obstruction of the company is removed, the meeting of employers and employees at the conference table is a powerful aid to industrial peace.

"Moreover, the resources of the railway labor act are not exhausted if negotiation fails in the first instance to result in agreement."

If disputes concerning changes in rates of pay, rules or working conditions, the decision added, are not adjusted, either party could invoke the services of the national (railway) mediation board.

The Supreme court also upheld the constitutionality of the new Frazier - Lemke farm mortgage moratorium act. The decision, read by Justice Louis D. Brandeis, whose opinion condemned the earlier Frazier-Lemke act, was unanimous.

The law was passed to replace a similar statute which the court held unconstitutional in the spring of 1935. Like the earlier law, it is designed to permit insolvent farmers to adjust their debts and to retain possession of their property for a three-year period during which they might redeem it.

Compromise Is Urged on Supreme Court Bill

SENATORS, some fifteen in number, who have not committed themselves on the President's bill to enlarge the Supreme court, are earnestly trying to bring about a compromise that would enable them to go along with Mr. Roosevelt without laying themselves open to charges of supporting a plan to pack the court. Several compromise measures have been devised, one of which is that of Senator Carl Hatch of New Mexico, a Democrat and a member of the judiciary committee that is holding hearings on the administration bill.

Senator Hatch

Mr. Hatch proposes to modify the President's bill so that no more than two additional justices could be appointed in any one year. Furthermore, it would provide for a flexible court with a membership varying between fifteen and nine judges. The additional appointments, made upon the failure of justices past 70 to retire, would not become permanent increases. They would be offset by failure to fill an equal number of vacancies caused by subsequent retirements.

Though the opposition claims at least 42 votes, its leaders privately admit that congress probably will pass some kind of bill which will permit the President to change the present complexion of the Supreme court. Even if he is empowered to add only two new members, that would be an administration victory; and it is likely that death or voluntary retirement will give him a chance to put on the bench yet others better suited, in his opinion, to deal with problems of the present.

Further witnesses for the opposition, appearing before the judiciary committee, included Dr. Irving Griswold, professor of constitutional law at Harvard; Dorothy Thompson, prominent journalist; Walter F. Dodd of Chicago, constitutional authority, and Dean Henry M. Bates of the Michigan university law school.

Eminent Men Are Named for the Coronation

THREE famous Americans, with their aides, will represent the United States at the coronation of King George VI of Great Britain in Westminster Abbey May 12. They were selected by President Roosevelt and are: James W. Gerard, former ambassador to Germany, special ambassador; Gen. John J. Pershing, commander of the A. E. F. in the war, and Admiral Hugh Rodman, U. S. N. retired, special representatives. Curtis Bok of Philadelphia will be secretary of mission. Col. James L. Collins will be aid to Gen. Pershing, and Commander Frank E. Beatty will be aid to Admiral Rodman.

Gen. Pershing

The battleship New York, flagship of the Sixth battle squadron with the grand fleet in British waters during the World war, will participate in the international naval review off Spithead on May 20.

No Government Action Yet on Sitdown Strikes

UNDER pressure from his advisers to take a public stand concerning the sit-down strike, President Roosevelt immediately after his return from Warm Springs held a conference with Vice President Garner, Senate Majority Leader Joe Robinson, Speaker Bankhead and House Majority Leader Sam Rayburn. At its close Senator Robinson, presumably voicing Mr. Roosevelt's views, said:

"The government cannot initiate action under the circumstances thus far presented. It is felt that the sit-down strike situation in a general sense is improving.

"There are two conditions under which federal action may be invoked in case of acute strike conditions; namely where federal laws have been violated or where federal property, including the mails, is interfered with.

"Unless one of these conditions exists, federal intervention or action, under the Constitution and decision of the courts, is not warranted.

"The second condition is cases where state authorities, under the federal law, ask the services of federal agencies in the preservation of law and order and in the prevention of violence.

"Neither condition has so far arisen. Except in instances where interstate commerce is interfered with, where a federal law is disregarded, the federal government does not, and cannot under the Constitution, initiate action."

