Weekly News Review

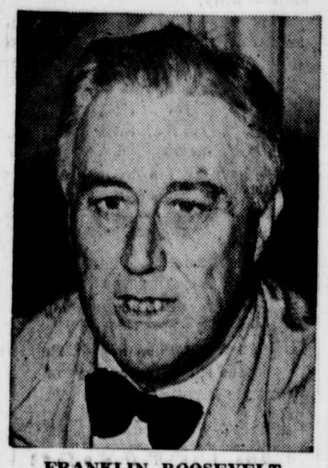
President's Peacemaker Role Seen as Campaign Strategy

By Joseph W. La Bine

Politics

On Tuesday, November 8, the United States will elect an entire house of representatives, one-third of its senate and a host of governors. Since U. S. politics swings back and forth from Republican to Democratic domination, since the Democratic swing which began in 1933 has reached and passed its peak, the safest prediction is that Republicanism will start swinging back into power this year.

Obviously, it is Franklin Roosevelt's ambition to stymie a Republican comeback. But his chief interest in last summer's primaries was not Republicanism, but the construction of a coherent liberal party through so-called "purge" tactics. Since "purge" failed, since preservation of New Deal gains already made is now more important than



FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT
At election time, a peacemaker.

party purification, November's election has resumed normal political color for the first time since 1930.

As in 1936, this year's Republican candidates can base a strong campaign on New Deal failure. Unlike 1933 and 1936, this year's Democratic campaign becomes essentially a defensive proposition. But developments of the past month show that the New Deal's defense will not feature such argumentative points as AAA, relief and budget-balancing, will attempt instead to shift public interest on Franklin Roosevelt's accomplishments as a peacemaker. Three points of peace:

World Peace: The world may never know if President Roosevelt helped smooth over the Czech-German crisis, but his final message to Adolf Hitler and simultaneous pleas to every other world power came only a few hours before the Reichsfuehrer called his historic Munich parley. But, coming when it did, Roosevelt intercession looked tremendously successful. Thus, praising the administration's foreign policy as a safeguard to world peace, Democrats hope the voting public will overlook the fact that Munich's meeting did nothing to help democracy's cause, was instead a bloodless victory for Germany.

Business Peace: If the administration's foreign policy helped win world peace, it also helped U. S. business. Upshot has been a tremendous stock market upturn, greater steel and automobile production, higher railroad carloadings. But part of this upturn is also due to governmental "pump priming," which is just beginning to show its effect. Nevertheless these signs of optimism came at a time when U. S. business decided to quit warring on the administration, choosing instead to play ball until a Republican government throws out New Deal measures which it considers oppressive. President Roosevelt has asked for less "saber rattling" and more cooperation between government and business. Charles Hook, president of the National Association of Manufacturers, has assured him that business is eager for co-operation. Thus, Franklin Roosevelt looms as a peacemaker with business.

Industrial Peace: When the American Federation of Labor convened in Houston, Texas, the President messaged his desire for a settlement of the factional war between A. F. of L. and John Lewis' Committee for Industrial Organization. Obviously a solid labor front, thoroughly New Deal, would be a potent vote getter. How it could exercise this solidified strength against employers is an unpleasant thought, but the average business man is inclined to hope a patch-up will bring more conservatism to labor. Though the President's peacemaking effort has completely failed, the nation may well appreciate his gesture.

Despite the political connotations these peace efforts must certainly carry during election season, the President's self-chosen role of arbiter wins favor with a war-weary U. S. populace. Whether this popular appeal will overshadow Republican criticism on November 8 is anybody's guess.

Domestic

In 1930 the census showed 25.3 per cent of all U. S. women over 16 were gainfully employed. By 1937, said John D. Biggers, resigning as head of President Roosevelt's unemployment census, the percentage had jumped to 31.7. Reasons: (1) technical and cultural changes; (2) economic necessity. Mr. Biggers found the corner bakery and laundry relieved Mrs. Housewife of many duties, leaving her free to boost the family's income or replace an unemployed husband as breadwinner.

His comment: "This is an economic and social trend worthy of consideration."

A much more blunt comment came from the Rt. Rev. Msgr. Fulton J. Sheen, famed radiorator and faculty member of the Catholic university at Washington: "The only real success for a woman, the only real vocation is motherhood . . . Why be equal to men when you are superior?"

