

News Review of Current Events the World Over

President Proposes Reorganization of Federal Judiciary, Increasing Supreme Court Justices to Fifteen— Efforts to Settle Motor Strike.

By EDWARD W. PICKARD
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PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT electrified congress with a surprise message proposing sweeping changes in the federal court system which would allow him to pack the Supreme Court with justices who could be expected to uphold the constitutionality of New Deal legislation.



President Roosevelt

1. That for every federal judge with a service record of at least ten years "continuously or otherwise" who fails to resign or retire within six months after reaching the age of 70 the President shall appoint another judge.

2. That the number of additional judges so appointed shall not exceed fifty, the Supreme Court being limited to 15 members, appellate and special courts to two additional members each and district courts to twice the present number of judges.

3. That two-thirds of the Supreme Court and three-fifths of other courts shall constitute a quorum.

4. That the chief justice of the Supreme Court shall transfer circuit and district judges to jurisdictions with congested dockets in order to speedup disposition of litigation.

5. That the Supreme Court shall be empowered to appoint a proctor to supervise the conduct of business in the lower courts.

The President also proposed a reform in the injunctive process which he declared would expedite Supreme Court rulings on the constitutionality of legislation and would further insure "equality" and "certainty" of federal justice. He said frequent injunctions which set aside acts of congress are "in clear violation of the principle of equity that injunctions should be granted only in those rare cases of manifest illegality and irreparable damage against which the ordinary course of the law offers no protection."

He asked that congress forbid any injunction or decision by any federal court touching a constitutional question without "previous and ample notice" to the attorney general to give the government an opportunity "to present evidence and be heard."

His bill proposed that any lower court decision which involved a constitutional question be appealed directly to the Supreme Court, where it would take immediate precedence over all other business.

New Deal leaders in congress were expected to back the President's proposals solidly, while it became apparent that the conservative Democrats might align with the solid Republican group in opposing it. The latter group saw in the bill a direct attempt to get rid of some of the older justices of the Supreme Court who have proved continual stumbling blocks for New Deal acts.

Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes, approaching 75, has voted sometimes to sustain, sometimes to invalidate New Deal laws. Justice Willis Van Deventer, 78, has invariably opposed New Deal laws; so have James Clark McReynolds, 75; George Sutherland, 75, and Pierce Butler, 71. Louis Brandeis, 80, has voted to sustain New Deal acts, except in the case of the NRA, rejected by unanimous decision.

If the President is successful in putting over the proposed changes it will be the eighth time in the 148 years of the Supreme Court's history that the number of justices has been changed. The largest number ever sit on the bench was 10 from 1863 to 1866, and the smallest number 5 from 1801 to 1802.

BROUGHT together by Gov. Frank Murphy at the demand of the White House, representatives of both sides in the General Motors strike were in almost continuous conference seeking a way to settle the controversy. The corporation was represented by William S. Knudsen, executive vice president, and John Thomas Smith of the legal staff. Acting for the strikers were John L. Lewis, head of the C. I. O., John Brophy, its director, and Homer Martin, president of the United Automobile Workers.



William S. Knudsen

It was reported that at one time the conference was near collapse. Then Governor Murphy received a message from the White House saying the President expected a settlement.

During an interim the governor said both sides were in earnest and doing their best.

Judge Gadola in Flint had issued an injunction ordering the sit-down

strikers there to leave the plants. The sheriff served notice to the men and they jeered him. They then sent to Governor Murphy a bombastic message to the effect that they would resist eviction to the death. The mayor, city manager and police chief of Flint, asserting the people were tired of strikes and violence, organized between 500 and 1,000 police reserves. The police chief warned Lewis he "had better call off his strike if he doesn't want another Herrin massacre."

A writ of attachment for forcible expulsion of the sit-down strikers was obtained by the G. M. lawyers.

MARITIME workers on the Pacific coast ended their long strike by accepting working agreements that had been negotiated in San Francisco and the 40,000 men returned to their jobs. Ships in all the ports, long idle, got up steam and prepared to resume business, and the ticket offices were thronged with passengers.

Shipowners issued a statement asserting the end of the walkout would mean a business revival for 1,000 industrial plants and 500 export offices up and down the coast.

SECRETARY of the Interior Harold Ickes and the national resources committee of which he is chairman have produced a public works and national water program for the next six years, and it was submitted to congress by President Roosevelt with the recommendation that it should be adopted. It involves the expenditure of five billion dollars and calls for lump sum annual appropriations under the regular budget for a list of approved projects, and allocation of the funds to a permanent public works or development agency.



