SEEN and HEARD around the NATIONAL CAPITAL

By Carter Field

Washington.—Frank R. McNinch is going to blow away the smoke that has been hovering over the Federal communications commission and put out the fire if there is any. Primarily that is what he was put in there for. Scarcely anything pending on Capitol Hill has worried President Roosevelt more than the Wallace White resolution providing for a sweeping senate investigation into FCC. Particularly in that this resolution would be handled by the senate interstate commerce committee of which Burton K. Wheeler is chairman. The President correctly interprets Wheeler's attitude as one of active dislike for himself, despite Wheeler's approval of many of the New Deal economic and social objectives.

Whatever may be the truth about the "fire," certainly many folks in the industry just assumed that it was there. They gave no open indications of a suspicion that anything so gross as actual passage of money would be effective, but many approved the policy that the distillers followed, when they offered the job as their czar first to James A. Farley and then to Forbes Morgan, Mrs. Roosevelt's uncle. There were little signs of this, such as the hiring of Charles Michelson by one radio station which wanted its license extended.

Actually, whatever the fact may be, it has been the common assumption in Washington and in the industry that wave lengths were awarded according to the political influence those seeking them were able to bring to bear.

McNinch, although formerly a politician, has shown no evidence of being swayed by politics in any action since coming to Washington. He is honest beyond question, and punctilious about merit as he sees it. In fact, it is often commented that it is worry about which is the right thing to do that causes his bad spells of nervous indigestion.

Three Plums Less

Just two weeks after taking office McNinch killed three birds with one stone by abolishing the set-up by which the seven-man commission had been divided into three water-tight compartments dealing, respectively, with telegraph, telephone and radio matters, thus neatly removing three juicy political plums from the Washington tree. For when the three divisions cease to function on November 15 there will be no further need, of course, for the services of Robert T. Bartley, A. G. Patterson, and Joseph F. Killeen, the directors of the three divisions. Bartley just happens to be a nephew of Representative Sam Rayburn, house majority leader; Patterson is a close friend of ex-Senator Hugo L. Black (who now has a better job), and Killeen is an old associate of Postmaster-General James A. Farley and of Edward J. Flynn, Democratic leader in the Bronx in New York City.

To analyze the action justly, it should be explained that the reduction in personnel was a secondary result. It is generally acknowledged that the purge victims have performed adequately the rather superficial duties of their respective positions. It is also admitted that the commission's work will probably be carried on without noticeable lag after they leave. The real objective can be read between the lines of McNinch's official statement: ". . . Experience has shown that to subdivide a small commission has a divisive effect and tends away from co-operation and mutual understanding; the assignment of such important work (to division) . . . has resulted in two members of the commission . . . exercising an undesirably large portion of the power and functions of the commission, while denying the other commissioners any practical opportunity to participate in decisions . . . Commissioners not on a particular division have felt a natural reluctance to inquire into the work committed to others . . . The aggregate wisdom and judgment of seven minds is surely greater than any two or three of the seven." In other words, it is harder for seven men to fall into error than for two to do so.

Word About Hard Coal

Most people think of hard coal—anthracite—as rather an expensive luxury. And what with oil and gas heating, occasional coal strikes, etc., as pretty nearly a dying industry.

So it's rather interesting that a study has been made of the situation in northeastern Pennsylvania, with a view to determining how the use of anthracite can be increased in producing electricity! And this in this era of government subsidized water-power, with President Roosevelt's eulogies of Bonneville and Grand Coulee so recently on the front pages.

The fact is that anthracite has been used for the production of electricity for some years. It is more economical in that little section of the country where the hard coal is mined. They have become rather efficient in using it under boilers in generating plants, too, being able now to produce a kilowatt hour from a pound and a half of low-grade anthracite. It took twice as much back in 1919.

Another strange thing is that the use of anthracite in power production is virtually the only market for hard coal which has not diminished in the last few years. Actually it has increased slightly. It is now running about two million tons a year.

There are points about this situation, which caused this study and inspire optimism among the hard coal miners, which are interesting in connection with the whole power problem.

As to Freight Rates

For example, freight rates. One of the reasons why so many folks are skeptical about the success of the big western power projects is just that. They figure that the manufacturer who goes to Bonneville to get cheap power is going to run into freight rates. Partly on his raw material, but mostly on shipping his product two thousand odd miles back to where the consumers are.