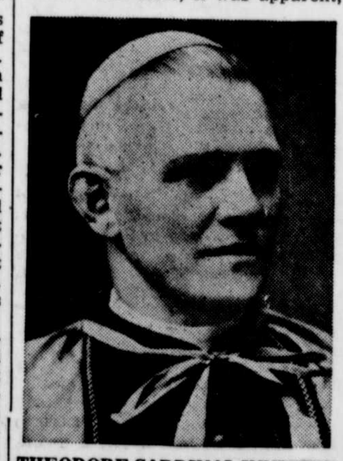
● Until this year, most U. S. citizens regarded the foreign spy as a comic strip and fiction character, although government intelligence officers have long known the nation is infested with agents from Russia, Germany, Italy and Japan. First real action to combat spies is the house committee on un-Americanism which has heard evidence connecting espionage with everyone from Shirley Temple to unnamed industrial magnates. Incoherent though its findings may be, the un-Americanism committee has crystalized enough U. S. sentiment to demand action. After reviewing the situation, President Roosevelt has laid plans for co-ordinating the work of such spy seekers as the army and navy intelligence departments, federal bureau of investigation, secret service and other treasury law enforcement units. Already in operation is a new law requiring all agents of foreign principals to register with the state department. Though the measure has no teeth, it will enable the U. S. to keep an eye on propagandists, thereby paving the way for action against spies.

● Regardless of who holds power when civil service is expanded, it will create furore in the minority ranks because present job-holders will be favored. On this assumption, a furore will come in Republican ranks February 1 when 81,000 Democratic workers in so-called emergency agencies are moved into civil service classification. Another 44,000 may be added later.

Religion

Last March, just before Reichsfuehrer Adolf Hitler marched into Austria, Vienna's Theodore Cardinal Innitzer urged Catholics to vote for German annexation as a means of blocking Communism. Though Cardinal Innitzer knew German Catholics had suffered at the Reich's hands, he plumped for Naziism because Herr Buerckel, Hitler's representative, had quoted the Saviour: "Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's and unto God that which is God's."

Criticized by the Vatican, Cardinal Innitzer moreover was to learn that "Caesar" Hitler would take all he could get, shearing every vestige of power from the Catholic church. Early in September the cardinal protested when marriage was made a state affair, when Catholic schools were frowned upon, when Catholic nuns were ousted from hospitals. Later he complained when priests were denied the right of administering church comforts to political prisoners. The state, it was apparent,



THEODORE CARDINAL INNITZER
After Naziism, he changed his mind.

strove to push Catholicism into the background, to raise Austrian youth in Nazi ideology instead of Catholic theology.

When Cardinal Innitzer protested, a mob strongly reminiscent of the Middle ages descended on his palace, made it a shambles, threw 60-year-old Father Johann Kravanik from a second-story window. The Cardinal himself was cut by flying glass but appeared next morning at Vienna's famed St. Stephen's cathedral.

Only official Nazi answer to Vatican protests has been shoulder-shrugging, but Vienna's mob scene may have far-reaching effects. Already seen is a surging German religious revival which is bound to crash headlong into the state's domineering program. From this point, Germany might either become an anti-Christ state or modify its religious position. Meanwhile, church and state are girding for battle.

Foreign

Since the notorious peace of Munich, almost every day has seen the stars of Great Britain and France descend to new lows, torn by dissention from within, heaped with ridicule from without. Hardly had Alfred Duff Cooper resigned from the British cabinet in protest against Prime Minister Chamberlain's "sell-out" before Winston Churchill arose in the house of commons to state his views. He prophesied that England will be dependent on German good will for its very existence. "We have sustained defeat without war, and the whole equilibrium of Europe has been changed," he summed up.

That Prime Minister Chamberlain agrees is shown by his insistence on a high-speed rearmament program, a move quite contradictory to his Anglo-German peace pact and his treaty with Italy. It is an admis-

WINSTON CHURCHILL
He, among others, was ashamed.

sion that not even Mr. Chamberlain trusts Adolf Hitler or Benito Mussolini very far.

Meanwhile, France has been quick to make peace with Italy by recognizing her conquest of Ethiopia. Her parliament, by overwhelmingly approving the Munich pact, agreed that no price was too high for peace even though it meant relegating France to the position of a second-rate power. But sorely-taxed Frenchmen want to know why they must pay for a huge army and navy that refuses to fight.

There are other signs, as well. The resignation of Czech President Eduard Benes in the face of growing public sentiment against weak-kneed democracies, indicates that Czechoslovakia is giving in to demands for co-operation with the Rome-Berlin axis. It is almost humorous to reflect that Great Britain has agreed to defend Czechoslovakia's integrity. Even more tragic is Chancellor Hitler's demand for reparations from Czechoslovakia, to be paid out of the $150,000,000 loan recently granted the Czechs by Great Britain.

With central Europe turned over completely to dictatorship, with Russia breaking her French alliance and crawling back into silence, France and Britain apparently stand alone, friendless, merely tolerated by their "friends"—Italy and Germany.