Contrasting Views of Miss Perkins and Green

SECRETARY OF LABOR FRANCES PERKINS, replying to criticism of her views on sit-down strikes by Representative McCormack of Massachusetts, wrote him:

"I think that it is the duty of the secretary of labor to point out the problems, purposes and intentions, as well as the conditions, of the wage earners of the United States of America, so far as these are understood or expressed.

Sec'y Perkins

"So I think it is my duty to say that careful inquiry indicates that the sit-down strikes do not reflect any widespread movement to defy the law or impair civil government or change current conceptions of property rights. The objectives are the usual objectives of unions in labor disputes."

That the sit-down strike involves "grave implications detrimental to labor's interests" is the view of the American Federation of Labor as stated by President William Green. This for two reasons:

"First, public opinion will not support sit-down strikes. That means labor loses public support when any part of it engages in sit-down strikes. Without such support organized labor cannot win strikes or establish and maintain itself as a vital force in the economic and industrial life of the nation. Labor cannot afford to lose the support of public opinion.

"Second, temporary advantages gained through sit-down strikes will inevitably lead to permanent injury. The public generally will not long tolerate the illegal seizure of property. If persisted in, it will through state and federal law-making bodies force enactment of legislation providing for compulsory arbitration, the incorporation of unions and other repressive forms of legislation."

Negotiations to Settle the Chrysler Strike

UNDER the persuasion of Gov. Frank Murphy of Michigan, John L. Lewis, head of the C. I. O., and Walter P. Chrysler, chairman of the Chrysler motor corporation, were brought together in more or less peaceful conference at the state capitol in Lansing. The immediate result was an agreement that the sitdown strikers should evacuate the eight Chrysler plants in Detroit, and that the corporation should not resume production during the period of negotiations. Six thousand strikers had held possession of the plants since March 8 in defiance of court orders and the governor, as in the case of the General Motors strike, had been extremely reluctant to authorize forceful methods of enforcing the law. He had, however, insisted that the men must obey the law and court orders, and the concession by Lewis was a victory for the governor, as well as for the corporation which had declared it would not negotiate while the men held its plants. Mr. Chrysler also has asserted the company would not enter into any agreement recognizing any one group as sole bargaining agency for all employees.

Congressman B. K. Focht of Pennsylvania Dies

THE small Republican group in the house lost one of its members by the death of Representative Benjamin K. Focht of Lewisburg, Pa. Becoming suddenly ill while dining at a Washington hotel, he was taken to a hospital and passed away from heart disease.

Mr. Focht, who was editor of the Lewisburg Saturday News, began his public service in 1907 as a member of the 60th congress. The present was his tenth term, but he had not served consecutively. He was seventy-four years of age and was the son of a Lutheran minister. His widow, a son, and a daughter survive.

"Volunteers" in Spanish War Stir Nations to Anger

SPAIN'S civil war is becoming to a great extent a war between Italy and France fought on Spanish soil, and both those nations are exasperated and enraged, while Great Britain anxiously strives to avert an open breach. Italy, too, is now furious against the British because English newspapers taunted her with the fact that Italian volunteers were defeated by French volunteers in recent victories won by the loyalists northeast of Madrid. Count Dino Grandi, Italian ambassador to London, told the subcommittee of the international committee on non-intervention that he would not discuss the withdrawal of foreign volunteers from Spain and that not a single Italian fighting in the Spanish war would be ordered home until the conflict ended.

Dino Grandi

France's response was quick and startling. Foreign Minister Yvon Delbos proposed to British Ambassador Sir George Clerk that France and Britain assume a naval blockade of Spain to keep Italian troops from landing to join the fascists. The British and French governments thereupon agreed, with full knowledge of other European powers within the non-intervention committee, on "all points" of a program to make non-intervention completely effective and decided it was imperative to prevent, even by force, any further Italian landings. No decision was reached to send warships at once for this purpose.

The defeat of the Italians on the Guadelajara front was followed by an almost equally severe setback in southern Spain where Italian volunteers also were said to have made a poor showing. These events seemed to cool down somewhat the fiery ardor of Mussolini, and the English and French statesmen were hopeful that a general outbreak in Europe had been at least postponed.

