

New Era Makes Advent at Capitol

GOP Sweep Frees Truman Of Burdensome Program

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WASHINGTON. — There is a feel of Christmas in the Washington air which is prompted by more than the evanescence of the joyous spirit of Noel — just try to get onto a Connecticut avenue car headed for the F street shopping district. The White House presents its usual decor of pine and ribboned wreath. And, at this writing, the chief tenant is, I believe, dreaming of a Missouri Christmas among his friends.



Baukhage

Whether he spends the holiday beneath his own roof or the one which Uncle Sam so generously provides, it can be said that it will be a far merrier occasion than a year ago. He will be among his friends as well as his family, and as one of his official circle put it, with his "professed" enemies (the opposite party) in power his "unprofessed" enemies (officially his friends) having no further opportunity to toss bricks or bandy threats about his head.

I recall another crisp, cool winter day last February a year ago, when we wended our way to the President's weekly press and radio conference. Bemused pansies (I recorded in this space) showed frost-bitten faces in the garden of the White House grounds.

We were discussing the difficulties and differences which President Truman already was encountering at the hands of his own party in congress.

"Congress has to be realistic in an election year," I quoted someone as saying. "They are facing real issues. And the President's program isn't realistic."

"Whether or not it is realistic," another member of the group replied, "it isn't his program. He inherited it. It's New Deal and New Deal is Old Hat now. It doesn't represent Harry Truman's ideas at all, but he has to go through with it."

As we look back, it is plain enough that whether it was New Deal or what it was, the program of the President was one that the people rejected on election day, the moral obligations of the past, the effect of the pressure groups, the ukase of the party of bigwigs were swept away and Harry Truman, who didn't want the job that was thrust upon him when death commanded, was made a free man.

The President's satisfaction springs not from any spirit of "I told you so" hurled at his alleged supporters, not from any lack of loyalty to a cause well lost. It was simply the weary but happy flood of relief of a man who, having attempted what he knew was an impossible task, saw that task ended, and friend and foe forced fairly into the open.

War Terminated Honeymoon With Congress

My mind goes back to another scene shortly before the death of President Roosevelt. I sat in the office of the vice president talking of days when the caissons went rolling along and both of us — many miles apart — rode beside them. We talked also of the then forthcoming San Francisco conference of the United Nations and Mr. Truman's theme was what he felt to be his function. Paradoxically enough—as it turned out later—it was helping establish liaison between congress and the White House, complementing the highly successful effort of Secretary of State Hull which resulted in the forging of a bi-partisan foreign policy. And in so short a time, after Mr. Truman became President, that liaison between Capitol Hill and 1600 Pennsylvania avenue snapped in twain, never to be reunited.

Three months after the President took office I recorded: "The political armistice in Washington will end shortly after the President's (Truman's) return from Berlin—by that time domestic discontent will be crystallizing, the honeymoon will be on the wane. . . ."

And I then had the temerity to predict that if . . . "the Japanese war should end . . . within the year . . . President Truman will be stripped of the protecting armor of the Commander-in-Chief. Then the slings and arrows which even Roosevelt's enemies were wont to deflect to congress and other government agencies will be aimed squarely at the man in the White House."

That prophesy required no gift of the occult. Mr. Truman knew it then—or I wouldn't have.

From now on the President is his own man. The legislation he offers, whatever its fate may be, will be moulded to suit his own heart's desire. He has fought the fight to the best of his ability, assailed from the right and the left and the rear as well as the front. Now he will write his own ticket, be it good or bad. Few Presidents have had such an opportunity or faced a more severe test.

Presidential Bee Hums

Washington withdraws from official activity for the holidays without getting any real impact of the advent of the new regime. There has been the preliminary hurly-burly of reorganization on Capitol Hill but the same old faces are evident and the same old voices speak. The active Republican leaders in both houses of congress have been so much in the limelight for the last year anyhow that they merely appear to be stepping up, rather than stepping in. It all seems quite routine and casual.

There was just a touch of the excitement of the beginning of a new era when house and senate steering committees had their first

meeting. The New Deal followed Hoover's exit.

The Democrats had only a short interlude at the pie-counter between Taft and Harding and their return in 1933 came in the midst of such a domestic crisis, with the mad days of the NRA following on the heels of the bank holiday, that our attention, was diverted from politics. But what the Democrats did to the Republican officeholders "wasn't good," as one Republican put it recently. He added: "We are going to do the same for them."

Congress begins with the Republican Presidential plum within easier reach than any which have dangled in many a year and it is no wonder many hands are reaching hopefully for it. In fact, Senator Vandenberg early sounded the warning that more thoughts should be concentrated on the responsibilities following the victory of '48, and less on the possibilities of '48, for the good of all concerned.

