# SEEN and HEARD around the NATIONAL CAPITAL

By Carter Field

FAMOUS WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT

Washington.—Most significant in connection with Gov. Herbert H. Lehman's attack on President Roosevelt's Supreme court enlargement bill was the fact that the President has turned, one by one, against so many of his former close advisers and lieutenants.

The recent fight for leadership of the senate Democrats, to fill the place made vacant by the death of Senator Joseph T. Robinson, demonstrated this in a striking way. For all the four years of his first administration, Roosevelt's closest confidant among senators was very generally regarded as Senator James F. Byrnes of South Carolina.

In fact, if Senator Robinson had died a year ago there would have been little doubt on Capitol Hill that selection of Senator Byrnes as leader would be the thing the White House wanted.

Actually Senator Byrnes discovered, shortly after the recent battle began, that all the White House wires were being pulled for Senator Alben W. Barkley of Kentucky. Senator Byrnes found he had no chance at all. He was caught between two millstones. So he retired from the race, and Barkley was chosen.

The most effective supporter the President has had on Capitol Hill has been the very non-talkative Vice President, John Nance Garner. The Vice President was really ousted as one of the President's advisers months ago, when he became very vociferous, in the privacy of the President's office, in insisting that the government should take a strong stand on the sit-down strikes. Senator Byrnes lost his popularity at 1600 Pennsylvania avenue for the same reason.

### Favored Barkley

Neither Garner nor Byrnes had ever liked the court bill, but they were following the President on it, just as Joe Robinson and Pat Harrison were.

But the President knew their hearts were not with him on this issue—to him the most important of all. That is why he was for Barkley for leader, instead of Harrison. He has always known he could depend on Barkley. Back in 1932 he was so anxious to get Barkley for temporary chairman of the national Democratic convention that he agreed to let Jouett Shouse be permanent chairman if Shouse and his friends would not oppose Barkley for temporary chairman.

This agreement was made with Robert Jackson, then secretary of the Democratic national committee (the New Hampshire Jackson, not the Robert H. Jackson of New York who is now assistant attorney general). Listening in on an extension telephone was Harry F. Byrd, now a senator from Virginia.

The importance of a vigorous temporary chairman at a political national convention is extraordinary in any close contest. On him depends the job of overseeing the selection of the permanent list of delegates!

Senators Sherman Minton of Indiana and Lewis B. Schwellenbach of Washington were called in with Senator Barkley and Senator Key Pittman of Nevada after the death of Robinson. This gave a clue to the present situation. They are among the most radical men in the upper house.

### Wages and Hours Bill

The average senator and representative, in trying to figure out just what he should do to play safe on the bill regulating wages and hours, is like a golfer about to drive. He must remember to get his stance right for direction, his grip as the pro told him to keep it, also to keep his left arm straight, just which part of his anatomy to move first in pivoting, and above all to keep his eye on the ball.

The only trouble with this illustration is that in worrying about the wages and hours bill there are considerably more things to remember, forgetting any one of which may prove far more disastrous than when a golfer tops, hooks, slices or whiffs.

Who could have foreseen, for instance, that freight rates would be important?

It started when some Southern congressmen, insisting that the South must have a differential to permit its employers to work their labor longer hours and pay them less than their competitors in the same line in the North, gave as one reason for the necessity of this "advantage" that the South pays higher freight rates.

It so happens that the interstate commerce commission is now digging into that question, under active prodding of certain commercial interests in the South.

Insiders predict—though predicting what the I. C. C. will do is almost as dangerous as forecasting court decisions—that there will be orders from the high court of commerce adjusting freight rates in the South. This would have the effect of depriving the Southern congressmen of one of their arguments in favor of the differential, if the decision of the I. C. C. is as predicted. But it will not end the discussion. It may even provide an unexpected bit of trouble in annoying the security holders of some of the Southern roads. It is almost certain to bring agonized cries from the truckers who will be forced by competition to reduce their rates.