Japan Rejects 14 Inch Limit on Naval Guns

JAPAN has rejected a British proposal for the limitation of naval guns to 14 inch caliber unless Great Britain and the United States agree to reduce the size of their larger warships. This decision was imparted to Sir Robert Clive, British ambassador to Tokio, by Foreign Minister Naotake Sato, and it leaves America, Britain and France, signatories to the London treaty, free to arm their ships with 16 inch guns. The British are said to have decided guns of that caliber are not practical at sea, but they are favored by United States navy engineers. Britain's five new battleships will carry 14 inch guns.

Death of John Drinkwater, British Poet and Dramatist

JOHN DRINKWATER, distinguished British poet, novelist and playwright, died suddenly of a heart attack in his sleep at his home in London. He was only fifty-four years old and seemed in normal health.

Drinkwater's historical plays were widely known in the United States, particularly "Abraham Lincoln," and "Robert E. Lee." He had just completed a motion picture for the coronation of King George VI of which he was both author and producer. The film deals with "the king and his people" from the time of Queen Victoria to the present.

What Irvin S. Cobb thinks about:

Departed Spirits.

SANTA MONICA, CALIF.—Continued failure of mediums to claim the reward offered by the late Harry Houdini, who provided a test for proof of communication with the spirit world, makes me think of a thing that happened at the first seance ever held down in my neck of the woods.

The operator was summoning the spirits of departed dear ones to order. A lanky youth out of the bottoms desired to speak with his father.

Irvin S. Cobb

Presently, a shadowy figure appeared between the cabinet's dark curtains and a voice uttered muffled sounds.

"Is that you, Paw?" inquired the seeker.

"Yes, son," answered the voice.

"Paw, air you in heaven?"

Seemingly startled, the ghostly apparition hesitated a moment before giving what might be taken for an affirmative sound.

"Paw, air you an angel?" demanded the son.

Again an embarrassing delay, then a diffident mumble.

"A regular angel with wings and everything?"

Once more a low grunt.

"Say, Paw," cried the youth, perking up, "whut do you measure from tip to tip?"

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Matrimonial Adventures.

HERETOFORE some of the authorities have held that the first two years were the hardest in matrimonial adventures, but the peak of the danger period for married couples is now set at the sixth year by Los Angeles' city attorney. On the side he runs a bureau for handling the funds assessed for family support against separated or delinquent parents. So he ought to know about it, if anybody does.

Well, personally, I always did have the theory that no woman could stand any man for more than five years unless she got numb. After that it's just a long-distance endurance test on her side—and perhaps sometimes on both sides.

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Senatorial Shifts.

NAMING no names, a little bird just in from Washington whispers that one senator, under the influence of alternating psychic waves or something, already has shifted three times on the plan to make the Supreme court over. First he was against it, then for it, then against it again, and is now threatening to change once more. They'll be taking bets on him at Lloyd's next.

Once in a while we get a statesman who reminds you of a hunk of country butter in an icebox—takes the flavor of everything near by, but not improved by any one of 'em.

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Maine's Statesmen.

THERE is but one answer to the attitude assumed by both of Maine's senators, who show a pronounced inclination to balk at whatever the New Deal calls for in congress and especially at the plan to mold the Supreme court somewhat closer to the boy scout model.

If these here foreigners don't like this country, why don't they go back where they came from?

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The Game of Poker.

CALIFORNIA'S attorney general decides that draw poker, unless played as a percentage game, is not gambling.

Had he gone deeper into the subject, he might have ruled that draw poker, as generally played nowadays, is not even a game. What veteran would call it anything except a sacrilege against an ancient and once honorable sport when folks are free to introduce at will such abominations as deuces wild or one-eyed jacks or barber's itch or spit in the ocean?

To draw honest cards; to try to play the other fellow's chances as well as your own; to try to figure when to raise and when to call and when to quit; to try to pick the right moment for bluffing, since the bluff is the real soul of the thing—that's poker, my masters, an American-born pastime, hallowed with age, ennobled by usage, beloved of the fathers.