It's not a new story. Back in the early '20's lots of farmers went broke on irrigated land in western Montana. They raised potatoes and shipped them to Chicago, considerably more than a thousand miles. Potatoes are heavy—for their value. Maybe the railroads ought not to charge so much. But it's a long haul. So one hears a lot about "intermountain freight rates."

Now the fact is, as the bureau of standards will tell you, that there are more units of heat in a ton of bituminous coal than in a ton of anthracite. And you can buy a ton of bituminous at the mine mouth cheaper than you can buy a ton of anthracite.

But it is cheaper to use anthracite to produce power than bituminous, if the production occurs in anthracite territory. The answer is freight rates.

Whereas right in the anthracite territory there are all the industries a power salesman could ask, and all the consumers for the products of those industries one could desire.

A Sore Spot

Apprentice training is one of the sore spots in the present business management problem, but there is little prospect of any corrective action. There is plenty of lip service for the idea of doing something—of opening the door to employment at the more lucrative trades to more boys and young men—but union opposition plus lethargy seems too strong for the irritated employers who suffer in times of shortage of skilled employees. Especially as the employers have never put up anything remotely resembling a real fight.

In most skilled trades it is more difficult for a youngster to get aboard the bottom rung of a ladder than it is for him to get into a very exclusive Greek letter fraternity at college.

Once the youngster has been "tapped" for apprentice training, it is fairly simple. Of course he has to put in four years' training before he is recognized as a mechanic, palpably absurd in most trades, and absolutely essential in none. But by the same token he does not have to display any special aptitude or mental ability, or physical dexterity to master something in four years which another boy would be able to do in from six months to a year—or he himself for that matter.

This has been the labor union rule. Recognizing the need for more skilled mechanics and for more young men trained so as to take care of the future, the government stepped into the picture and set up the Federal committee for apprentice training. This body has solemnly stood by the union requirements—four years, frills, Greek letter "tapping" to get started, and all.

Makes It Worse

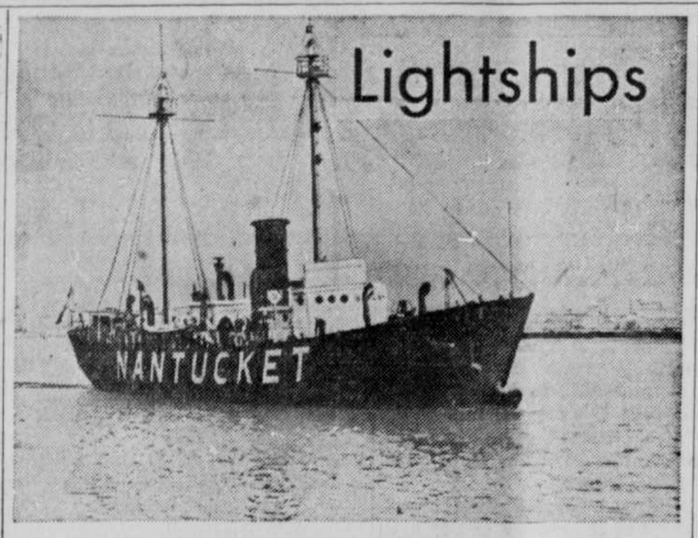
But along comes another government agency and makes the situation still worse—for the small employer. This is the government employment agency. Here is what has happened again and again in the last few months, when despite the alleged slowing down of business there has been a scarcity of skilled mechanics.

Mr. Big Employer needs 100 skilled mechanics of a certain variety. He informs the government employment agency of this need and tells what he is willing to pay. Whereupon the government agency rounds up the men for him, taking them from anywhere from 10 to 30 small competitors of Mr. Big Employer.

Mr. Big Employer is able to pay more. Mr. Little Employer cannot hold them. Mr. Little Employer does without.

When this situation is pointed out to New Dealers, with the possibility that, if carried on indefinitely, such a course would lead to the gradual elimination of all the little fellows, New Dealers do not seem frightened.

"This practice tends to force wages up to their proper level," they answer. "These little employers you are feeling sorry for are exploiting their workers. They should meet the prevailing wage scale. This would boost the buying power of their communities, and help general prosperity."



Lightship Anchored on Nantucket Shoals.

