

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Reviewed by
CARTER FIELD

Movements of congress to be slow until political future of the Democratic party and the New Deal is clarified . . . See opening wedge of fight against third term in the action on relief money . . . Congress to be tightwad when it comes to opening up new public works.

WASHINGTON.—The whole picture of why this congress is going to be snaillike in its movements until the political future of the Democratic party in general and the New Deal in particular is clarified is disclosed in that amazing speech of Sen. John H. Bankhead of Alabama—brother of the speaker of the house—denying that there had been any "issue" between President Roosevelt and Vice President John Nance Garner over the amount of money voted in the relief bill.

Even the Associated Press could not let that speech pass without including in the account of it the fact that the day before, when Sen. Alva B. Adams, of Colorado, had been asked if he appreciated the help Garner had given his side, he had said, "Yes, I do."

As a matter of fact everybody interested knew that the White House made a terrific fight to win that roll call, and that the opposition strained every nerve to beat the White House. The "issue" was not relief at all. Most of the senators who had lined up against the President will be perfectly willing, and said so, to vote more money later if the President will declare an emergency exists.

The issue was clearly to trim a little of the President's powers. It was not clear-cut. Many senators were frightened into line by the cold wave which accompanied the fight. They were afraid their constituents might figure they were willing to let men and women freeze and starve. The weather was on the side of the President.

Opening Wedge of Fight Aimed Against Third Term

But doling out the relief money to the President—forcing him to come again with a declaration of emergency if he wants any more—restricts by a good deal the blanket power he has exercised over relief spending, and by the same token tends to trim his political power to just that extent.

Make no mistake about it, that fight was the opening wedge of the battle which is really aimed at preventing a Roosevelt third term, and preventing the choice of any out-and-out New Dealer as Roosevelt's successor in the 1940 convention. Specifically it was aimed at the "spenders" in the New Deal. It demonstrated a lack of sympathy for many of the Roosevelt lieutenants, including, most spectacularly, Marriner S. Eccles, head of the federal reserve board.

Mr. Eccles is not worried about the deficits, or the mounting national debt. Congress by that vote on relief, first in the house and second in the senate, showed that it is.

But some of the Southern senators and other leaders are not willing yet to admit that they are really fighting continued Roosevelt mastery. They want to watch a few developments first, to determine just how safe it is to be against him. They want to leave a few bridges unburned, so they can rejoin him if he should prove unbeatable.

Down underneath, most of them hope he will be succeeded by someone with economic views much further to the right. It will be noticed in Senator Bankhead's very cagey remarks that he left open doors leading in every direction. The speech fooled no one in the White House crowd. But it pleased them just the same. It tended to soften the blow.

Congress Is Set Against Giving New Deal Free Hand

If that suggestion about setting up another TVA in southern Illinois, which would generate power from the coal deposits there instead of from water power, had been made four years ago, or even last year, it would have frightened the utilities to death.

Now they are hoping that nothing will happen because congress is set against giving the New Deal a free hand on spending, is willing to be liberal when it comes to danger of people starving or freezing, but is inclined to be a tightwad when it comes to new public works. As for example Passamaquoddy and the Florida canal, both of which seem doomed to remain sidetracked.

Besides, and this is really the funny part of the situation, there is not the popular appeal in developing electricity from coal that there is from water power. Down underneath the New Deal is all for it. President Roosevelt is just as unfriendly to the privately owned utilities as ever. But this is no time to be agitating this particular point—certainly until the Supreme court has clarified it in the TVA case.

Best opinion here as to the future of public ownership of big power developments is that they will be confined, for a time at least, to water power. The answer is simple. In the first place, there is the popular notion that power produced from water power is the cheapest power in the world—almost free. Second, there is the popular idea that water power is one of our great national resources, belonging not to the few people who happen to own the land adjacent to the most favorable spot for developing it, but to all the people.

Cost of Producing Electric Current Is Very Small

Actually of course the cost of producing electric current is so small that it does not make much difference which method is used. But if you insist on going into decimals coal is cheaper than water power.

The city of Washington offers an excellent illustration. Sen. George W. Norris has long advocated the development of water power at Great Falls, on the Potomac, a few miles above Washington. As an engineering proposition it is perfectly sound. It is now being pressed in the house by Rep. John E. Rankin of Mississippi, Nemesis of the private utilities, and leader of the public power bloc. Rankin would set up a "Potomac Valley authority" modeled after his beloved TVA.