### Muddied the Water

Meanwhile, of course, everybody knows that the freight rate argument was just thrown in to muddy the water—that nobody was really weighing these freight rates seriously as an argument for the differential in favor of the South on wages and hours regulation.

For of course no change in freight rates is going to change the situation with respect to the colored workers on whom the South depends for such a large proportion of its labor. The fact that a farmer may be able to send his crops to market at a little lower charge for freight is not going to make him willing to pay his workers more—not if he can get out of it. And he is going to be just as sore on his representative and senators if they vote to do that to him as if there had been no charge in the freight rates whatever.

So no decision by the I. C. C. is going to modify the course of those fighting for a differential favoring the South. It is merely going to deprive those advocating the differential of a sideline argument, and deprive them of it just about the time they are tired of talking anyhow.

All of which makes it just a little clearer why so many senators and representatives would like to put this bill, and a good many others, over until next session. It may be just as ticklish then, but they would like to stop worrying now!

### Very Few Left

Once there were plenty of Republicans in high public office, notably in the senate and house of representatives, who had the same general ideas about their party that Joseph T. Robinson had about his. There are mighty few, if any, left, and those who even come within striking distance of Robinson's batting average are without exception so branded as "reactionaries" and "Tories" that in presidential campaigns they are regarded by candidates and national chairmen as liabilities rather than assets.

Robinson believed that the most important thing to determine about any official act of his was whether it would help or hurt the Democratic party. Absolutely consistent on this, he never allowed any personal view or prejudice to influence him in the slightest if it seemed to him to run counter to the chances for electing a Democratic President at the next election.

The best illustration is prohibition. There may live a man who can say flatly that if Joe Robinson had not been in politics he would have been a dry, or a wet. But most of his friends around Washington and Little Rock doubt it. Robinson was never one of those politicians who make public speeches one way and talk privately the other. When Robinson embraced an issue, whatever may have been the original reason for his taking that side, he went all the way. He made speeches for it.

Then with extraordinary speed he changed to the new position, and became just as fanatical about that.

### Loyal to Party

Prohibition was mentioned because it is one of the most easily demonstrated cases. Robinson was born bone dry under the party leadership of William Jennings Bryan. He became wet when the party turned in that direction at the 1928 Democratic national convention. Like many others, Robinson was convinced by the 1928 landslide that the country was overwhelmingly dry and hence that any national party to win an election must be dry.

So at a national committee meeting the following year, held at a Washington hotel, when John J. Raskob proposed a new plan opening the door to repeal, Robinson made one of the most stinging speeches ever delivered at such a gathering.

"You shall not nail the skull and crossbones of an outlawed trade to the masthead of Democracy!" he shouted.

But three years later, when the Democratic national convention went all the way wet in its platform and then nominated Franklin D. Roosevelt, who accepted the platform, Robinson became an ardent wet again!

What few Northerners and Westerners understand is the cause for this extreme party of loyalty. It is sound politics in the South because of the generation-old-feeling—ever since reconstruction—that success of the Democratic party is the most vital issue in the world—that everything else sinks into insignificance when compared to it.

It has been just about 45 years since there has been any comparable feeling about the Republic party.

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# THAMES TELLS ITS TALE

Weighing a Shipment of Elephant Tusks on a London Wharf.

## From Every Corner of the Earth Come Ships That Ply This River

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

THAMES traffic makes London the world's foremost river port. Since Roman galley days—when Britons traded grain, slaves, and dogskin for European salt and horse collars — commerce has flowed between London and the continental countries along the Schelde, the Rhine and the Elbe. After Drake nerved England to smash the Spanish Armada, London ships gained in time the lion's share of ocean-borne trade.