Lightships and Lighthouses Save Lives and Property Along America's Coasts

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

LIGHTSHIPS, bobbing about the sea along our coast, warning mariners of dangerous shoals, may not stir the imagination of passengers on passing ships, but they have played an important part in guarding life and property at sea.

They have repeatedly given refuge to the the shipwrecked. A German submarine raider visited Newport in 1916, before we entered the World war. Later it went out and made its lair near Nantucket lightship, where, until the alarm spread, vessels were contantly passing. The submarine sank a number of unarmed merchant ships, the crews of which took refuge on the lightship. At one time there were 115 shipwrecked men aboard the lightship, and 19 ships' boats were trailing on a line astern.

As bad weather ensued shortly, and the locality is 47 miles from the nearest land, it is certain that many of these seamen would have lost their lives had it not been for the haven provided by the lightship.

The only navigational aid in this country destroyed by the enemy during the World war was the Diamond Shoal lightship off Cape Hatteras.

On the afternoon of August 8, 1918, a submarine raider began firing at a merchant ship about a mile and a half away. The lightship broadcast by radio a warning to other vessels in the vicinity, and this was undoubtedly the means of saving many ships. But it resulted in the submarine's firing six shots at the lightship, and later returning and sinking it by gunfire.

The crew got away in boats, and, after seeing the ship go to the bottom, they landed safely that evening on Cape Hatteras.

Some Notable Life Saving Work.

Blunts Reef lightship marks the outer limit of rocks off Cape Mendocino, a wild and desolate section of the California coast.

At 1:30 on a June morning in 1916, the lookout reported a boat hailing the lightship. On coming alongside, the officer in charge stated that the steamship Bear had stranded between the cape and False Cape rock. In all, nine lifeboats came alongside, and 155 people from the Bear, including many women, were taken aboard the lightship and given hot coffee and warm bedding.

Other lifeboats arrived later with more survivors. Eventually all these people were transferred to land by the steamer Grace Dollar.

This all happened during dense fog which had lasted for two days, with the station fog signals sounding regularly. Now a radio-beacon has been placed on Blunts Reef lightship.

In 1916, Fire Island lightship, in the approach to New York, was rammed by the steamer Philadelphian, and her side cut open for four feet below the water line.

The ship was saved from sinking only by the remarkable presence of mind and quick work of her crew, who shifted weights, slung out boats, and filled them with water, so as to list the vessel and bring the damage above the water line.

Lightship number one was retired from duty in 1930, after 75 years of service. This vessel was built for the station then known as Nantucket New South Shoals, and remained on this exposed station for 36 years, with only sails for power.

In early days it was not easy to maintain lightships on outside stations. The first attempts in this country were made at Sandy Hook, at the entrance to New York bay, in 1823, and at Diamond Shoal, off Cape Hatteras, in 1824. In the latter case the ship broke from her moorings within a few months, and, after being replaced several times, was wrecked in 1827. It was 70 years before another lightship was placed off Diamond Shoal.

Recent Improvements in Lightships.

Marked advance has since been made in lightship design. The breaking strength of mooring chains has been doubled; even a West Indies hurricane passing up the coast seldom parts a mooring.

In the gale of September, 1933, Diamond Shoal lightship dragged her 5,500-pound mushroom anchor five miles, but the mooring chain withstood the tremendous strain.

Our coastal lighthouse system was fairly well completed in the last century. Structures which house the great lights of today were for the most part built from 60 to 80 years ago.

Progress in recent years has been more in technical improvements, making use of radio, electricity, new illuminants, and improved fog signals.

Now and then, however, changes must be made in the primary stations themselves; new needs call for new stations, the abandonment of old towers, or the substitution of less expensive automatic lights.

Six light stations of the first rank, recently completed, show the different needs that occasionally arise. At North Manitou, in the northern part of Lake Michigan, a station has been built in 22 feet of water to take the place of a lightship. Two other similar stations have recently been completed in this lake.

At Cape Decision, Alaska, a new light and fog signal station stands in a key position for the navigation of southeast Alaska, situated as it is at an entrance from the outside, and at a turning point for the inside passages.

At the south end of Santa Barbara channel, off the coast of California, navigation is now safeguarded by the station on Anacapa island, a guide both to coasting vessels and to those approaching Los Angeles from the open sea.

The sixth of these new primary stations stands at the entrance from Lake Huron to the St. Mary's river, where it was necessary to have a guide close to the channel for the Lake Superior traffic.

