WEEKLY NEWS ANALYSIS BY JOSEPH W. LaBINE

Late-Term Congressional Bolt Looks Like Foretaste of 1940; G.O.P. Expect Victory in House

(EDITOR'S NOTE—When opinions are expressed in these columns, they are those of the news analyst and not necessarily of this newspaper.)

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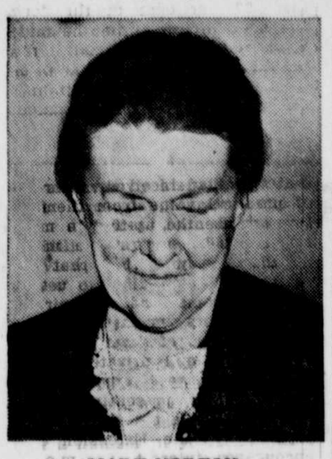
CONGRESS:
Get Out of Town

As congress neared term's end, Franklin Roosevelt sat at his Hyde Park cottage with Democratic Chairman James Farley, talking and thinking. He could afford to do both, also to wish congress would get out of Washington in a hurry. Reason: The New Deal was being ground underfoot unceremoniously and indiscriminately in a manner that boded ill for any 1940 campaign plans the President might have. Moreover, everything indicated the



MARY NORTON
She might have stayed abed.

poisonous Republican upsurge of recent weeks would rise to new heights in 1940. Expecting the 49 additional seats they need for a house majority, hoping for 16 new senate seats to make themselves a formidable minority, Republicans had the makings of a persuasive argument against the President's third-term ambitions. For if this happens, neither Mr. Roosevelt nor any other New Deal President could do much.

Equally important was what had already been done, not only by Republicans but conservative Democrats who found strength in coalition. The record of one week's insurgence:

Labor Board. New Jersey's Rep. Mary T. Norton got out of her sick bed to swallow bad medicine. Strongest foe of the bill offered by Virginia's Rep. Howard W. Smith to investigate the national labor relations board, she examined the record and found Mr. Smith had never cast a vote in favor of organized labor. Thus, when the house voted 253 to 135 to probe NLRB and (by custom) to place Representative Smith in charge, she felt justified in charging that he was "the last man in the world to pass on labor legislation or problems." New Deal poison here is that NLRB's alleged shortcomings publicized this summer and next winter will focus attention on the White House.

Hatch Bill. Passed by both senate and house, the "clean politics" measure of New Mexico's Sen. Carl M. Hatch is designed to keep relief out of political hands, and vice versa. Far more significant is that portion which forbids federal office holders from participating in national political conventions. Since 400 jobholders attended the 1932 G. O. P. pow-wow, and considerably more the 1936 Democratic convention, it is obviously the custom for pro-administration wheelhorses to write platforms and make nominations. Thus the New Deal will suffer at next year's Democratic convention because Mr. Roosevelt's best supporters may be absent.

Logan Bill. Passed quietly by the senate, this measure gave federal courts power to review acts of all federal quasi-judicial bureaus (like NLRB), striking the most severe blow at agencies created since 1933. Result: Administration and executive power would be badly crimped. Though last-minute senate reconsideration was possible, the bill was a cinch to pass if it reached the house.

Lending. Labeled by critics the "pump-priming bill of 1939," the President's pet $2,800,000,000 lending program fell to $2,490,000,000 passing through the senate banking committee where Federal Loan Administrator Jesse Jones became so exuberant in his praise for the bill that his tongue slipped. When he told the committee Reconstruction Finance corporation could handle the program two years with its present borrowing authority, smart Republicans jumped into the breach with a suggestion: Why, then, should congress bother legislating an entire new program when the same purpose could be accomplished by giving RFC a few new loan powers? In a sense this proved a Godsend; such action would put a hasty end to the last major measure still before congress. That done, the President's friends could get out of town until next winter.

DOMESTIC:
Nose Count

On August 15 someone in St. Joseph or Marshall county, Indiana, will hear a knock on his door. The 1940 census will be under way, tested at a cost of $20,000 prior to the most complete statistical inventory of the nation's resources ever attempted. Not until April will the official count be made by 140,000 enumerators working two weeks in urban centers and four weeks in rural areas. But from preliminary Indiana surveys the department of commerce will pick key questions.

