

Washington Not Always Glamorous

World's Greatest Capital Has Its Seamy Side Too!

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WASHINGTON.—A boy joined the staff of a four-page paper of which he was one day to become editor. The office was a rattle-trap building whose notable characteristics, he later said, were "sewer gas, rats, dirt, overgrown rowdy newsboys who had to be held in check by a long whip and fire-arms," and it was "positively dangerous at times to go into the alley which they infested, leading to the composing room."



stitution. He will be remembered for his long campaign to give Washington a vote in congressional and national matters.

Rats Were Menace To City's Health

Some time ago I had occasion to mention the invasion of Washington by rats and how the city hired a modern Pied Piper who has done an effective, if silent, job. This was brought to my mind recently when I encountered a fat, black cat on my way to work early one morning. The cat had a guilty look, and I had a hunch he had spent the night in riotous living and was merely sneaking in to change his collar.

However, the cataclysm caused by the rat-invasion in which, believe it or not, a baby's hand was eaten brought hasty action and I see that it was considered worthy of comment by experts, including the editors of the magazine of the American Museum of Natural History.

The campaign began when a case of typhus which is spread by fleas and mites on rats, was discovered. Traps set in the neighborhood caught a number of rats whose blood was typhus-infected. The United States Public Health service got busy, shocked to learn that the scourge of Europe two centuries ago was a possibility right here in our fair capital.

An expert was called in. He first sealed up all points where commercial transportation entered the city. Then 300 traps were set up in the zone where the infection had been found. Five days later the traps were taken in and the area was thoroughly dusted with DDT, the insecticide which the army perfected.

Next red-squill bait was distributed. It kills rats, but not pets or children who might pick up the bait. In places where there was no danger to human beings the deadly "1080" was distributed. The campaign was successful. Meanwhile, a clean-up of potential rat-breeding premises was started with court orders to enforce it. Today Washington has a complete scientific rat-control program which will cost us about \$75,000 annually.

However, it still leaves a few rats for energetic cats.

When People Vote, They Win

The June "Economic Outlook," published by the Congress of Industrial Organizations, contains an article entitled "When the People Vote—They Win." That might be interpreted in more ways than one. The article points out that an "off year" is so designated politically not only because the presidency is not at stake, but because the politicians know that general apathy on the part of the voter has marked those elections in the past: 1938 (off) thirty million voters went to the polls; 1940 (on) fifty million voters; 1942 (off) twenty-eight million; 1944 (on) forty-eight million.

The CIO takes the attitude that what the people as a whole want is what they (the CIO) want, and that the people get what they want when they vote for it. They say: "Mass registration and mass voting is the best guarantee of liberal progressive government."

They might also add that if you want conservative rather than liberal progressive government, you have to vote for it, too. In any case you can't get what you want unless you go after it. The "Outlook" prints a table showing how the vote shifted in certain districts in off-years. The table showed that when the vote fell off, it was the Democratic vote. Districts which swung from Democratic to Republican candidates in most cases shifted with a decrease in the total vote.

"The Republican vote remained relatively stable, while the Democratic vote dropped sharply."

Does this prove that Democrats are sleeper than Republicans, or that the Republican is a creature of habit?

War Profiteering Will Be Scandal

The juicy scandal uncovered by the senate war investigating committee in which "profiteering at its worst," as Senator Mead called it, was exposed, is, I fear, only the beginning.

Any moment I expect to hear an explosion in connection with surplus property. War breeds waste, and the cloak of patriotic endeavor as Samuel Johnson indicated even more bluntly, often covers skullduggery.

The same thing happened after the last war, and on a smaller scale, after all wars. But what is probably making people squirm all over Washington is the revelation of the fact that telephone wires were pretty generally tapped, and heaven knows what may be in the FBI files. It is a strange thing about the telephone. People have just come to take for granted that because you

can't see anybody on the line, nobody is there.

I wouldn't be surprised to learn that telephone conversations with most of the government departments are being recorded right now. I have reason to believe that when the question of installing these recorders in the White House was brought up, it was flatly turned down. White House employees have a long and excellent record for fidelity. Of course they are carefully screened, and when the campaign to get everybody fingerprinted (an excellent idea if you have nothing to conceal about your past and no plans for an over-adventurous future) was begun, the White House employees voluntarily came forward and offered their thumbs, fingers and hands for the ink-pad.

The senate galleries were full. It was a scorcher of a day and a filibuster was going on. The senate chamber is air-cooled. What caused the crowd? The heat or the stupidity?

Pretty Goldwyn Girl Georgia Lange (who visited Washington with her five pulchritudinous pals of "Kid From Brooklyn") stepped up to a newsstand and moved a paper-weight off the face of the cover girl on the July Coronet. Why? I asked her. Because it was her face.

I never saw a purple bear. I never hope to see one—but I'd like to see that little silver-blue fellow, born recently in the Bronx zoo.

3.3 BILLION BUSHELS

Record '46 Corn Crop Forecast

WASHINGTON.—The largest crop of corn ever raised in the United States, and near record production of wheat and oats has been forecast by the department of agriculture. The department stated the current outlook for total crop production has seldom been surpassed. Except for 1942, the reported condition of all crops is the best in seven years.