Taxation

Though campaigning politicians do not speak of it, next winter's congress will probably turn the income tax headache into a nightmare. With another federal deficit in prospect, with high income brackets already taxed to the limit, the solution will be a broadening of tax base on middle and low income groups, i. e., the man making less than $50,000 a year. Present exemptions are $1,000 for single persons, $2,500 for married persons, with $400 extra for each dependent under 18 years of age. If 2,067,736 persons filed 1935 returns on that basis, an estimated 8,400,000 would yield from $200,000,000 to $500,000,000 more under the proposed plan for reducing exemptions to $500 for single persons, $1,000 for married persons and $200 for dependents. Chief victims would be those now paying in the low income brackets, a prospect that bodes virtual political suicide for any congressman who favors the measure. Only alternative would be federal sales taxation, which "horrified" President Roosevelt when he first took office and has since been a dead issue.

War

A weird combination of communistic-democratic government rules Loyalist Spain, plainly holding the sympathy of democratic France and England. Rebel Spain has the support of totalitarian Italy and Germany. Since the totalitarian team beat the democratic team at Munich's recent peace parley, Loyalist Spain wonders if she will not become another Czechoslovakia, sold down the river to keep peace in Europe's quarreling family. This theory has been borne out in talk of an Anglo-French-Italian pact whereby Italy would withdraw her support to Rebel Spain (a move already started), whereby France would close her border against arms shipments to Loyalist Spain. Thus isolated, Spain's civil warriors would eventually be brought to talk peace. Since France and England are anxious to keep Italy's good will, there is every reason to believe that ultimate victory would come to Premier Benito Mussolini's very good friend and ally, Rebel Generalissimo Francisco Franco.

Bruckart's Washington Digest

Old Trickery Again Being Used In Writing Views of a President

That Intangible Personality, the 'White House Spokesman,' Is Back on the Job; Makes Goats of Writers; Taxes Blamed for Added Burden Business Carries.

By WILLIAM BRUCKART
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WASHINGTON. — The "White House Spokesman" is back! That ghostly, shy and sometimes playful figure has been resurrected from the grave where President Roosevelt interred his intangible personality early in March, 1933. He was placed there with proper ceremonies by Mr. Roosevelt after his witchlike voice had served during the administrations of Presidents Coolidge and Hoover, and after he had served valiantly as the source of one inspired news story after another. Mr. Roosevelt unmasked the "White House Spokesman" as just the President of the United States, speaking behind his hand. But lo! Here is that man again.

I could not help laughing a bit the other day when the "White House Spokesman" reappeared on the front pages of metropolitan daily newspapers, in the work-a-day clothes of "authoritative White House sources." Grieving as most writers did that this trickery had to be employed in order to write a President's views, I enjoyed the humor of the situation, nevertheless. If the White House Spokesman was going to be reborn, what more proper place could there be than Hyde Park, N. Y., the President's summer home. That delightful home on the banks of the Hudson river is only about the length of an airplane runway from the fiction scenes of nightly riding by "the headless horseman of Sleepy Hollow."

But restoration of the "White House Spokesman" to his place of eminence is a serious matter. Use of such a disguise, such a mask, has no place in American life. Many a time in the period when Calvin Coolidge and Herbert Hoover occupied the White House, there were stories sent to all parts of the nation that came from the "White House Spokesman." It was a silly procedure. It was both silly and cheap. The head of the government was simply using the correspondents as vehicles to carry the responsibility which the then occupant of the White House should have assumed.

Some stories were trial balloons; some were expressions of a personal opinion by the President which he was not quite ready to espouse publicly, and others were pieces of just plain trickery, given out with the understanding that the President should not be directly quoted. The course was adopted, so it was claimed, as a means of giving the writers all of the available facts right up to the minute.

Just Kidding and Fooling Readers of Newspapers

Well, without questioning the sincerity of purpose, the fact remains that the writers were the goats. And here they are being made the goats again, and the public, the readers of newspapers, are to be kidded and fooled some more. What's the excuse? There is none. It is the same old ostrich and the same old sand in which he is hiding his head; so why do it?

The present, and rejuvenated, "White House Spokesman" had a good deal to say, behind this shadowy veil, about the desirability of a truce between business and labor, a truce with the administration in Washington. The bitterness between industry and government was made almost into a parallel with European conditions, and the "Spokesman" went further to suggest that some method of getting together, comparable to the European "settlement," should be used here.

Well, I imagine there is none in our country who do not hope for, and believe in the need of, a lasting peace between business and government. As the shadowy form said, as it floated over Hyde Park, there has been too much name calling, too many charges and recriminations. The condition has slowed up general business; it has made the relief rolls full to overflowing. But when the "White House Spokesman" seeks a "settlement" like that at Munich, Germany, where Dictator Hitler grabbed everything he wanted—well, let me observe that it was a swell subject as an illustration why the "White House Spokesman" should remain in his grave!