Names immortal in discovery and conquest are linked with this water front. From here Frobisher went seeking the Northwest passage, and Hawkins to Puerto Rico and Vera Cruz; from here Lancaster made his voyages to the East, before the downfall of Portugal and the rise of the British East India company. Raleigh sailed from here to explore the Orinoco, to popularize tobacco and, tradition says, to start the Irish planting potatoes.

It was London's daring money which sent Sebastian Cabot to found the Russia company, opening trade with that land. London merchants and skippers promoted the Turkey, African, Virginia and Hudson's Bay companies.

London emigrants helped colonize in the Americas, in Australia, New Zealand, China, India, Africa and the rich islands of the sea.

**English Spread From Here.**

From this water front went the English language. In Drake's day only a few millions spoke it. Now it is a world tongue. Of all letters, telegrams, books and papers printed now, it is estimated that 70 per cent are in English. London alone uses enough newsprint every day to cover a ranch of 9,350 acres—or nearly 15 square miles of paper.

"The smell from that big paper mill at Bayswater is one of the marks I steer by on foggy nights," a Thames pilot will tell you.

Exploration of London's crowded docks reveals not only what amazing piles of food a great city can normally eat, but also what odd items, from live bats to rhino horns, are mixed in the life stream of world commerce.

Imponderable, in variety and magnitude, are these fruits of man's barter. Here, too, his work ranges from rat catching and opium sampling to dredging the Thames and handling annual cargo enough to fill a road with loaded trucks from the Yukon to Patagonia.

To say that every day some 500 craft, big and little, pass through the Thames mouth tells only half the story. More significant is what happens on the docks.

**Commission Ends Confusion.**

Even London people themselves don't dream what incredible activity is here. Few ever see it. Confusion on this crowded river, in days gone, grew so intense that waiting boats often lay unloaded for weeks; goods were piled in disorder on river banks, and pilfering was enormous. One river bandit stole almost a whole shipload of sugar! To combat this chaos the West India merchants built their own fortlike docks.

With more trade came more docks, and more toll-rate wars and other confusion. This ended in 1909 when the Port of London authority, a Royal commission, took full control under act of parliament.

It paid 23,000,000 pounds for privately owned London docks, spent millions more to make the lower Thames the world's longest deep-water channel and to enlarge and re-equip cargo-handling facilities.

It has dredged mud enough out of the Thames to build a Chinese Wall, and has constructed the world's most extensive dock system. One of its cranes, the "London Mammoth," lifts 150 tons!

Finally, with characteristic British financial genius, it sold its debentures on the stock exchange, and now its operations usually pay all costs and interest and leave a profit which is used for more improvements.

**Giant Docks and Yard.**

The PLA is not in trade. It is merely custodian of merchandise that may range from wild animals for the zoo to a shipload of molasses from which to distill fuel alcohol. It weighs goods, reports on their quality and condition; it opens bales and boxes for customs inspection, furnishes samples for buyers, and looks after repacking and loading for those who ship from London to other ports.

On the north bank of the Thames, scattered for miles downstream from the Tower, stand these great PLA docks: London, St. Katharine, East and West India, Millwall, Victoria and Albert, King George V, and the Tilbury.

On the south bank, near London's heart, are ancient Surrey Commercial docks, with a lumberyard that covers 150 acres!

Besides the railways and truck lines that tie these docks to the outlying kingdom, some 9,000 Thames barges handle goods to and from ships' sides.

Each dock has its own character. St. Katharine docks are built on the site of the old Church of St. Katharine by the Tower, founded by Queen Matilda in 1148. What heterogeneous goods they store: wool, skins, wines, spices, sugar, rubber, balata, tallow, ivory, barks, gums, drugs, coffee, iodine, hemp, quicksilver, canned fruits and fish, coir yarn, coconuts, and brandy!

**Navy at One Dock.**

West India and Millwall docks lie in a river peninsula known as the Isle of Dogs. Here the passer-by may smell 12,000 puncheons of rum, a million tons of sugar and shiploads of dates.

