

Washington Digest

Social Security Program, Labor Laws Face Congress

Proposed Legislation to Bring Unions Under Definite Restrictions; New Insurance Plan To 'Out-Beveridge' England's Program.

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As the ship of state pulls out of the holiday doldrums, skipper and crew are setting their jaws for rough weather. There are cross currents ahead in the new congress which are going to set the old ship rocking.

Symbolic of conflicting movements, the debate of which will soon be filling the Congressional Record, are these two: A proposed bill to bring labor unions into the restricting pale of legislation such as business has to contend with under the anti-trust laws, and a social security program which some say will out-Beveridge England's new Beveridge plan. That program, its author, Sir William Beveridge says, is "in some ways a revolution."

The "holiday doldrums" I mentioned were not entirely a seasonal affair this year. There was the usual letdown while congress went home and the nation turned to festal thoughts. There was also a pre-meditated lull which was necessitated by the turnover in the last election. The administration knew that no matter what was done in the interim between November and January, it would, in some measure, be undone when anti-administration Democrats and the increased Republican minority got together in the new congress.

Stop-Gap Arranged

Since manpower is the prime consideration of the moment, a stop-gap was arranged. With much fanfare Manpower Commissioner McNutt was given new powers and a far-flung program was ballyhooed. But it was mostly ballyhoo and just before Christmas wide publicity was given to a document which was obviously the forewarning that much stricter regimentation of labor was in the wind. The long-postponed, but inevitable, national service act raised its head again.

The document was a draft of a bill made by Grenville Clark, an attorney who suddenly emerged as a presidential advisor. It was announced that he made a special trip to England to study the British manpower setup. Clark remained silent until just before Christmas and after congress had gone home, but every congressman received a copy of the proposed legislation.

About two weeks earlier, shortly after the Beveridge report was made public, a cabinet officer was heard to remark: "We've got to get busy and draw up a program that fits America's needs a little better than the Beveridge plan would."

But the lull was still lulling then and when the President was asked at a press and radio conference if he were preparing a message for congress on the subject—that was about the time of the remark of the cabinet member—he said "no."

The Beveridge plan was the natural result of the Battle of Britain. Then a common danger brought the British people closer together. The underfed, underclothed and underhoused had to be taken care of. Class lines don't exist in the shambles. A bombed-out duchess can be as cold and hungry as a waif. The poor suddenly realized that if they could be taken care of as well or better in an emergency, they ought to have a little better distribution of the ordinary decencies of life in prosperous peace times. Wise leaders didn't wait until the war was over to face angry demands which might turn into real revolution. Sir William Beveridge's committee drew up the blueprint for what they called "a British revolution" in the country's economic setup under which, as one spokesman described it, "the people would contribute by their own preference, to a national insurance fund rather than take a hand-out from the state."

'Assurance'

The goal of the Beveridge plan is to lay the ghost of insecurity by means of "assurance." Assurance is the British word for what we call "insurance" and which really defines the commodity better than our word—assurance that men and women would have a subsistence through sickness and unemployment and old age; would have money to take the baby through its difficult early stages; enough for a decent burial without burdening friends or



WHO'S NEWS This Week

By Lemuel F. Parton
Consolidated Features.—WNU Release.

NEW YORK.—Scouting optimists in the news around the New Year, one finds Dr. Thomas Midgley Jr. becoming president of the American Chemical Society, after years of hopeful prophecy and dotted-line achievement. Among his prophecies have been his forecast of worth of gold to be taken from sea water, inter-planetary travel, age control and the end of indigestion by the use of hormones. His achievements, which are many, include his discovery of tetraethyl lead as a gasoline anti-knock compound, his development of non-toxic and non-inflammable refrigerants and his many contributions to basic research in synthetic rubber processes.

Holds Science Will Clear the Way for Peace, Abundance

As to the mundane outlook in general, Dr. Midgley takes the cheerful view that the potential creativeness and productiveness of science, with its command of new energies and processes, will clear the way for peace and abundance in spite of our collective stupidities and villainies. These alluring, if remote, horizons, Dr. Midgley sees from his wheel chair in Worthington, Ohio, having been stricken with infantile paralysis in 1940. Thus afflicted, he has continued his research, with no slackening of either work or fervor, and a possibly heightened belief in some kind of happy ending, or rather fulfillment for the comédie humaine. His story would be a case in point for Thomas Mann, who says the calmest faith and truest personal integrity is attained through suffering.

In Cornell university, where he was graduated in 1911, it was said that young Midgley would coast along through routine work, but was always busy on something out of the groove—some idea of his own. This inclined him quickly to research and before he had been out of college a year he was threading the subatomic maze of synthetic rubber. It was in the years from 1922 to 1926 that he brought through his knockless gasoline, which bloomed into the impressive ethyl gasoline industry, with headquarters at Detroit, of which industry he is vice president. In his wheel chair, he is a big business executive, with special telephone rigs to make his inter-office communication around the country easy and casual—like everything else about him.