IRVIN S. COBB.

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'Seeing' Bridge

The only bridge in the world that can "see" has been completed at Kincardine, Scotland. Equipped with three electric "eyes," the huge swinging center span automatically aligns itself with the roadway when closed. All three "eyes" are located on one end of the swinging span, says the Washington Post. One sees the span does not overshoot the mark, another that it does not undershoot, and the third watches for the dead central position. The 1,500-ton span is so delicately poised on the central pivot that only two 50-horsepower electric motors are needed to swing it open to river traffic.

Hugh Bradley Says:

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Earle Meadows, as Guest Columnist, Cites A. A. U. Needs

Hugh Bradley has as his guest columnist today, Earle Meadows, the handsome twenty-one-year-old pole vaulter who won the Olympic crown last summer at Berlin and who came within a quarter of an inch of a new indoor world's record this winter. He tells of the thrills, problems and disappointments of an athlete on the wing.

By EARLE MEADOWS

MY INITIAL take-off into the realm of sports writing should, of course, concern the possibilities of a 15-foot vault. I think it is coming, and it's not so very far in the future, either. But the athlete who makes it—and there are many who have the potentiality—will need a good imagination and just a bit of "what it takes" to make that height.

I assume that the rabid track crowd is familiar with the forecast of George Varoff, the world champion, who has predicted a 15-foot leap within the next few years. That prophecy certainly is worthy of notice. But, even though George is one of my best friends, and even friends must disagree sometimes, I can hardly fall into line with his theory the vault will come as a result of combining two qualities, namely, his own push and the powerful pull of slim Sueo Ohe.

My contention is that it will not come by combining these two phases, for the simple reason that one asset would offset the other. It is quite impossible to combine such a marvelous pull as his with potent push that the Oriental possesses. The combination would ruin timing in the air. My credo is that the vault will result from the addition of a new technique—entirely from the standpoint of the actual mechanism.

After all, every vaulter will agree that working for form, rather than maneuvering through the air without a parachute, is his aim, especially at the above height. Varoff will agree, too, that when he made his world indoor record of 14 feet 4⅞ inches at Boston last month, his off-balance in the air threw him down head first, proving that it makes the downward fall dangerous to the pole vaulter.

Earle Meadows

Get busy, coaches, the pole vault is not yet mastered as far as technique is concerned. Another point I would like to bring out is that with the present system of measurement—such as cost me a world record at the Garden in the New York A. C. games—a 15-foot vault is impossible. It would take all night or day to measure the bar and the athlete would lose his edge.

I'm not complaining or criticizing the officials. I'm only asking that they remember this point. An athlete trains for 13 years to achieve the honor of lifting his body to a height previously unreached by man. To achieve this record, a tremendous amount of energy must be expended. It would seem, therefore, that the measurement should be checked carefully and announced before the record is attempted.

I thought that winning the Olympic vault in the rain at Berlin was the greatest thrill I had ever known, until that night at the Garden, when I cleared what I thought—and everybody else, too—was a record height. I can't express how I felt because it was such an unusual feeling to be so happy. And then . . . the letdown, when they told me it was one-quarter of an inch short.

And all because of inaccurate measuring instruments. I admit that I didn't want the officials to check with a steel tape before my attempt that night, because they would have been standing there gabbing yet, probably, figuring out the ways and means, talking this over and that—hot air that would thoroughly have warmed an unheated Garden. By the time they finished I would have lost my edge.

At the age of ten I measured the crossbar by my own stature, the most accurate means. I'll never forget how I started to vault with an old worn-out rug cane and a clothes-line. And what a thrill I got out of it.

Finally, the old cane broke, and then came greater competitive desire to go higher than the other fellow.

My first ambition to become an Olympic champion came when I was thirteen. It grew and grew within me. Then, like a dream, I was in Berlin, competing as one of three representing the Stars and Stripes.

NOT IN THE BOX SCORE:

WITH the close of the Florida season Jack Dempsey will make a flying tour of South America, refereeing boxing and wrestling matches. . . The best jockey at getting a horse away from the post at Miami is a kid named J. Barba. . Freddy Lindstrom's best chance for a big league hookup is with the Giants. . . Bowling is such a popular sport with the people who come to Florida for the sun that the newspapers have to carry special signed columns about the ten-pin art.