The most powerful light in the American lighthouse system shines from a low structure atop the Atlantic Highlands at Navesink, New Jersey. Its penetrating beam measures 9,000,000 candlepower.

Vicissitudes of Lighthouses.

Progress, as well as nature's assaults, sometimes dooms fine old lighthouses. Often these towers figure prominently in local history and romance. Fortunately, such old towers sometimes can be preserved.

The state of New Jersey has taken over the tall tower of Barnegat light, which is of diminished importance to navigation. The first Cape Henry tower, in Virginia, has been transferred to a patriotic organization, and that at Cape Florida is preserved by a private purchaser.

When the sea encroaches, it is often difficult to save an old station. Usually it is less expensive to move it, or to build another lighthouse.

Thus, along the low-lying, sandy south Atlantic states and Gulf coasts, many early masonry towers have succumbed to the sea. Metal structures have been dismantled and moved back to places of safety.

Eleven years ago the historic lighthouse at Cape Henlopen, Delaware, was destroyed by the inroads of the Atlantic. Henlopen was one of the early Colonial lights.

Our steady change to modern automatic lights has saved the public much money. But for primary lights the maxim is, "Safety is found only in certainty," and human attention, given by lightkeepers, must be retained. An exception is the lighthouse operated by the United States government on Navassa island in the West Indies. Here the keepers were removed because of difficulty in maintaining them on this uninhabited and barren island between Jamaica and Hispaniola. This lighthouse now has two automatic flashing lights, one above the other, with independent gas supplies for each, to insure that one light will always show.

Ingenious devices are utilized to save gas or electricity in burning the automatic lights. Sun valves, depending on the rate of expansion of different metals, are used to turn off the acetylene gas lights during the daytime.

Recently the light-sensitive cell has been employed to turn on and off automatic electric lights operated from batteries.

The unattended flashing light at Molokini, Hawaiian Islands, burned without failure for nearly 20 years, flashing over 200,000,000 times. Two lighted buoys each have a record of burning nearly a year and a half on one charge of acetylene gas.

The Walkin' Deputy

By ALICE V. LINDLEY

WALKIN' JOHNNY, though city-bred, had all the earmarks of a good deputy sheriff with but one exception. That he could walk was an accepted fact to everyone in the little cow town of Rawlins, and that he had nerve, he had proved to everyone's satisfaction when he had captured that gang in the hills, alone and on foot.

But when it had come to riding a horse, well, as Johnny told the sheriff: A man can do just so many things with his feet, but a horse—if a horse had any limitations in that respect Johnny had failed to find them.

Now it seemed as though every bad man for miles had made up his mind that Rawlins was the only town in the country worthy of attention just then, and a Walkin' Deputy, as Johnny had come to be called, was of about as much use as taxicabs in Venice. So Johnny had concluded it was his painful duty to learn to ride.

It was after a fairly victorious encounter with his mount that Johnny learned the sheriff's plans to take a posse after "Red" Terry's gang and he begged to go along.

"All right," the fat one told him, "but if yuh fall behind we'll have to get along without yuh."

So Johnny had gone along and soon, very soon, he regretted it heartily. He had never been so long in the saddle and every bone in his body ached, each one in competition with its neighbor. So intent was he upon his personal agony that he failed to notice that the others were drawing out of sight, but it was not until sundown that he would admit he had completely lost them. And then he became a new creature. He still ached, to be sure, but he could stand it as long as his two feet were on solid ground. His weariness almost completely left him as he made his preparations for the night. He was about to light his fire when he saw a little spiral of smoke not more than a mile away.

"Must be the sheriff and the boys," he chuckled. "Guess I'll ride over," (At the mere sound of the word "ride" Johnny's bones ached protestingly.) "Guess I'll walk over and pay a visit," he finished lamely. So he set out briskly.

It was not so far as he had thought, but some cautious instinct warned him to go slowly and he blessed that impulse when he came in sight of the three horses tied a little distance from the fire. They were not the horses he had been trailing all afternoon.

Stealthily now Johnny made his way back toward his camp. Once there he thought things over carefully. It would be easy to circle around and wait for them further down the trail, but they were riders with a reputation and if they made a break for it Johnny would be helpless. While he planned he looked over his equipment. Suddenly he made a low exclamation as he picked up a small bottle from out of his saddle bag.