Speaking of attainment through frustration, he worked with tellurium when he was bringing through his non-toxic refrigerants and that permeated his genial person with a powerful odor of garlic. He took scientific measures—something like protective coloring. When he traveled, he found in the smoking car the closest possible concentration of bad cigars. The fragrance of garlic was just a harmless added starter here, and nobody noticed him. He is resourceful, diligent, optimistic.

PERSONS who have been a bit jittery about the government telling us where to work and what to do may be assured by the public record and attitudes of Grenville Clark, the New York lawyer who drafts the quite unprecedented and drastic manpower bill for Paul McNutt. A staunch advocate of compulsory military service, and of any and all methods necessary for national survival, Mr. Clark has been at the same time an alert and outspoken defender of civil liberties. He is a pioneer of the Plattsburg system and chairman of the National Emergency Committee of the Military Training Camps, and an active advocate of a big and strong army, but he is a wary opponent of anything suggesting a military caste. In May, 1931, he said: "My experience in the war department has led me to distrust the participation of army or navy experts in affairs of national policy."

Similarly, he has opposed any encroachment on Constitutional safeguards by bureaucrats, or excessive centralization of government which might endanger individual liberties. He may be cited as a conspicuous holdout against both the weakness of a peace-loving democracy and the aggression of militarists and war-planners who might save the country but leave it no longer a democracy.

He thinks we can keep both the Bill of Rights and a strong wall. That seems to be the nub of the argument, as military urgency closes in on manpower—our most free and footloose zone of casual and migratory tradition. Maybe we never wanted to move to Perth Amboy, but it's tough if anybody says we can't. Mr. Clark knows all about that. He drafted the original selective service act, and kept it legally in bounds. Mr. Clark was born in New York in 1882, was graduated from Harvard in 1903 and practiced law in New York.

He'll Square Our War Manpower With Blackstone

Sightless Workers
Lockheed officials report that 13 blind workers who are helping build fighting and bombing planes in the California plant are in some respects better than average and turn out more work than their fellows because of higher concentration. Including two women, these sightless workers passed a month's placement test in the Lockheed factory and are now working as tubing assemblers, burring-roll operators and assemblers of switch boxes. One is a parts handler on a conveyor in the paint shop.

Guide dogs bring the blind employees to the plant each morning and doze all day beneath their masters' benches. Miss Hazel Hurst, sightless president of a foundation for training blind persons, worked at every job before selecting the blind worker to be placed in it. However, the number of jobs they can perform with safety will always be limited, she said. Lockheed hopes to find jobs for more sightless workers.

It's Uniforms Now!
The importance of Harry Hopkins' bathrobe conferences with the President are on the wane as far as their importance goes. The President is paying more attention to advisors in uniform.

A houseboat on the Nile has been opened as a club for warrant and noncommissioned officers serving with American army forces in Egypt.

At Camp Livingston, La., Sergt. Robert Sullivan, grandson of John L. Sullivan, gives rifle instruction to Pvt. John W. York, cousin of Sergt. Alvin C. York.



History in the News by FLMO SCOTT WATSON Released by Western Newspaper Union.

Famous Mule Dies

ONE of the most famous mules in American history died the other day. Myrtle was her name and when her service of more than a third of a century to the United States army ended at Fort Huachuca, Ariz., she was cremated with full military honors.

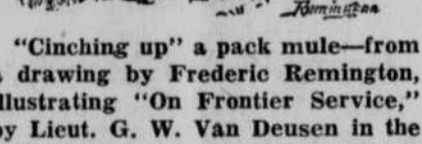
Not only was Myrtle the oldest mule in the army at the time of her death, but she had another distinction. She was once the subject of a special order issued by Gen. John J. Pershing that when her days of usefulness were over, she was not to be destroyed (as is usually the case with army mules) but was to be permitted to die a natural death.

That was because Myrtle was the last survivor of the pack train which accompanied "Black Jack" into northern Mexico back in 1917 when he was engaged in his chase of Pancho Villa after that Mexican leader had led the raid on Columbus, N. M. Two years ago, when Myrtle was 33 years old, she became dangerously ill and a veterinarian suggested shooting her. But Col. Lee Davis, then post commander at Fort Huachuca, remembered General Pershing's order and the mule was spared to enjoy two more years of ease on the "retired list."

However, the honors heaped upon Myrtle are not the first that have been bestowed upon one of the long-eared, and highly important, "adjuncts" of Uncle Sam's fighting forces. On October 8, 1937, Jack, another veteran of the Mexican border troubles, was officially retired from service at the age of 29 and on that occasion the 62nd coast artillery (anti-aircraft) regiment staged a full-dress review at Fort Totten, N. Y., in his honor.

At that time the Chicago Daily News commented editorially: "The review is said to be the first tendered to a mule as guest of honor in the New York area. That may be so, but it is not the first official honor given the army mule."