No. 1 aim of the 1940 census is to check social trends. Since the depression changed social and economic status of most U. S. citizens, special emphasis will be placed on the following points:

Employment. Status of every citizen over 14 years of age during the week of March 24-30 will be checked, answering queries of many federal agencies.

Fertility. Great changes in reproduction rates among regions and in social classes have taken place since

CENSUS CHECKER AT WORK
She'll record social trends.

1929. The census bureau hopes to verify its hunch that few U. S. cities are reproducing themselves.

Internal Migration. Depression brought big population shifts as people sought new jobs in new places. Not only will the 1940 residence be checked against 1935's, but the bureau will specifically check an away-from-the-farm movement.

Education. Replacing the customary illiteracy question will be one asking the highest grade of school completed, since illiteracy's problem is rapidly disappearing.

MISCELLANY:
Recall Recalled

In Michigan, 80-year-old Gov. Luren D. Dickinson added a radio speech to his earlier warning about sin and high life evils, then took his critics by surprise to endorse heartily a recall petition circulated by Detroit Republican John B. Corliss Jr. The petition was withdrawn.

Trend

How the wind is blowing . . .

REVENUE—U. S. tax collections for fiscal year 1938-39 totaled $5,181,573,952 against $5,658,765,314 the previous year, a decrease of $477,191,361. Biggest drop: Income taxes, which decreased $434,869,356.

FASHION—International Association of Clothing Designers forecasts gaudy clothes for men next spring, with daytime suit hues ranging from taupe to maroon. Trousers are expected to be narrower, showing contours (and defects) of the male leg.

BUSINESS—Retail trade has taken its expected midsummer slump but wholesale buying continues at high level, an indication of good business expectations during the autumn months.

EUROPE:
Wohltat and Dove

Sailing across the English channel one hot July day were Germany's Dr. Helmuth Wohltat and the Spectre of Peace. Headed for conversations with Britain's R. S. Hudson, secretary for overseas trade, the man who cemented Rumania's pact with Germany last spring needed only to wink his eye before European peace rumors began sprouting like wild oats:

'Positive' Plan. First rumor came from a "reliable informant" who

SECRETARY HUDSON
Peace flew with his visitor.

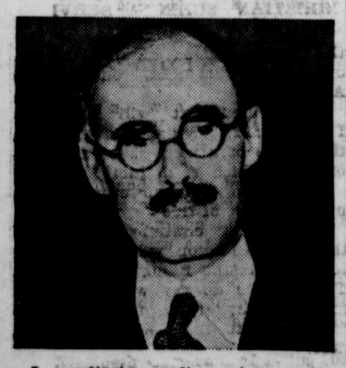
said Secretary Hudson would ask Germany to disarm in exchange for a large British loan to transform her industry from a war basis to a peace basis—to hammer her sword into a plow share. Germany's war-lost colonies would either be returned or internationalized. The reported loan: 1,000,000,000 pounds. A few days later London papers discovered Mr. Hudson actually had made unofficial loan proposals to Herr Wohltat. Foreign office, London newspapers and Commons immediately howled for his resignation.

Siren of Berlin. With French-Polish-British solidarity apparently an actuality, there is every indication Germany is "testing the atmosphere" with one thing in mind—further appeasement. One government spokesman said Berlin "rejects a warlike solution" to the Danzig problem, thereby inviting peace conversations. Nothing is definite, only the time-tested "give-us-what-we-want-and-there-will-be-peace" formula which has never failed Der Fuehrer yet.

Philadelphia Plan. From its Washington bureau, the Philadelphia Inquirer published mysterious news of a five-power plan which had leaked from diplomatic circles. The plan: Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Poland would get 25 years of peace by (1) returning Danzig to Germany but leaving it a free port; (2) putting Italy on the Suez canal board; (3) neutralize African territory opposite Gibraltar; (4) guarantee all existing frontiers; (5) limit armies to 300,000. Within 24 hours every nation concerned had denied the rumor and gone back to its mid-summer grumbling.