Harold Ickes

As the chief part of the plan, Mr. Roosevelt presented congress with a list of some \$2,750,000,000 worth of water conservation projects, including a \$116,000,000 flood-control program in the inundated Ohio and Mississippi river valleys.

In his transmission message the President warned congress against considering each project as a separate entity. The report, he said, "should, of course, be read in conjunction with the recommendations for highways, bridges, dams, flood control, and so forth, already under construction, estimates for which have been submitted in the budget."

"During the depression," he told congress, "we have substantially increased the facilities and developed the resources of our country for the common welfare through public works and work-relief programs.

"We have been compelled to undertake actual work somewhat hurriedly in the emergency.

"Now it is time to develop a long-range plan and policy for construction—to provide the best use of our resources and to prepare in advance against any other emergency."

The committee that drew up this program includes, besides Mr. Ickes, Secretary of War Harry H. Woodring, WPA Administrator Harry Hopkins, Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace, Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins, Secretary of Commerce Daniel C. Roper, Frederic A. Delano, uncle of the President, and Charles E. Merriam, University of Chicago professor.

DESPITE the warm opposition of Democratic Senator J. W. Bailey of North Carolina and others, including the few Republicans, the senate passed the house deficiency relief bill carrying an appropriation of \$948,725,868.

Senator Bailey spoke in support of his amendment which would require a means test, or "pauper's oath," as some have called it, for states, counties, and their political subdivisions to secure federal aid for their relief requirements. The amendment was rejected without a record vote.

Out of the total allocated in the bill for "relief and work relief," about \$650,000,000 was expected to be given to the Works Progress Administration. From this fund aid will be given to victims of floods in the Ohio and Mississippi valleys.

TO FINANCE for another year the social security board, veterans' administration and about thirty other federal agencies, the house appropriated one billion, forty-six million dollars. The bill, passed without a record vote, carried a last minute amendment providing that none of the funds appropriated should be available to pay for the expenses of any congressional investigation. This amendment was aimed at senate investigations such as the La Follette and Wheeler inquiries.

FEVERISH work, day and night, by 120,000 pick and shovel laborers all down the Mississippi from Cairo appeared to have won the fight to save the fertile lands along the river from the great flood. But engineers warned that the danger of inundation was not yet over. However, most of the levees were holding and the winds that had been driving the waters against them were subsiding. About 200,000 inhabitants of the valley had been forced to abandon their homes, but the Red Cross and other relief agencies were caring for them. At Cairo and Hickman were plenty of coast guard boats and barges ready to rescue the people if the embankments gave way.

Floodwater from a break in the Bessie Landing, Tenn., levee all but encircled Tiptonville, Tenn., and spread over adjacent thousands of acres. Backwaters continued to harass lowland dwellers in Mississippi and Louisiana but engineers remained firm in the conviction the worst definitely would be over when the crests pass Arkansas and Tennessee.

Harry Hopkins, WPA administrator, and other members of the special flood relief committee named by President Roosevelt, went to the flood areas with the expressed intention of seeing that the job of caring for the refugees was well done. Mr. Hopkins indicated he was prepared to spend \$790,000,000—the entire deficiency work relief budget—for flood relief if necessary.

DR. STANLEY HIGH, religious publicist who has been prominent among the administration supporters, is out of Presidential favor. He has been cashing in on his closeness to the White House by writing for periodicals, and his latest article, entitled "Whose Party Is It?", in the Saturday Evening Post, brought this statement released by Assistant White House Secretary Early:

"The President announced the death of the 'official spokesman' in March, 1933. He now announces the passing of the so-called authoritative spokesman—those who write as 'one of the President's closest advisers.'"

Though High was not named, Mr. Early left no doubt as to who was meant.

ITALY and Turkey settled their disputes in conferences between their foreign ministers, Count Galeazzo Ciano and Dr. Tewfik Rustu Aras. Italy will participate in the Montreux convention which gave Turkey the right to rearm the Dardanelles, and Turkey is assured that Italian ambitions to possess Turkish Anatolia have been abandoned.

It was believed Mussolini considered the time ripe to make friends with Turkey, first allaying Turkish suspicions and defining spheres of influence, in the hope Italy could woo Turkey from friendship with Moscow.

SECRETARY of State Rafael Montalvo of Cuba announced that Pedro Martinez Fraga had been appointed Cuban ambassador to Washington. He has been serving as minister to London and will succeed Ambassador Guillermo Patterson, who has been transferred to Mexico City.