Continued favorable weather is necessary to bring this prospect to realization. Indicated corn crop is 3,341,646,000 bushels, compared with the preceding record of 3,203,000,000 bushels harvested in 1944 and with 3,018,410,000 bushels in 1945.

Winter wheat crop of 857,163,000 bushels would be a record and although spring wheat promise is only 232,929,000 bushels, the total wheat harvest looks like 1,090,092,000 bush-



TRIP TO CAPITAL . . . Mrs. Evelyn Baker and Mrs. James Magee won a trip to Washington in a contest conducted by radio station KOTA in Rapid City, S. D., to honor women who did their jobs quietly and well during the war. Mrs. Baker's husband was killed on Okinawa and she has two children. Mrs. Magee lost a son in the war.

NEWS REVIEW

Truman Sets Jaw, Shows That Job Irritates Him

TRUMAN: Temper Short

Amper it's hot weather, but President Truman's temper is considerably shorter than it used to be. This was evident recently when he spoke out at a press conference stating that John O'Donnell, a reporter, had spread "another lie." (Incidentally, O'Donnell once received an iron cross from FDR.) Other displays of irritability have been noticed by those close to him. Is it his health? No, says his doctor; it's just being President.

"I don't know of any President who kept so many appointments," said Col. Wallace Graham, the President's physician.

Mr. Truman wakes himself between 5:30 and 6:00 each morning, showers, shaves and dresses without the aid of a valet, and goes for a mile walk. He sometimes splashes in the White House swimming pool, but never plays golf or engages in any game more strenuous than pitching horseshoes. He may keep eight or ten appointments of 10 to 20 minutes each, see visitors, legislators, foreign diplomats, head a reception line and do some work in his office, all in an afternoon and evening. He sleeps soundly too.

But sometimes these days, he's a little irritable! Maybe he's just like the rest of us.

INVISIBLE DEATH: Surrounds Bikini

Some of the things that happened at Bikini atoll when the atomic bomb exploded are still a mystery, correspondents aver. The A-bomb rays, for instance, clung like a se-



CANDIDATE . . . Mother of four children, Mrs. Elizabeth Chilton Murray is a candidate for the Democratic nomination for congress in the eighth district of Virginia. Her father was former U. S. Senator William Chilton.

cret weapon or invisible death around that South Pacific area for hours and days—and even longer perhaps.

The blast of x-rays and invisible alpha, beta and neutron rays that hit ships from the atom bomb were more crippling than the blast that smashed down and the heat that wrecked some. One of the navy's "drone" ships, which went pilotless into the cloud and returned, was unsafe to approach for more than three days. It is believed that had there been pilots in the planes they would have been killed. Mice that flew into the cloud changed color. White mice became brown. Hair usually turns white or gray when exposed to radioactive rays. All the drones brought back evidence of extreme radioactivity in or near the cloud. This invisible ray attack was worst at about 15,000 feet altitude. The roof of x-ray is placed at about 2,000 feet, so the other rays were different.

So far the scientists have made no report. But newsmen are asking: "Could human beings have lived on airplanes and ships after the blast?"

COTTON: Crop Is Bigger

There were 18,316,000 acres of cotton in cultivation on July 1, or 3.2 per cent more than a year ago, the department of agriculture has estimated.

The acreage in cultivation July 1 and the percentage of the 1945 acreage, respectively, by states included: Missouri, 310,000 acres and 116 per cent; Virginia, 20,000 and 105; North Carolina, 580,000 and 102; South Carolina, 950,000 and 98; Georgia, 1,235,000 and 98; Florida, 23,000 and 100; Tennessee, 600,000 and 99; Alabama, 1,510,000 and 107; Mississippi, 2,420,000 and 106; Arkansas, 1,660,000 and 107; Louisiana, 900,000 and 104; Oklahoma, 1,120,000 and 95; Texas, 6,350,000 and 104; New Mexico, 116,000 and 99; Arizona, 145,000 and 94; California, 359,000 and 113, and all other states, 18,000 and 99.

WHEAT QUOTA: To Europe Passed

The United States was ahead of its quota of wheat shipments to Europe in the first six months of 1946, Secretary of Agriculture Anderson reported a few days ago. He reported to President Truman that 50,000,000 bushels were shipped in June, bringing shipments for the year up to 397,000,000 bushels.

COAL LAND: Good for Farming

At Altoona, Pa., tests have shown that stripped coal fields, properly backfilled, are better farm land than before the coal was removed. It was the opinion of the state mine inspector that practically all of the land can be restored for agricultural purposes, either for cropping, grazing or planting orchards.

SECRECY PREVAILS

Ships Regrouped for Second Atomic Test

By WALTER A. SHEAD
WNU Correspondent.