Victoria and Albert and King George V docks form one huge structure, the world's largest sheet of enclosed dock water. Often 40 or 50 ships—equal to a good-sized navy—tie up here at one time.

Tilbury is the first dock one sees when sailing up the Thames. Its long landing stage forms a homeland gateway for people from Australia, New Zealand, India, China and other eastern countries who land or embark here. Fast trains of the London, Midland and Scottish railway touch the dock's edge and whisk passengers away to all parts of the kingdom.

In the city, PLA has still more warehouses. At its Butler street building are 70 rooms full of oriental carpets—enough to cover a farm of 120 acres!

People buy most carpets in June, for wedding presents, you are told. There are electric ovens, too, for conditioning raw silk, a mountain of Havana cigars and leaf tobacco enough to last one man, say, 500,000 years!

Here is a furtive horde of lean black cats, to help out the official human rat catchers. Musty wine vaults use 28 miles of underground track on which to roll barrels that hold the 12,000,000 gallons of wine brought to London each year.

This is the world's ivory and tooth market. It takes 16,000,000 artificial teeth from the United States every year—and some 2,000 elephant tusks from Africa and Asia.

Not many tusks are from newly slain elephants. Most of them come from mudholes, left by animals.

**Tea for Londoners.**

Wool was England's chief export in the Middle ages. Today it is one of London's main imports. It takes the fleeces from about fifty million sheep to meet London's annual demands!

Tea trade has centered here for 300 years. In Mincing Lane you can see brokers bidding on lots which have been expertly sampled by PLA's own teatasters.

When they "bulk" tea, or mix it, on some warehouse floors you may see it heaped up in mounds higher then men's heads.

Think of all the "liquid history" that has been packed into this ancient water front since Roman galleys traded here; since Danes and Vikings came to plunder; since the great companies of merchant adventurers launched their tiny ships for daring trade and colonizing far over then little-known seas.

Think of the 60,000 ships a year that now form smoke lanes from London to every nook of the world where goods can be bought or sold and you begin to see why this 70-mile stretch of "London River" is, incomparably, the world's busiest water front.

# Overweight and Life Span

By DR. JAMES W. BARTON

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FOR many years it was believed that overweight shortens the span of life but it was not until the large insurance companies with the records of thousands of "healthy" individuals accepted for life insurance, gave out their figures to physicians that the true facts became known.

Dr. Barton

These facts are that overweight definitely shortens the span of life. Taking the life expectancy of individuals of definite height, age and weight, it is shortened in the exact proportion to the amount or percentage of overweight that exists.

The table states: "Taking the life expectancy of any individual as 100 per cent, his mortality or death rating as influenced by overweight is given in percentages. Thus a person 5 feet tall whose standard weight is 129 pounds, but who weighs 50 per cent in excess, or 193 pounds, has a mortality or death rate of 170 per cent, or 70 per cent above normal."

In commenting upon this fact that the death rate is increased in proportion to the percentage or amount of overweight, Dr. Harry Gauss, University of Colorado, in his book "Clinical Dietetics" says: "There is nothing amazing in these statistics. A person whose normal weight is 150 pounds and who weighs 180 pounds is carrying 20 per cent excess body tissue. His heart is required to pump blood to 20 per cent increased tissues by weight, the kidneys must get rid of waste matter from 20 per cent increased tissue, the liver and pancreas must do the work for the same increase in tissue, and so all the organs in the abdomen (and also in the chest) are taxed by the increased burden."

Now we know that Nature is very generous, that the limit or margin of safety in these organs is much beyond the everyday needs of the body (we could live with one kidney, one half or less of the stomach, of the liver, and of the intestine), but the extra strain of overweight over a number of years must result in a breaking down before it otherwise would occur.