"History and tradition are full of such honors, beginning, perhaps, with the brevet awarded the leader of the Civil War herd that stampeded and routed a Confederate at-



"Cinching up" a pack mule—from a drawing by Frederic Remington, illustrating "On Frontier Service," by Lieut. G. W. Van Deusen in the Outing Magazine, December, 1895.

tack in the vicinity of Chattanooga. Then there was the mule that tumbled off a cliff while packed with a loaded Gatling gun, the fire from which frightened off a band of Indians in ambush.

"There was Arizona, wounded in the Meuse-Argonne, who was decorated by the 30th infantry, and Whiskey, purchased by the 28th infantry when its service company was motorized, who was turned out to graze in a mule Valhalla at Fort Niagara. "A more wholesome honor was paid at Washington, where a tablet commemorates the 243,135 mules of the American expeditionary forces. "The army mule's endurance has been the subject of many encomiums. A first cavalry mule who somersaulted down an Idaho mountain and was left for dead, turned up in camp that night unharmed. "Perhaps we should not mention the mule that hospitalized most of a national guard machine gun company on the border some years ago, and the mule whose kick cost the government a \$10,000 insurance payment, except that it reminds us that, even in these days of motorization and mechanization, there is still many a kick left in the old army mule."

That there is "many a kick left in the old army mule" yet is proved by the fact that, even in the "streamlined" and mechanized modern American army, there is still a place for the mule. Visit Camp Carson near Colorado Springs, Colo., and there you will see the 98th field artillery with its guns mounted on mule-back. That is, you'll see it unless it's off on a hike such as the outfit took recently when its 793 men and 790 mules climbed to the top of Pikes peak, thereby providing such a sight as that mountain has not seen in all the years since it was "discovered" by Lieut. Zebulon Pike away back in 1806!

No list of famous mules would be complete without mention of Mademoiselle Verdun, mascot of the 15th United States field artillery, who was born on April 16, 1918, in France, in the Troyon sector while the Second division, of which the 15th artillery was then a part, was holding the lines near the site of the historic battle of Verdun. Mademoiselle Verdun went through the Belleau Woods, Vaux, St. Mihiel, Mont Blanc and Meuse-Argonne offensives with the regiment and accompanied it when it marched into Germany after the Armistice.

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Those Khaki Uniforms
British soldiers in India during their war with the Sikhs, 1848-49, felt too conspicuous in their white campaign uniforms. By dipping them in muddy water they changed them from white to—the Sikhs had a word for it—khaki. The United States quartermaster general, now buying scores of millions of yards of khaki cloth for uniforms, specifies a khaki dye that results from blending many dye shades.

ASK ME ANOTHER?
A General Quiz

The Questions

1. How many countries have a larger population than the United States?
2. Why does an owl stare?
3. What gives the color to the so-called "red" snow?
4. What is the average life of a dollar bill?
5. What is the oldest living thing in Florida?

The Answers

1. Three (China, India and Soviet Russia).
2. Because its eyes are immovable in their sockets.
3. Microscopic plants.
4. The average dollar bill is in circulation but nine months.
5. "The Senator," a cypress tree near Orlando, 3,500 years old.

Puncher Smith Was an Optimist to the Bitter End

In the first round of the heavy-weight contest, Puncher Smith hit the floor hard four times, and just before the bell, went down for the full count.

The winner was rushed to the microphone, where he said a few modest words. By this time, Puncher had come to, and managed to stagger to his feet. Whereupon the announcer came over. "Come on," he coaxed, "say a few words to the millions listening."

Puncher tried to keep his knees steady; then he said: "Ladies and gentlemen; this is the greatest fight of my career. May the best man win!"

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Caesar's Shorthand
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SNAPPY FACTS ABOUT RUBBER

In Calcutta wealthy natives with cars invariably point their tires red because of the superstition that this will obviate motor trouble.

The rubber tapper, or seringueiro, in Brazil lives partly off the forest he ranges in search of wild rubber. A shotgun and machete are his traditional equipment.

Superstitious negroes of Georgia believe that the best cure for rheumatism is to sleep with an old tire around the waist.

When dual tires are mis-mated, the larger tire carries most of the load, wears off its tread abnormally and fails early due to the generation of excess heat in its cord carcass.

It is estimated that the average tire loses 12 per cent of its weight in use and yields about 5% of its original weight in reclaimed rubber.

Jerry Shaw

In war or peace

B.F. Goodrich
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they say:

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"BLITZING BRASS" for polishing buttons

"COW TRACKS" for non-commissioned officer's chevrons

"CAMEL" for the Army man's favorite cigarette

FIRST IN THE SERVICE

With men in the Army, Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard, the favorite cigarette is Camel. (Based on actual sales records in Post Exchanges and Canteens.)

CAMEL
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THE PACK FOR ME IS CAMEL. I FIND THEY'RE MILD BY FAR—AND THAT FULL FLAVOR IS GREAT!

BRIEFS . . . by Baukhage

The use of aerial bombs as air-raid warning devices are frowned upon by the war department in a statement to OGD officials. Not only is the sound of aerial bombs easily confused with that of anti-aircraft fire, but "they have doubtful value for warning purposes." Communities now using aerial bombs should discontinue the practice.

—Buy War Bonds—