THIRTEEN of the Russian conspirators tried in Moscow for plotting the overthrow of the Stalin regime were condemned to death by the trial court, and their pleas for mercy were rejected by the presidium of the communist executive committee. They were ordered shot within 48 hours after sentence was pronounced.



Gregory Sokolnikov

One of the executioners said "they died like soldiers."

To the surprise of the world, four of the leading defendants were saved from the firing squad, being sentenced to terms of imprisonment. These were Karl Radek, once noted journalist, and Gregory Sokolnikov, former Soviet ambassador to London, given ten years each; and M. S. Strollov and V. V. Arnold, ordered confined for eight years. The judges said these four men, while guilty of treason, did not actually participate in terrorist and wrecking activities. It was the belief of neutral observers that they had been spared in order to get their testimony against the scores of men still under arrest.

COL. CHARLES A. LINDBERGH celebrated his thirty-fifth birthday in Rome, whither he had flown with Mrs. Lindbergh in their new plane. From the Eternal City they flew to Tripoli to spend a few days with Gen. Italo Balbo, governor of Libya and himself a famous aviator. Then they planned to continue to Egypt.

FEDERAL agents and Missouri state troopers were led by Robert Kenyon, a twenty-year-old morose police character, to a thicket fourteen miles from Willow Springs, where lay the body of Dr. J. C. B. Davis whom Kenyon had kidnaped and allegedly killed before attempting to collect \$5,000 ransom. Kenyon confessed the crime and was rushed to jail in Kansas City to save him from lynching. There he told a wild story of one "Nighthawk" who, he said, forced him to write the ransom note and then murdered the doctor.

Washington Digest

National Topics Interpreted By WILLIAM BRUCKART
NATIONAL PRESS BLDG. WASHINGTON, D. C.

Washington.—I have said in these columns many times that politics is a business. If anybody desires proof of that statement I think I am able now to offer the best possible evidence of the truth of that statement.

Lately, W. Forbes Morgan, treasurer of the Democratic national committee, has demonstrated beyond the shadow of a doubt what politics as a business actually means. He did so in the recent announcement that the Democratic national committee would seek to build up a "war chest" of \$10,000,000 that the vast New Deal party machinery can go on at top speed; that the momentum gained by the successful Presidential campaign of 1936 can be maintained and that the party can continue to function as a cohesive unit through which millions of voters may speak.

It appears that Mr. Morgan will not succeed in getting anything like \$10,000,000 together but it is very significant that he is thinking in terms so large as those mentioned in his announcement. It means simply that the present control of the New Deal party is determined to carry out to the nth degree the theory of its chairman, James A. Farley, only recently reappointed as postmaster general of the United States.

Mr. Farley plays politics in exactly the same manner that he would engage in a business venture. He takes chances when the stakes are high, he knows his men, his workers, and moreover, he knows how to get the best results out of the material he has. His operations are not unlike the functions of a sales manager of a great concern—he sells what he has to the voters and if any salesman fails to function, Mr. Farley looks for replacements.

We might illustrate the Farley methods further by reviewing some of the methods he employed in the last four years. For, when it comes to raising money, the Democratic national committee, under Chairman Farley, is both businesslike and versatile. It will be recalled how whenever the pretext arose, the Democratic national committee sponsored such things as dinners to which the faithful partisans were asked to buy tickets, usually high priced tickets, for an ordinary banquet. It will be recalled also how elaborate programs of the Democratic national convention were sold by the hundreds of thousands; how those programs were loaded to the gunwales with advertising of concerns that could not well refuse to buy advertising space; how victory dinners were given, and how finally the inaugural ceremony when Mr. Roosevelt took office was turned into a gigantic political rally that spread itself into every hotel in Washington that had space for great dinners and dances. These things are but a few which demonstrated the Farley versatility but they prove to my mind that if the Democratic national committee sets out to build up a real "war chest," it will accomplish exactly its objective.

The committee set-up is the most pretentious yet attempted by any political organization. It has a large and exceedingly efficient staff of trained men and women and it runs like the well oiled machine that it is. It will cost money to keep that machine running at high speed, but Mr. Farley recognizes how elections are won. His philosophy is that the early bird catches the worm and so, although there is not another election for two years, the Democratic national committee is making ready for that election campaign right now. Unless the wise political students around Washington are badly mistaken, Mr. Farley will know pretty well when the congressional and senatorial candidates take to the stump early in 1938 just what the last two years of the Roosevelt administration will be like. It goes without saying that he will be prepared for them.