HONOLULU, OPERATIONS CROSSROADS — With much attendant secrecy the target fleet in Bikini lagoon has been regrouped for the second atom bomb test scheduled for July 25. Although most of the correspondents have returned to the States, several made application to remain in Bikini during the interim so they could cover the arrangements being made for the second test. This request was refused by the navy, however, and all newspaper men were ordered to proceed to Kwajalein, where they were either transported immediately by air to the States or to Honolulu, or were housed aboard the press ship Appalachian.

In the meantime the Appalachian made a leisurely trip to Pearl Harbor where she underwent some minor repairs, and now is proceeding back to Bikini, where she is scheduled to arrive on B-day minus 1, or July 24.

Nearest Center.

It has been announced that ships nearest the bulls-eye of the second test will include the battleship Arkansas, the heavy cruiser Pensacola, the Japanese battleship Nagato, the aircraft carrier Saratoga, the destroyer Mayrant, the submarine Pilotfish, the transport Falow and a tank landing ship.

It may be that the Pilotfish will be nearest the bomb burst, which, as has been announced, will be an underwater detonation. Other ships of the target fleet have been placed in various positions ranging up to 1,800 yards away from the blast.

The Arkansas, the Pensacola and the Nagato all were severely damaged as to superstructure in the first blast. The Pensacola particularly suffered heavy damage to her fire control; her stacks were blown off and her deck plates buckled. This correspondent went aboard the Pensacola after the first test and noted that her decks amidship were driven downward about 12 inches and with such force that steel supports beneath were driven through the steel deck plating like toothpicks through paper.

Await Report.

There is considerable speculation as to the coming report of the Military Evaluation board as to the efficacy of the atom bomb as an offensive weapon in naval warfare. If the board decides that future naval construction must meet the dangers of atomic blasts, then we may expect an entirely different warship of the future.

The experience of the first blast indicates that fireproof exposed upon high superstructure is particularly susceptible to the heat and blast of atomic power. The speculation is that to meet this threat, future construction will see streamlined warships with low superstructures, enclosed as much as possible, looking something like a modern diesel locomotive with curved surfaces to deflect blast.

Installation of ventilation systems also will be given close scrutiny since it was learned that the blast in some cases, particularly aboard the Pensacola, entered the ventila-



TERRIFIC BRILLIANCE . . . Camera catches terrific brilliance of atomic blast in this photo taken just at time of detonation of the atomic bomb.

tion openings and followed the ducts below decks, breaking out at the weakest points, shoving through a bulkhead and smashing other obstacles in its way deep in the ship.

This was particularly noticeable in a comparison with the German ship Prinz Eugen, which has no ventilation system and depends upon row upon row of portholes for ventilation for its crew. Not a porthole was smashed and no damage done below deck, but she was admittedly much farther from the center of the blast than the Pensacola.

In reflecting upon the damage done to the ships in the first blast, the remarkable thing to this writer is that not a single live mine, bomb, shell, bag of powder or any other ammunition aboard any ship was exploded either by the heat or blast force of the bomb. Torpedoes on the Independence exploded due to a fire which finally exploded her powder magazine and her aviation



MUSHROOM CLOUD . . . The huge mushroom cloud rises over Bikini shortly after the atom bomb was dropped. This picture was made by a photographer flying in a B-29.

gasoline. But on most all the ships were placed live mines, bombs, shells were in guns or on loading apparatus, and each ship had a full load of ammunition. None of it was exploded and the safety crews which boarded the ships following the blast were careful in their examination.

Then the speculation goes to the use of lead lining against X-rays, rock wool or some other protection against heat, and concrete or some substitute against neutrons and other radioactivity.

Opinions Vary.

There are two schools of thought as to the damage likely to occur to ship hulls from the underwater blast. Having in mind the fact that depth charges of presently used explosives have sunk or damaged submarines and heavily damaged destroyers and other lighter craft, one school declares that the atomic bomb will play havoc with the target fleet and predicts that even capital ships closest to the blast will be capsized and sunk.

Others, however, predict that much of the force of the blast will be absorbed by the water and that, although there is danger of light ships capsizing, the larger ships will merely roll with the water and their heavier underwater armor will not be damaged. They predict the heavily armored ships will not suffer as much underwater damage as could be inflicted with a torpedo. This is all in the realm of speculation, however, and the navy remains mum about its own expectations.

In discussions aboard the Appalachian among scientists and off-the-record comment by naval officers, there is some reason to presume that the atomic bomb as an offensive weapon against ships at sea is not as effective as other weapons. However, its effectiveness against naval bases would be devastating and a fleet without naval bases would be rendered impotent.

Atoll to Remain.

This writer believes that Bikini atoll and its coconut groves will be there after the second test is over and even after the third bomb scheduled for November or later is detonated in hundreds of fathoms of water in the ocean outside Bikini lagoon. We do not expect any 100-foot waves nor 1,000-mile-an-hour wind although some wave may wash over the island. A 15-foot wave could do that.

But the test which has changed from a joint army-navy operation, about which so much stress was put, into strictly a navy show and which is probably costing about a half million dollars a day, likely will give our military men all the knowledge they will need to prepare for or against the atomic bomb in the future . . . if indeed there is any way of preparing against it.

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