**Tendency to Diabetes.**

"And the reducing of the span of life is not the only penalty of overweight. The increased tendency toward diabetes is another. Dr. E. P. Joslin, Boston, the outstanding authority on diabetes, has shown that diabetes is from ten to twenty times more common among fat persons than in normal or undernourished persons." Dr. W. E. Preble, Boston, who made observations on 1,000 cases of obesity (overweight), found that 432 of the patients showed evidence of organic heart disease, 230 showed functional diseases of the heart (disturbances such as increased rate or irregularity), while 463 showed evidences of interference with the work of the kidneys.

That overweight persons are poor surgical risks is a common observation of the surgeons, and that they offer less resistance to such infections as pneumonia is a common observation also."

Now the above facts should not make those of normal weight think they would feel better, be more free of ailments, and live longer if they were to reduce their weight. To be of normal weight, with just the right amount of fat (15 to 20 per cent of the total body weight) is an asset.

**Cut Down on Bread.**

Nor should those who are slightly overweight give the above figures much thought; a matter of 5 to 8 pounds over the average weight should cause no concern. Perhaps cutting down slightly on bread, butter and potatoes—nothing more—would reduce the weight to normal over a period of two to three months.

It is of course fortunate up to a certain point that the fashion for slimness has passed its height; stage directors no longer demand that members of the chorus shall be "skinny" and women in general are not ashamed of curves any more. This will prove helpful if women, and men also, will not let the pendulum swing too far the other way, and allow themselves to become overweight, because there is no getting away from the facts presented in insurance tables.

Insurance companies do not refuse applicants for insurance if they can help it. Their business is to insure all that they "safely" can. The fact that they refuse applicants with excessive overweight, and charge a higher premium for those who are even moderately overweight is the strongest possible argument that overweight is not only a menace to health but definitely shortens the life span.

**Agouti, a Rodent**

The agouti is a rodent allied to the guinea pig and common in the jungles of eastern South Africa. It is about the size of a rabbit, has a rudimentary tail and ranges in color from yellow to brown.

# Floyd Gibbons' ADVENTURERS' CLUB

HEADLINES FROM THE LIVES OF PEOPLE LIKE YOURSELF!

## "When Clocks Stopped"

By FLOYD GIBBONS

Famous Headline Hunter

HELLO, everybody: Bryan Carlock of Bloomington, Ill., is one man who knows exactly when his adventure started. Other folks may be a little vague about the exact hour and minute of their life's biggest thrill.

When death is staring you in the face, you don't stop to look at your watches and say, "Ho hum, if I don't get out of this mess pretty quick I'll be late for dinner." Neither did Bryan, for that matter. But he knows the time.

**He knows it because, when the blow struck, all the clocks and watches stopped. It was the end of time. The end of the world! The end of everything! The day was March 10, 1933, and Bryan had arrived in Long Beach, Calif., just that morning, to visit his sister, who was married to an army officer, Lieut. Chester Linton.**

She and Bryan had gone down town in the afternoon and returned home at 5 o'clock. The clocks and watches stopped at exactly 5:55!

### It Was Just Before Dinner, When—

In the meantime, they were busy getting dinner ready. Chester Linton had come home. Sis was in the kitchen making salad and biscuits. Potatoes were boiling on the stove and the roast was in the oven. The rest of the family was in the living room. Bryan was reading and the children—a girl and three boys—were playing on the floor.

Sis came in and said, "Are you all hungry? Dinner will be ready in a few minutes." And then—

**And then—terror! The words were hardly out of his sister's mouth when the building began to sway and rock. There was a roar that sounded like thousands of firecrackers exploding all at once. Tables and floor lamps fell over. Plaster crashed down from the ceiling and the floor bulged upward and burst open.**

Says Bryan: "I thought the world was coming to an end. The whole house was rocking like a boat. I couldn't get my voice for a moment, and when I did, I cried out, 'What is it?' Then I heard Chester say, 'Earthquake! Get out!' As he said it, the wall beside him crumbled and fell out into the street."