Two pretty feuds have been simmering in Miami all winter. One is between the local bookies and the visiting bookies, mainly from New York, who have cut in on the cushy play. The other is between those two veteran Colonels—One-Two Bradley and Flamingo Joe Widener. Gossipers insist that when money and other substantial assistance was needed when Hialeah was reorganized several seasons ago Widener solicited Bradley as a partner. Now they aver that—with business being very good and a new governor making everybody behave—Flamingo Joe doesn't believe in partners.

Bicycle riding has become almost as popular in Florida as in Bermuda. You can rent the things out on the beach for $1 a day. . . Although the men do the most blabbing about big losses, clubhouse and grand stand messengers insist that fully 40 per cent of the racetrack wagering is done by women. Most of the girls, it is true, debate the matter for hours before splitting a $2 ticket but there are others, plenty of them, who send it in in C note lots. . . One of them devoted half an hour to standing in front of the gate the other day complaining about having to pay $1 tax on a clubhouse ducat when she had meant to bring along the 50 cent tax grand stand variety of pass.

Sarazen Has Ideas About Ryder Cup

Gene Sarazen, who, of late, has gone in for all kinds of reducing diets and exercises, is down to 152 pounds. He thinks this year's Ryder Cup team should be composed of Sarazen, Hagen, Manero Shute, Horton Smith Ralph Guldahl and Picard. . . The Cards, by the way, have little fear of the Giants this year. They think Pittsburgh probably has the best team in the league but that the Cubs will provide the main opposition and that Rip Collins will star in the full 154 games.

Tony Manero

Harry Voiler, the fight movie man has plans to win the light-heavyweight championship with Al Delaney. Delaney's injured hand, incidentally, has entirely healed and he will soon resume fighting. . . One of the prides of the Stevens Brothers, the racetrack and ball park restaurant men, is that they have more than 1,500 employees. But that no valued employee ever has left them except on account of death or extreme old age.

Millionaire John Hertz doesn't seem to care who knows how sore he is about rumors that the Illinois Racing commission will favor Washington Park over his Arlington Park in the assignment of dates this year. . . Wilcey Moore, former Yankee sinker ball pitcher, still has a span of mules called Babe and Ruth which he won from the home run king his first year on the club. . . Babe bet Moore that he wouldn't make three hits during the season. . . . He made four. . . Moore is a gentleman farmer at Hollis, Okla., in the winter. . . He is with the Kansas City Blues this season. . . Stan Laurel, the movie comedian, interrupted a vacation cruise to stop in Cuba and watch the New York Giants work out. . . Benevolent citizens of Auburn, Wash., are caring for Amos Rusie, old New York Giant pitching star, and his wife, who were dispossessed recently when a mortgage was foreclosed on their farm.

Although his best friends tell him to forget it Jack Dempsey still dreams of promoting one big heavyweight championship fight. . . Harry Hooper, regarded as one of the finest sun fielders in major league history, once was charged with three errors on two successive pitched balls when playing right field for the White Sox. . . He fumbled two flies and made a wild throw on one of them. . . Shoeless Joe Jackson now weighs 230 pounds and owns two automobiles. . . Joseph Widener has shipped four juveniles, Unbreakable, Entertaine, Silver Spear, and Soda to England. . . Fred Perry shares Ellsworth Vines' enthusiasm for golf. . . Hans Steinke, former heavyweight wrestler, is a mat referee on the Pacific coast.

Two sophomores with the Iowa baseball team on its southern trip are relatives of major league players. . . Harold Manders of Adel, Ia., right-handed pitcher, is a cousin of Bob Feller and Arthur Manush of Burlington is a nephew of Heinie Manush. . . Although Glenn Cunningham set them both in the same race, the American mile record is lower than the world's. . . Cunningham ran the distance in 4:06.7, but since the International federation does not recognize tenth of a second timing in races above a quarter of a mile the world mark is listed as 4:06.8.