Denials notwithstanding, rumors would not float with such utter abandon without some inspiration. International observers took them as a good omen of peace conversations, but shook their heads in fear of more British appeasement.

Japan's Victory



In preliminary discussions at Tokyo, British Ambassador Sir Robert Leslie Craigie recognized the necessity of extraordinary Japanese defensive measures in China, and abandoned Britain's program of aid to China, marking an about-face of British policy in the Far East that will pave the way for ultimate Jap domination of all China and expulsion of British (and probably other western nations') commercial interests there.

. . . *Her Sorrow*

Meanwhile Japan's economy—already sorely pressed by the long war in China—suffers from an unprecedented drouth in central and southern areas, threatening the all-important rice crop and causing a shortage of hydroelectric power. The electricity shortage is especially serious because Japan needs power for her speedup program of key industries. And funds ordinarily going for war purposes must be used for farm relief.

. . . *Her Worry*

Jap Ambassador to Russia Shigenori Togo (shown with wife), shadow boxes in Moscow with a touchy issue. Jap and Soviet troops are fighting bitterly on the Outer Mongolian - Manchukuoan border, while closer home Tokyo refuses to pay fines assessed against Jap coal and oil concessions operating on the Russ portion of Sakhalin island. Warships and troops stand ready for an emergency. Neither nation will give an inch.

Bruckart's Washington Digest

Shaping of National Policies Influenced by Work of Congress

Party Defections, Defeats and Victories of President Have Important Place in Picture; Growing Split in Democratic Party Blamed on Roosevelt.

By WILLIAM BRUCKART
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WASHINGTON.—When one examines political situations and maneuvers, there is nearly always a tendency to overestimate the importance of the current activity. That is to say, an action or a policy just completed is generally likely to be given an appraisal that exaggerates its significance. Political plans, on the contrary, ought to be looked upon in the mass. This is especially true of national politics which, of course, involves the national party and voting strength.

For these reasons, there seems to be need for a review of the first session of the seventy-sixth congress. The things that have happened, the party defections and party realignments, temporary defeats for the President and balancing victories for him and his political philosophy, all should be analyzed. The result of all of these things is the important bit of history. It is important because it has a direct bearing on the 1940 political campaign and voting. It is more valuable to see the shaping of national policies at this time than usual because of the efforts being made to put forward President Roosevelt for a precedent-breaking third term in the White House.

Most every one has been aware, since 1936, that a split in Democratic party strength has been growing. Mr. Roosevelt, himself, led the way and was perhaps the main cause of the present wide breach. It will be remembered how he sought to "purge" the Democratic party of Senators George of Georgia; Smith, of South Carolina; Tydings, of Maryland; and Representative O'Connor of New York. He failed on all except the New York representative. So there were three senior members of the United States able, openly, to battle Mr. Roosevelt's policies. Around these three have since collected all of those Democrats who fear radical leadership in the party; who fear a Roosevelt third term and who are determined to restore party control to those who have been responsible for a long line of party successes.

Old-Line Democrats Succeed In Building 1940 Platform

There has been much written and spoken about maneuvers underneath, and what the results of these maneuvers are. I am inclined to the opinion, however, that only now after seven months of the first session of the seventy-sixth congress are we able to evaluate them properly. The various acts of congress, the various attitudes and defeats and victories can now be placed in the basket. When they are shaken up, it strikes me that the old line Democrats have succeeded in building what amounts to a national Democratic platform for 1940. And that platform can reasonably be said to be one upon which no real New Dealer can run for the presidency next year.

Perhaps, the statement of Senator Joe Guffey of Pennsylvania evaluates the circumstance better than I can do. Guffey, New Dealer, closer associate of the President than Mr. Roosevelt sometimes desired, asserted in a recent radio address that Mr. Roosevelt "has had no term in the White House at all, for his work was destroyed by the Supreme court in the first term and was wrecked by tories in the second years."