### The More He Struggled, the Worse His Fix.

The apartment was on the second floor of a brick building at the corner of Broadway and Linden. They started for the stairway, and Bryan says when he reached it it was moving like an escalator. Sis

The stairway was moving like an escalator.

and the kids were safely at the bottom. The lieutenant was behind him. Bryan was half way down that tottering stairway when his foot went through a broken step and caught there.

**He struggled to extricate himself, but the harder he tried, the tighter he seemed to be wedging himself in. Now, the lieutenant was at his side, trying to get him out. Plaster was still falling from the walls and ceiling. At last the lieutenant got him loose, and they ran out into the street.**

On the other side of the street, a neighbor was lying dead on the lawn—a great chunk of cornice beside him. He had run out of his home at the first shock of the quake, just as the cornice fell, and it killed him. The whole neighborhood was in confusion. Some men were carrying a woman into the bungalow next door, her leg torn and bleeding.

### Tidal Wave Threatens Destruction and Hunger.

And then, another terrible cry was passed from mouth to mouth through the stricken area. "Tidal wave coming!" "We were only three blocks from the ocean," says Bryan, "and we took the kids and began running inland. We had had nothing to eat. The roast and potatoes and other food back home had been blown against the north wall of the kitchen.

**"When we couldn't run any more, we walked. We went on that way for two or three hours, through streets filled with debris and ruin and desolation. Before long, the city was under martial law. About 8:00 or 9:00 o'clock we struck a place that hadn't suffered quite as badly as other sections of the town. They were serving soup, sandwiches, coffee, etc., so we stopped and had something to eat."**

### He Didn't Even Feel Nail in His Leg.

They were all exhausted by this time. There was still no sign of a tidal wave and, tidal wave or no tidal wave, Bryan wasn't going to go a step farther. They held a council of war and decided to return to the neighborhood of home.

They wandered back toward the ocean and, within a block of the Lintons' wrecked house they found an apartment building which was still in pretty good shape, and managed to get shelter for the night.

**For the first time, then, Bryan noticed that his right foot was damp. He pulled up his trouser leg and found the foot covered with blood. There was a nail in the calf of his leg. Evidently it had been thrust there when he got caught in the broken stairway.**

"There was a doctor in the house," he says, "and he dressed the wound. I was walking like a drunken man, and the doctor told me I was 'earth shocked.'"

### Calls Quake's Effects Worse Than War.

The tremors continued all through the night. They stayed in the apartment house, but in the morning they had to move on, for the city's mains had been broken and there was no gas or water. They went to City Hall park, where relief work was getting under way, and there they were put into a truck and sent to Lennox, about twelve miles from Los Angeles where a women's club had been turned into a dormitory.

**"They gave us medical attention there," says Bryan, "and a lot of us needed it. A lot of the women were hysterical. One of the nurses there had been in hospitals in France during the war and had been bombarded by the Germans, but she said it didn't affect her nearly as badly as the quake did.**

"Our little group got off easily. My sister and her little girl had been hit by plaster and the three boys had their legs skinned. The lieutenant had had the presence of mind to hold a chair over his head, and he escaped without a scratch. But the thing that saved us all from death was our delay in getting out of the house. If we had gone out while the debris was still falling we would have met the same fate as our neighbor across the street."

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**Most Slowly Written Works**

The "Acta Sanctorum," the great collection of the lives and legends of the Roman Catholic saints, is one of the most slowly written works on record, says Collier's Weekly. Except for two interruptions, which stopped the compilation for 48 years, Belgian Jesuits have worked on it steadily since about 1600 and hope to complete its some 35,000 biographies by approximately 1975.

**Lee, Jackson in Shenandoah Valley**

Gen. Robert E. Lee, after the Civil war, went to the Shenandoah valley as president of Washington and Lee university, at Lexington—the oldest of the many schools and colleges for which the valley is famous. Stonewall Jackson entered the valley soon after the outbreak of the Civil war and, with an army of 10,000 men, drove back 60,000 invaders.