There was another phase of the "Spokesman's" backfence snarling that is bound to disturb the neighbor's sleep. It was tantamount to a demand that business stop misrepresenting the government's attitude—this being the New Deal attitude—toward business. That is to say, there was a veiled charge that business, which is to say, "the economic royalists," have been lying about the government's programs and objectives, no mention being made of some of the abortive results.

Blame Taxes for Added Burden Business Carries

The news dispatches from Hyde Park made reference to unfair stories about taxes. The "Spokesman" specifically asserted that business interests were all wet when they asserted that federal taxes are heavier now than one, three or five years ago. It struck me as being a queer complaint, because federal taxes are higher; there are more of them in number and the rates on nearly all the old ones are higher. Treasury figures show that the federal government collected $3,115,000,000 in taxes five years ago. The same official figures show collections of more than $4,100,000,000 three years ago, and in the fiscal year ending June 30, 1937, the collections were announced as $5,290,000,000. Then, on June 30, this year, the official figures recorded collections of $6,240,000,000. To be absolutely fair, it must be considered that business was at its lowest ebb five years ago. Hence, tax payments were at the lowest. But, without attempting to cite all of the increases in rates and new taxes invoked, new taxes and new rates have been responsible, too, for the increased burden which business carries.

It is important, also, in connection with the consideration of taxes to call attention to the federal government's budget condition. At the end of September, when the first quarter of the fiscal year was completed, there was a deficit of more than $700,000,000. The Treasury had been called upon to pay out $700,000,000 more than it had taken in by way of taxes. If my country school multiplication still serves me, there is a deficit indicated for the current fiscal year of approximately $2,800,000,000 since there are four quarters in each year. It may be less—or it may be more.

No 'Breathing Spell' Ever Has Taken Place

In the matter of a truce between the government and industry, I believe I recall accurately the famous "breathing spell" of several years ago. Roy Howard, the Pittsburgh and New York newspaper publisher, wrote a letter in which he told the President of the need for cooperation between the government and business and suggested at the same time how encouraging it would be if business could be assured that government harassment of business was at an end. If I remember, Mr. Roosevelt said in his reply that the major portion of his New Deal reforms was completed and there would be a "breathing spell." It was about that time, too, that Vice President Garner was reported to have said it was time to let the cattle get fat; that they had been chased around until they were just skin and bones. He meant, of course, that if business was going to expand and re-employ workers, then on relief, the government must quit taking everything the employers received. Well, neither the "breathing spell" nor the fattening process ever has taken place.

Further, reference might be made to the fact that, not the "White House Spokesman," but numerous spokesmen for Mr. Roosevelt have been having great fun riding astride the neck of business. One can refer to the activities of Robert H. Jackson, trust buster extraordinary; to Thurman Arnold, who succeeded to Mr. Jackson's job in the department of justice; to William O. Douglass, or to Secretary Ickes. Each of these has had several turns swinging a bludgeon at business men, and they will swing them some more.

So, perhaps Mr. Roosevelt's analogy in which he compared the European situation and "settlement" with the idea of a settlement between government and business was not so far wrong. Perhaps the "settlement" by which Hitler took over great chunks of Czechoslovakia is the way the "authoritative sources" or the "White House Spokesman" would have our government take over most private industry.

Needs Encouragement From Leaders in Public Life

The "White House Spokesman's" suggestion about a truce and cooperative effort between business and government brought a response from Charles M. Hook, president of the National Association of Manufacturers, who assured the President that "there will be no rattling of sabers as far as the manufacturers are concerned." He said there would be an upward surge in business "if there is encouragement from leaders in public life." I am not able to say what is meant by the "no saber rattling" beyond the obvious meaning of a willingness to keep the collective business mouth shut.

Actually, it appears the crux of the whole problem is to be found in the fact that throughout the Roosevelt administration there are many officials who blab and blab and have little or no idea of the matter they are discussing, while on the business side of the fence the fellows who pop off most are incapable of far vision.

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Uncle Phil Says:

Too Few Map Out

If a young man maps out a career he generally achieves it.

An ounce of persuasion is better than a pound of compulsion.

Money talks pretty conclusively at times, but occasionally it gets rattled.

Because He Fails to Marry

From a bachelor's viewpoint marriage is a failure.

Contentment has one advantage over wealth; people don't try to borrow it from you.

Gossip is a deadly gas that is often fatal to friendship.

Leaders That Follow

Fashion leaders are so called because they follow the fashion.

We should strive to forgive and forget, but it always seems so much easier to forget our friends than our enemies.

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● If you were you know the true value of this newspaper

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