But engineers are agreed that such a development would not produce current any more cheaply than the private company does now. And the company uses a cheap grade of anthracite which has to be hauled down from northeastern Pennsylvania. Actually power is produced from this coal at a cost of only three mills per kilowatt at the switchboard.

Of course the government could take that same steam plant and produce electricity at something less than the three mills it costs the company, assuming that it operated as efficiently as the company does now. There is an item of taxes, which includes local property assessments and federal income taxes, in that three mills. But obviously no economy could be effected so far as the production of electricity is concerned which would be very important to the consumers.

Yet it would be sort of tough on the coal miners in Pennsylvania to try to effect this economy!

Expect No Speed From This Session of Congress

There is no use expecting any speed from this session of congress. It simply is not in the mood. Senators and representatives have their ears to the ground, their eyes strained for the most likely bandwagon, their brains concentrated on the most important question of the ages: "What is best for me?"

Gentlemen who have not already burned their bridges will be careful about dropping sparks. Some things, such as the relief appropriations, must be decided rather promptly—cannot be postponed. But even on this there is the obvious groping for the most expedient thing—politically—so patent that the ponderous phrases deceive no one accustomed to watching the political wheels go round. As for example Pat Harrison with his amendment for cutting the appropriation, but not turning anybody off the WPA rolls!

It's just one of those things, politically, which happens every time a very strong man approaches the end of his reign—complicated—as in the case of every strong President since Washington—with a trace of suspicion that this may not be the end!

Nobody knows whom to tie to! Nobody knows who is going to be the next President. Nobody knows whether the Democratic nominee next year will be a conservative, a New Dealer, or just a liberal. The whole feeling is best illustrated by a recent conversation just outside the senate chamber. It happened that the man generally regarded as the No. 1 prognosticator of the New Deal was talking with some newspaper men, who were wondering who would be nominated by the two parties.

"Well," said the prognosticator, "if someone came along and offered me 100 to 1 that I could not name the next President, I would take the bet, and name Thomas Dewey."

Thinks There's Possibility Republicans Might Win

This positively does not mean that the gentleman in question thinks the Republicans are going to win. But he thinks there is the possibility that they may, and he is fairly sure that they will nominate one of a very small group of men—he talked about three. Whereas the Democrats may conceivably name any of a dozen.

He knows that merely following the President is not enough to keep him in his \$10,000 a year (with perquisites) job. He knows that fighting Roosevelt on a few issues is not going to defeat him. But that's not enough. He wanted to be on the bandwagon.

Crystallization has not begun. It may follow the present debate on relief. It may not come until the neutrality and armament programs are up. The whole picture may change one way if business continues to revive, another if it slumps, and still another if war should come.

But make no mistake about this. There are a lot of boobs in the house and senate, but most of them are very smart politicians.

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WAR SCHOOL

Navy Officers Get in 'Swim' At Annapolis

Prepared by National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.—WNU Service.

To be a midshipman at the United States Naval Academy is the ambition of many an American youth. But it takes dogged persistence to become one.

From every state and territory of the United States come the young men who aspire to commissions as naval officers. When you arrive at the academy a number of your future classmates join you—lads from Massachusetts, Arkansas, Hawaii, and even from the Philippine Islands.

Before 1845, midshipmen were educated solely by experience at sea and by such "book learning" as the individual chose to acquire, with the aid of ship "school masters." George Bancroft, secretary of the navy under President Polk, early recognized the desirability of establishing a naval school ashore.

Obtained Army Fort. Eventually Secretary Bancroft obtained transfer to the navy department of Fort Severn, an outmoded army fort near Annapolis, and founded there the naval school. Commander Franklin Buchanan, the first superintendent, had about 40 students and 7 instructors.

From this slender beginning, the naval academy has gone splendidly forward, training officers for the naval service. The original naval school has disappeared, but the present group of 16 imposing buildings, begun in 1898, has risen on the foundations of the old. Now there are about 2,000 midshipmen at the academy. A graduate of the academy, describing his early experience, said:

"I had hardly stowed the mass of gear issued to me at the midshipmen's store, and shifted to my new white uniform, when I prevailed upon my roommate to guide me around the Yard.