In contrast to the circumstances I have just related, it must be disheartening to witness the feeble, almost futile, efforts that are shown around Republican headquarters. Of course, old time politicians always say that a winning horse can be financed, never a loser. John D. M. Hamilton, the Republican national chairman, rode a losing horse. He came out of the race saddled with a gigantic deficit. Deficits for losing political parties are not as easily financed as United States Treasury deficits these days and so Mr. Hamilton is having his troubles in that direction as well as finding any enthusiasm among Republican party workers.

But that does not excuse the Republican national committee nor Mr. Hamilton. After all, it is to be remembered that approximately 18,000,000 voters cast their ballots for the Republican presidential nominee, Governor Landon of Kansas. That is not a small number, any way you examine it. It is a powerful segment of the American population but it is powerful only to the extent that its leadership develops enthusiasm for the fight and capacity to take it on the chin when victory goes the other way.

Among the New Dealers who can be classified as sound politicians, there is considerable regret at the failure of the Republican leadership to get going. President Roosevelt, himself, would like to see more opposition because it would make his task much easier and would prevent some of the unsound legislation from seeping through congress on account of a lack of opposition. Furthermore, if there were more Republican fight, there would be less chance of splits in the Democratic ranks in congress. Democratic leaders entertain a very real fear of this possibility.

From among the corps of political writers in Washington, I hear much criticism of the Republicans who are variously described as being "dead on their feet." They are certainly doing less than nothing. They have allowed the Democratic national committee to carry the ball on every play; they have offered no publicity by way of criticism of New Deal programs and they have developed no plans at all for reviving the Republican organization or restoring life to the party workers.

I am not saying that Mr. Hamilton is wholly to blame for this condition. He must accept responsibility, however, because he is the titular head of the organization. It would seem, therefore, that unless Mr. Hamilton awakens and shows some fight, there will be fewer Republicans in the house or senate after the 1938 elections than there are now. The national chairman of the Republicans, according to all discussion that I hear, sooner or later will have to start cooking or depart from the kitchen. Otherwise, the 18,000,000 voters which the Republican party has as a nucleus upon which to build will become so badly disorganized, so disheartened and discouraged, that it will be impossible to reunite them.

Part of the Republicans' difficulties are traceable directly to Capitol Hill. I simply cannot understand why Senator McNary of Oregon, continues to serve as Republican leader in the senate when, in the opinion of most observers, he has failed to justify his title in any way. It will be recalled that he did nothing in behalf of Governor Landon's candidacy against Mr. Roosevelt. Nor has he shown either the capacity or the desire to carry on as an opposition leader should carry on since the new congress convened.

Again, this is not the fault of Chairman Hamilton. Frankly, I think it is the fault of the few Republicans in the senate. If they had any fight in them, or any faith in their party label, they would insist upon a militant leadership on their side of the senate chamber, small as their number is.

There are much greater signs of fight among the house Republicans. They are trying to make themselves heard, but the preponderance of Democratic strength in the house coupled with the gag rules which have been applied without stint or limit by the Democratic majority, precludes Republican leader Snell and his associates from doing very much for their party in the house. Where senators have the privilege of unlimited debate, House members are allotted time and lately the time allotted to the Republicans has been infinitesimal. That, of course, is one of the spoils of victory and the Democrats cannot be blamed for asserting their power.

But the point of it all is that while Democratic Chairman Farley has his team on its toes, full of fight, ready to go, Chairman Hamilton has not even been vocal personally, much less has he been able to stir up fight among his associates. It is a situation from which most anything may emerge. Mr. Hamilton sought and was given a vote of confidence by his own national committee shortly after the election. He cannot say now that his hands are tied insofar as the authority of leadership is concerned. So, it is made to appear that unless the present leaders of the Republicans really enter the arena, unless they show their ability to carry the fight to the enemy, it seems rather likely that new leaders will come from the ranks of the Republicans and the present group will become has-beens.

Criticize Republicans

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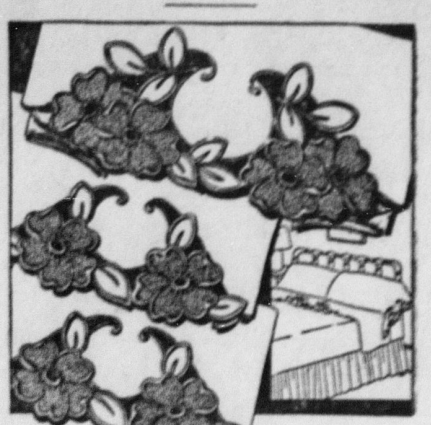
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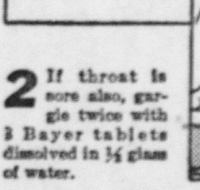
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