The battle between the Taftites and the anti-Taftites began even before election and the Ohio senator himself is so determined that this time he will win the nomination to avoid criticism. He refused to go on a broadcast for even a three-minute statement of Republican policy and he took off for Central America shortly thereafter.

FORECAST FOR 1947

Survey Shows Rise in Building

NEW YORK. — Representing an increase of 35 per cent, 630,000 dwelling units will be constructed in the 37 states east of the Rocky mountains during 1947, according to an estimate made by Thomas S. Holden, president of F. W. Dodge corporation, fact-finding organization for the construction industry. The figure represents a gain of 35 per cent in number of units and 38 per cent in dollar volume from the anticipated 1946 totals. The estimates are based on elimination next year of present priorities and allocations of materials, Holden said. For all construction, Holden said,



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NEWS REVIEW

Labor Ranks View Mine Dispute as Wage Guide

LABOR:

New Crisis

Once again it was John L. against the government!

This time, Washington appeared determined to force a showdown with the burly United Mine Workers chieftain, but it had its job cut out for it as 400,000 UMW members stood steadfastly by their leader and both the AFL and CIO threw in their support.

As in previous UMW walkouts, Lewis held a hand full of ace. Punish him as it might try, there were the 400,000 skilled and irreplaceable miners who refused to go down into the pits before clarification of the status of their contract; there were approximately 12,000,000 members of organized labor who looked with disfavor upon government use of the injunction to break a strike, and the courts were still to decide the legality of terminating the UMW-government pact.

But, encouraged by the country's overwhelming swing to the right in the recent elections and the possibility that the courts might decide in his favor in interpreting the legal

and hour concessions from the government.

Under the UMW-government contract, the miners received \$75.25 weekly for a 54-hour week, in contrast to \$23.88 weekly for a shorter week in 1939. Lewis' latest demands were said to call for a 40-hour week with earnings approximating those for 54 hours.

Arrival of the latest soft coal crisis saw the government prepared for emergency distribution of bituminous stocks. Only householders, hospitals, utilities and other essential public services were to receive deliveries. Railroads were scheduled to haul only food, clothing, medicine, fuel and other necessities and to reduce locomotive passenger service by approximately 25 per cent.

Humming again after the crippling strikes of last winter, industry faced another slow-down to conserve fuel supplies and spread them over the period of the walkout.

CIO Goal

Like the AFL, the CIO watched the coal strike with interest, not only because of the injunction proceedings generally condemned by labor but also because Lewis' acquisition of new wage concessions promised to blaze the way for boosts all along the line.

Meeting in Atlantic City, where John L. formed the CIO 11 years ago, CIO Pres. Philip Murray "sounded the battle cry for another round of wage increases by lamenting the rise in prices which offset previous boosts and assailing the uneven distribution of wealth.

Seeking to indicate the extent to which recent price rises have crossed out the 18 1/2 cent an hour wage raise won by the CIO earlier this year, Murray said that steel workers now are earning \$13.04 less a week than they did last March. Pointing to the ability of industry to bear higher wages, Murray said that profits in the last quarter of 1946 would total 15 billion dollars compared with 10 billions for 1944.

HOUSING:

New Wrinkle

The public received its first good look at the Lustrom corporation's heralded porcelain enameled steel home in Hinsdale, Ill., outside Chicago, and the showing marked another step in the battle of the company with the Tucker automobile corporation for possession of the huge Dodge-Chicago plant.

The battle took a sensational turn with charges of Preston Tucker, the auto magnate, that a prominent Washington attorney had promised to use his influence in having the National Housing authority remand its order turning the Dodge-Chicago plant to Lustrom if given the Tucker corporation's legal business plus a stock interest. Named as the attorney, Theodore Granik, vigorously denied the allegation.

Coal Mining Red Style

From Russia, where the Communist commissariat has its own method of settling labor problems, comes word of the working of a gigantic new coal field in northern Siberia by slave laborers from Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, Ukraine and Crimea. Consisting mostly of political dissidents, the laborers are housed in wooden barracks and subsist on porridge and 600 grams of bread daily. About 38 mines have been developed in the 5,000 square mile field.

aspects of the case, President Truman was set to push John L. to the limit in his efforts to wring wage



'PX' TRAIN IN JAPAN . . . The army recently opened a new "PX" train which travels throughout Japan to serve G.I.s and their families and other Allied personnel where other PX facilities are unavailable.



Senator Taft
Politically Cautious

meetings and made their first official statements concerning legislation and policy. Most of the steps had been foreshadowed and the change of venue was not favored. The last 14 years make up the longest period of lean years that any party has suffered. I witnessed the end of two 12-year droughts through which the Democrats thirsted; close of the one that began with William McKinley and ended with William Howard Taft, when Wilson accompanied the "new freedom" to the White House. And the next, another 12-year period, when

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