"We strolled across Farragut field to the seawall and looked out over the bay. A Chesapeake bugeye, with raking masts and sails glistening in the fading sunlight, came flying into the harbor on the last of the sea breeze. She was loaded to the gunwales with fresh oysters.

Stroll Through Grounds. "Facing about, Bancroft hall towered above us in massive solidity. My roommate pointed out the armory, Dahlgren hall, where midshipmen keep their rifles and drill in foul weather, and Macdonough

hall, the gymnasium, where the future admirals do 'stoop falls' and 'knee bends.' "We strolled through Thompson stadium, scene of many a gridiron battle, and passed under the terrace to Stribling walk. There the Indian chieftain intrigued me.

"Who's the old gent?" I inquired.

"Ssh! He put his finger to his lips in mock fear. 'Don't let him hear you. That's Tecumseh, god of the 2.5. Don't get him down on you, or you won't be long around these parts.'

"He explained how midshipmen are marked in class and at examination on a basis of 4 for perfect (equivalent to 100 per cent), and that 2.5 is the passing mark. Any score below that minimum, he said, was 'bilging,' in academy parlance.

"We moved down Stribling walk from Bancroft hall past the Mexican monument to the academic group (Sampson, Maury, Isherwood, and Mahan halls). This path midshipmen tread thrice daily, always in military formation, to their studies.

Plebes Get 'Deflated.' "As we strolled back across the terrace to our room, a bugle sounded formation and a gong clattered in the hall. 'Bel-r step out to formation,' my roommate said, and he ran toward our company parade.

Bancroft's broad corridors rang our voices during that all too



A pleasant task at Annapolis. Midshipman Elton L. Knapp of Monroe, Mich., in command of the third company, receives a kiss from Miss Ruth Scheidinger, also of Monroe, after she presented him with the colors, the feature event of the annual spring dress parade.

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"Quite naturally, a plebe comes to the academy somewhat overimpressed with his own importance. The inevitable deflation is sometimes abrupt.

"Even yet, I cannot recall without a shudder that first day of academic year. I was 'steering a proper course' down the middle of a corridor when a voice behind me spoke:

"Where headed for, mister?"

"The midshipmen's store, sir."

"Sound off."

"I was silent for a moment. A first classman moved around into my field of vision.

"Good Lord!" the stern voice cried. "Don't you know 'sound off' means to tell me your name and state? Well then, what did Lawrence say?"

"I remembered Perry's battle flag, the navy's most historic banner, preserved in Memorial hall. Rough white letters on a faded blue background spell Captain Lawrence's last words as he lay dying

on the deck of the Chesapeake. 'Don't give up the ship, sir,' I blurted out.

"Well now, that's better." The voice was more kindly. "What did Dewey do?"

"Sir?"

"See here, mister, you're terribly ignorant of naval history and tradition. Report to my room at 9:30 tonight for instruction. Savvy?"

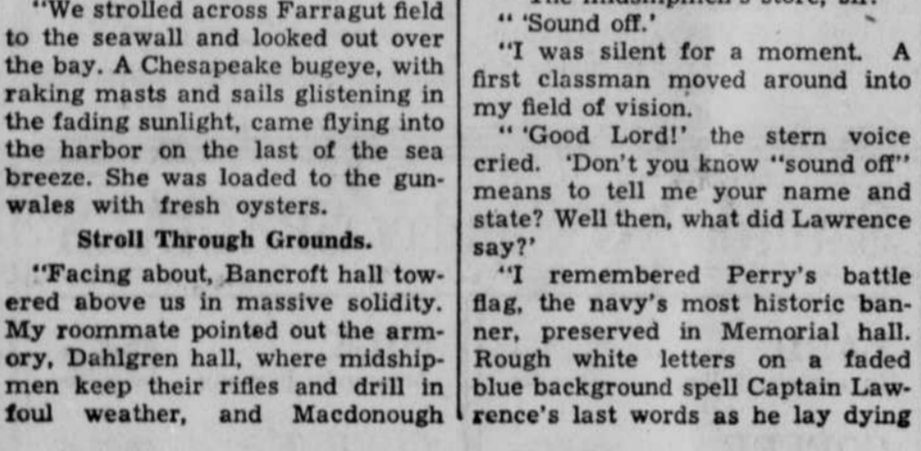
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Your Brace Is Terrible. "At dinner formation, standing stiffly erect in the rear rank, eyes riveted on the back of the midshipman's neck in front, I believed I cut a perfect military figure. But someone growled behind me, 'Pull yourself together, mister. Your brace is terrible.'