When one places the seething mass of legislation, bureaucracy and propaganda under a microscope, Mr. Guffey undoubtedly is correct—if the view is from the New Deal angle, alone. The wild reforms proposed by the brain trust of the first term were knocked down by the Supreme court. Further attempts to rebuild America were slowed down by congress, little by little, until the current session of congress has been telling the President what to do in a great many instances. Thus, it can be said, the President remade the Supreme court to his liking, but he lost congress, and it is well to remember just here that the Supreme court decides only questions that are brought before it. If congress does not enact questionable laws, the highest court does not get a chance to hold them constitutional.

Congress Takes Back Power Delegated to Mr. Roosevelt

It becomes less difficult, therefore, to sit back now and use hindsight. We see, practically from the time of the "purge," how congress began to take back powers it delegated to Mr. Roosevelt in the hectic days of 1933 and 1934. A bite here and a bite there. The pinnacle was reached when the senate kicked out the President's power to devalue the dollar and took away the right to buy silver with a repulsive and disgusting subsidy. Of course, after a brief lapse, those powers were given back to the President, but there is significance in that fact. It showed that when congress is ready, it will be just as free to take away from the President as it was to give powers to him before the party breach.

In between the extremes just mentioned, and particularly within the current session of congress, there have been unmistakable signs of congressional domination. I do not mean to say that the Democratic wheelhorses in congress have thrown the President overboard. They have chosen to chisel away his strength; they have avoided knock-down and drag-out battles as much as possible, unless the issues were paramount. Their strategy plainly has been to build strength for themselves in their own districts and in their own states rather slowly. The whole thing amounts to a program of education of the voters who a few brief years ago were hailing Mr. Roosevelt as the national savior. I believe the work has gone so far now that most of the Democrats in congress have considerable support in their home playgrounds.

To elaborate on the generalities which have been stated above, I may cite such things as the house determination to continue the WPA investigation—something New Dealers did not want. Additional funds were voted for continuation of the investigation of un-American activities, headed by Representative Dies of Texas—a program openly attacked by the New Dealers. The constant threats of congressional investigation of the labor relations board and the federal communications commission are two other things which the inner circle of New Dealers are moving heaven and earth to prevent.

Many Things That Annoyed New Deal Faction of Party

Reduction of the WPA fund total early in the spring, while small, was just another annoying mosquito bite on the New Dealers' legs. The voting of furloughs for WPA workers who have had 18 months of continuous checks was disliked by and was thoroughly distasteful to the New Deal faction of the party.

Nor did Mr. Roosevelt want to see congress change the tax laws. Senator Harrison of Mississippi, together with Undersecretary Haynes of the treasury, worked out the law that was passed. It eliminated the principal schemes for reform that the New Dealers had sponsored in the days when congress was completely subservient to the White House. It is to be noted just here, too, that these tax changes had the support of Chairman Doughton of the house ways and means committee, who had been a dependable "yes man" for the President, up to that time.

Changes that were made in the social security laws were never acceptable to the inner circle of New Dealers who constitute the President's principal advisors. But, again, congress showed its teeth in only a snarl.

The senate foreign relations committee gave the administration something more than name-calling, however, on the question of neutrality legislation. This, of course, followed a real spanking by the house. The house, it will be recalled, took the administration's neutrality program and butchered it right out where all could see what was going on.

President Gets Plain Mad The Way Things Are Going

It might be proper at this time to call attention to another phase of the situation here, although it can hardly be said to be a part of the circumstance that I have been discussing. Lately, Mr. Roosevelt has had his "Dutch up," so to speak, and has not minced words. For example, he called in Lyle Wilson, head of the United Press bureau here, and denounced Mr. Wilson and his organization for sending out dispatches which the President said were untrue. These dispatches, or one, particularly, told of a purported split between Mr. Roosevelt and the able and patient Secretary Hull of the Department of State. Their differences were reported to be over the President's policy on neutrality. Anyway, the incident wound up with the President taking the almost unprecedented action of issuing a public statement accusing the United Press of falsification of the facts.

This series of incidents came after many reports were in circulation at the Capitol that Mr. Roosevelt was mad about the way things were going. Whether these reports were true or false, they were seized upon by Republicans and by the Democrats who no longer want any part of Roosevelt policy. They were spread in the most fanciful fashion and there was no opportunity overlooked by which those old meanies around the congress could add to the President's discomfiture.

Of course, all of this is a part of the great game of politics.

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