It was a drug, the kind they gave horses. Johnny had bought it one day for fun and had amused himself often by threatening his horse with it when that animal acted a bit too lively. Now Johnny saw in it a possibility of overcoming a big difficulty. Once more he started for Terry's camp and in less than an hour he was back, a grin of satisfaction on his face . . . His horse well hidden, he watched the three riders coming along the trail.

"Seem to be having trouble with their animals," he chuckled gleefully.

Johnny waited until they were directly opposite before he commanded them to stop. Desperately each man tried to urge his horse but the animals refused.

"Get down," Johnny ordered curtly. "You ought to be ashamed riding such tired horses. You're going to town, but it wouldn't be right for you to ride them poor horses so you'll have to walk. Tell you what I'll do. I got a horse here just full of pep and rearin' to go, but so there won't be no hard feelings why I'll just walk along with you boys."

When the posse came back next day Johnny met them at the door of the fat one's office. The sheriff saw him and grinned.

"We had to dispense with your company kinda sudden, didn't we, son?" he asked with a twinkle in his eye.

"Yah," said Johnny. "Come on in, I got a present for yuh."

"Well," said the fat one, a little later as he and Johnny sat on the corral fence, "yuh sure made a good haul. What yuh gonna buy with the reward money?"

Johnny gave his horse a malicious glance.

"I'm going to buy me a flivver," he stated flatly.

SHORT SHORT STORY

Complete in This Issue

Interpreters of the Mode

SO LONG as you Sew-Your-Own, Milady, just so long will Yours Truly strive to interpret the mode for you. Today the trio brings you frocks for every size (from four years to size 52) for almost any occasion. Each has been designed to bring you the ultimate in style in its particular class and all claim a new high in simplicity and comfort.

Ultra-Smart Dress.

It's nice to know you're easy to look at even if the occasion is only another breakfast session. That's why the ultra-smart dress at the left is so handy to have. Note the clever detail all the way through even to the inverted skirt pleat. See how beautifully the sleeves set-in—you just know at a glance how simple it is to put together. Cotton, of course, is the material.

Typical of Youth.

The surest way to be a big little-body is to wear dresses that are as expertly planned as the grown-ups'. The little number above, center, has the smart styling of a sub-deb's frock. It is typical of youth's freshness and activity, and is one model that gets little girls' complete endorsement. It is the number one dress for the number one sweetheart in anybody's family.

An Orchid to You.

Do you think of a charming sorority tea with lots of atmosphere and plenty of style when you look at the handsome new two-piecer above, right? Would you like it made in one color and material, or, perhaps with a topper in gold lame or satin combined with a skirt of a rich dull fabric? Why not make it yourself to suit your own fancy and step into a swell little world of glamour crowded with fans and sun and festivity?

The Patterns.

Pattern 1401 is designed for sizes 36 to 52. Size 38 requires 4½ yards of 35-inch material.

Pattern 1366 is designed for sizes 6, 8, 10, 12, and 14 years. Size 8 requires 2⅜ yards of 39-inch material, plus 1¾ yards of machine-made pleating to trim, as pictured.

Pattern 1396 is designed for sizes 32 to 44. Size 34 requires 1⅞ yards of 39-inch material for the blouse, 1⅞ yards of 54-inch material for the skirt.

Send your order to The Sewing Circle Pattern Dept., Room 1020, 211 W. Wacker Drive, Chicago, Ill. Price of patterns, 15 cents (in coins) each.

New Pattern Book.

Send 15 cents for the Barbara Bell Fall and Winter Pattern Book. Make yourself attractive, practical and becoming clothes, selecting designs from the Barbara Bell well-planned, easy-to-make patterns.

Friendly Talk

BUT after all, the very best thing in good talk and the thing that helps it most is friendship. How it dissolves the barriers that divide us, and loosens all constraint—this feeling that we understand and trust each other, and wish each other heartily well! Everything into which it really comes is good. It transforms letter-writing from a task into a pleasure. It makes music a thousand times more sweet. The people who play and sing not at us, but to us—how delightful it is to listen to them. Yes, there is a talkability that can express itself even without words.—Van Dyke.

READ THE ADS

LIFE'S LIKE THAT — By Fred Neher

"The charge is taxidermy, yer honor . . . . he was stuffin' ballot boxes!!"