"I stiffened to a more rigid position. Presently we marched off to music played by the 'hell cats,' as the midshipmen drum and bugle corps is called by the regiment. From the regimental commander came the order, 'SE-ATS!' Two thousand chairs scraped."

It is a busy life. During a normal day, a midshipman attends seven military formations, recites three times, and drills once. He is inspected frequently, both for personal appearance and for cleanliness of his room, for which he and his "wife," or roommate, are jointly responsible.



Midshipmen from Annapolis are shown at Portsmouth, England, receiving a lesson in battle strategy during last summer's cruise on the U. S. S. Texas and the U. S. S. Wyoming. The ships were manned largely by midshipmen and ratings undergoing training.

hull, the gymnasium, where the future admirals do 'stoop falls' and 'knee bends.' "We strolled through Thompson stadium, scene of many a gridiron battle, and passed under the terrace to Stribling walk. There the Indian chieftain intrigued me.

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Floyd Gibbons' ADVENTURERS' CLUB

HEADLINES FROM THE LIVES OF PEOPLE LIKE YOURSELF!



"Stretching His Luck"

HELLO EVERYBODY! Teddy was a wing walker. You know, one of those birds in a flying circus who does things on the wing of a plane you wouldn't try in your own parlor. They must need money mighty bad, you tell your neighbor.

Teddy always was a runt. That's why he was a wing walker. You wanted as little weight as possible moving around out there on the fabric-covered wings of those Jennies the flying circuses were using right after the war. They weren't built for wing walking. But Teddy walked 'em, even in his sleep.

It was old stuff to him. It was so old he began to look around for something new to thrill the gaping crowds. Something that gave them a bigger kick than hanging by your knees from the undercarriage of a speeding plane. He didn't know then it never pays to play the other fellow's game. But he learned.

Well sir, it was in a town the flying circus was playing out in Iowa that Teddy came across the idea he was looking for. It came to him as he watched a human fly scale the walls of the tallest building. Reaching the topmost story, the fly somehow attached an ordinary inner tube to a window, sunk his teeth in the other end and hung there in the breeze. Teddy saw the stunt "got" the crowd. And it would knock 'em cold when he pulled it on a plane a thousand or so feet in the air.

Human Fly Coaches Teddy for New Job. When the fly came down to earth, Teddy introduced himself, invited him to supper. Maybe they hoisted a couple. Anyway, the fly warmed up enough to tell Teddy how it worked.

Before he went to bed that night, the wing walker bought himself a couple of brand new inner tubes. The next day, out at the flying field, he rigged them as he had been instructed. High up on a wall he fastened an end of one. Then, climbing on a chair, he took the other end in his teeth and kicked the chair away.

The darn thing stretched so far his feet touched the floor. He moved the tube a couple of feet higher and everything was fine.

Day after day Teddy religiously practiced hanging from that tube to strengthen the muscles of his jaws and neck. It was a heavy strain to put on the front upper teeth that were bridge-work, but they held. And six weeks later Teddy was prepared to strut his stuff.

Before we go any further I had better tell you Teddy is Theodore Davidson of Galesburg, Ill. They still call him "Dare Devil" Davidson, this new member of the Floyd Gibbons Adventurers' club.

He was all of that on a sunny afternoon, in September, 1919, in Moline, Ill., where the flying circus was putting on its show, making those

Jennies do things they were never built for. The weather was perfect. So was the gate. And the performers were feeling pretty good as they took to the skies.

Especially Teddy. He was going to pop their eyes out with a brand new, death-defying stunt, performed for the first time in any land. It never occurred to him then, this would also be the last time.

The inner tube was fastened securely to the axle of the undercarriage of the Jenny. And everything went off according to schedule until Teddy began lowering himself down that wriggling, slippery, flabby length of rubber.

Fails to Figure Effect of Air Resistance. "Right then," Teddy says, "I could see I had stretched my luck too far."

Right there, too, he began learning a painful lesson in simple physics! He had failed to figure what effect the air resistance of his body would have upon the tubing. Hanging below the plane, moving 70 miles an hour, the drag of the air on Teddy added some 30 or 40 pounds to the weight on that big rubber band.

"That tube started stretching and stretching," says Teddy, "and it was like a live thing as I slipped and fought it!"

The more it stretched, the harder it was for a wing walker with a bright idea to hang on. It had never acted that way in practice. Would it hold? Could it hold? What was he going to do about it? Teddy says he was too dumb to climb back. That was probably because he was too busy holding on.

Well sir, that's one of the darnedest fixes I ever heard of. And it became worse. After rattling for 10 minutes with that flexible support his arms tired.

He slipped lower. Finally, he just had to let himself down to where he could sink his teeth into the gadget attached to the flapping end. His jaws clamped down on it. The rest of him was limp with weariness.

His head forced back, he saw the tube stretch alarmingly as gusts of wind put more pressure on his body. There were six feet of it between him and the landing gear.

In practice, it had never stretched to more than three!

Rests Arms to Climb Back to Safety. Teddy tried to relax as the plane circled 1,500 feet above the grandstand. His aching arms were folded, resting for that long climb to safety. He wasn't sure he could do it. But he was not permitted to dwell on the idea for long. There was a wrench, a crunch, a shoot of pain in Teddy's face.

The bridgework that was Teddy's front uppers had crushed! The ends of the mouthpiece, however, were tucked away back where they were gripped by molars on both sides. Still gripping it, Teddy began inching his way upward along that thin, twisted, tough tubing that had been put to such strange use. Well, boys and girls, there is no use prolonging the agony.

"I made it, too," Teddy says, "but by such a small margin I decided then and there to be satisfied with my old bag of tricks."

Teddy's story closes on a note of sadness. Those artificial teeth of his vanished into thin air during the minutes he struggled up that yielding rope of rubber. All the dough he made that dizzy day went to buy a new set.

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Fails to Figure Effect of Air Resistance. "Right then," Teddy says, "I could see I had stretched my luck too far."

Right there, too, he began learning a painful lesson in simple physics! He had failed to figure what effect the air resistance of his body would have upon the tubing. Hanging below the plane, moving 70 miles an hour, the drag of the air on Teddy added some 30 or 40 pounds to the weight on that big rubber band.

"That tube started stretching and stretching," says Teddy, "and it was like a live thing as I slipped and fought it!"

The more it stretched, the harder it was for a wing walker with a bright idea to hang on. It had never acted that way in practice. Would it hold? Could it hold? What was he going to do about it? Teddy says he was too dumb to climb back. That was probably because he was too busy holding on.

Well sir, that's one of the darnedest fixes I ever heard of. And it became worse. After rattling for 10 minutes with that flexible support his arms tired.

He slipped lower. Finally, he just had to let himself down to where he could sink his teeth into the gadget attached to the flapping end. His jaws clamped down on it. The rest of him was limp with weariness.

His head forced back, he saw the tube stretch alarmingly as gusts of wind put more pressure on his body. There were six feet of it between him and the landing gear.

In practice, it had never stretched to more than three!

Rests Arms to Climb Back to Safety. Teddy tried to relax as the plane circled 1,500 feet above the grandstand. His aching arms were folded, resting for that long climb to safety. He wasn't sure he could do it. But he was not permitted to dwell on the idea for long. There was a wrench, a crunch, a shoot of pain in Teddy's face.

The bridgework that was Teddy's front uppers had crushed! The ends of the mouthpiece, however, were tucked away back where they were gripped by molars on both sides. Still gripping it, Teddy began inching his way upward along that thin, twisted, tough tubing that had been put to such strange use. Well, boys and girls, there is no use prolonging the agony.

"I made it, too," Teddy says, "but by such a small margin I decided then and there to be satisfied with my old bag of tricks."

Teddy's story closes on a note of sadness. Those artificial teeth of his vanished into thin air during the minutes he struggled up that yielding rope of rubber. All the dough he made that dizzy day went to buy a new set.

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Jennies do things they were never built for. The weather was perfect. So was the gate. And the performers were feeling pretty good as they took to the skies.

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