

# Washington Digest

National Topics Interpreted  
By WILLIAM BRUCKART  
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Washington.—Some weeks ago when the Treasury was parading a lot of names of well known individuals before a joint congressional tax committee, I discussed the purposes of the investigation and reached the conclusion that the whole affair was staged. If I remember correctly, I called it a vaudeville stunt, designed by the Treasury to save its face for having made bad guesses as to tax collections. The tax collections, as everyone knows, were much below New Deal estimates and somebody had to be the goat. So, it was natural to make rich men the goat by calling them tax evaders.

At the same time, I reported to you the fact that there was a difference of opinion among Treasury subordinates. Some of them wanted to make a great show of names of individuals who had resorted to practices not prohibited by law in order to reduce their taxes. I did not know at that time how serious the disagreement was within the Treasury. It has only lately come out into the open. As a result, two important Treasury officials have quit their jobs and have gone back to private life. I refer to Morrison Shafroth and Russell I. Ryan, chief counsel and assistant chief counsel, respectively, of the bureau of internal revenue. These two men know more about tax evaders and tax avoiders than anybody else in the Treasury but they had one grievous fault. They wanted to be honest about the whole situation. That was a fault because being honest did not make possible a flamboyant display of hatred for taxpayers who had employed legitimate means to pay as little tax as the law permitted.

As far as I can ascertain, Messrs. Shafroth and Ryan wanted to cooperate fully with the higherups in the Treasury in so far as a tax investigation by a joint congressional committee would point the way for improvement of the law. They knew, as many others know, that the internal revenue laws have holes in them. The smart lawyers and smart taxpayers naturally have taken advantage of these holes in the law because they are human despite the fact they are rich. So, the chief counsel and his assistant proposed to Secretary Morgenthau and Treasury General Counsel Herman Oliphant that the investigation be made along lines of a scientific character, that close study be given to some of the methods that had been employed to avoid taxes. In other words, Shafroth and Ryan were anxious to develop legislation on the basis of the experiences which they had had and loopholes they had found to be in common use. But their fault was honesty, as government officials would not be denied the vaudeville performance and the columns upon columns of publicity which Mr. Morgenthau and Mr. Oliphant, not to mention President Roosevelt, desired to see.

I stayed through all of the hearings before the joint congressional committee. They ran for fourteen days. Each day the Treasury trotted out another official as the witness before the committee and he was armed with a prepared statement which he read for some two hours to a committee that sat back in easy chairs and smoked cigars in comfort—while newspaper men avidly wrote stories about rich men, some good and some bad, who had committed the heinous sin of paying as little tax as the law permitted.

The resignations of Shafroth and Ryan rather convince me that the Treasury stooped to about the lowest level it has reached in recent years. Of course, it was not the first time in our history that income tax has been used for political intimidation. Reprisal is a strong word to use about government officials but I cannot escape the feeling that the Treasury used that investigation as a method of reprisal against many men who had opposed the New Deal.

I reach that conclusion on the basis of a review of the names which Messrs. Shafroth and Ryan refused to parade before the committee but which the Treasury itself used as the principal actors. Not more than three of the eighty-odd names presented to the committee had contributed to the Democratic national campaign fund a year ago. The tactics were not far from those employed by the late Huey Long in enforcing his will upon the people of Louisiana. I can add to this a statement of the fact that Under-Secretary Magill, who had charge of presenting the so-called evidence before the committee at the capitol, believed the Treasury was not following an entirely wise course in the methods it employed. But Mr. Magill went along with the scheme and there were many of the correspondents

covering that hearing who felt he tried to do the job fairly. So now Morrison Shafroth and Russell Ryan are back in private life and in their places are men picked by Mr. Oliphant, men who are likely to obey orders regardless of the whims of Mr. Oliphant and Secretary Morgenthau.

Another instance of official action that seems to indicate a bad trend in government lately has occurred. This incident was propagated by the federal power commission, one of the numerous federal agencies that is supposed to be largely judicial in character but which is equipped at the same time with administrative powers.

The facts are these: There was a group of men who served as directors of the Associated Gas and Electric company. These same individuals were directors for numerous corporations that are subsidiaries of that same company. The federal power act provides that the commission may require directors of one power company to divest themselves of connection with any other power companies—one of the strongest features of the law. The commission is empowered to make its own investigation of these interlocked directorates and then on its own motion may require such directors to appear and give the commission satisfactory reasons why they are holding places on the boards of more than one corporation. This also is a sound provision of law and undoubtedly works to the benefit of all consumers of light and power.

Before I proceed further, let it be definitely understood that I have not a great deal of respect for the Associated Gas and Electric company. Its record does not warrant my respect as an observer. Undoubtedly, however, its management complies with the terms of its corporate charter but as a great public utility it has obligations to the public beyond the terms of its charter and it is my opinion that the moral obligations are such that this age demands full observation of them.

This brings us to the crux of the power commission action. Late in September Vice Chairman Seavey of the commission had ordered the group of directors referred to above to show cause why they should not be compelled to relinquish various positions on other boards of directors. A hearing date was set. A few days before the hearing date, the directors in question resigned the positions to which the commission objected and then their attorney issued a statement which said, in effect, that they had resigned because they were convicted in the minds of the commission before the commissioners had heard the case. He used rather strong language, perhaps too strong in expressing his views.

Upon publication of the attorney's statement, Vice Chairman Seavey promptly ordered him to appear before the commission to give his reasons for the statement and to defend himself against disbarment from practice as a lawyer before the commission. Now, lest I be misunderstood, I do not know the attorney, Mr. Paxson; I know nothing about the merits of the case in question. But it is significant that an agency of the government suddenly decides that it can prevent a man from earning his living because he criticized members of that agency.

Occasionally, situations develop in national politics that provide a real laugh. One of them is now at hand. It results from the nasty controversy that swirls around the head of Hugo Black of Alabama, newly appointed associate justice of the Supreme court, who is charged with being a member of the Ku Klux Klan.

Terrible as is the charge and worse if it eventuates that Mr. Justice Black still is subject to the oath of the invisible empire, there is humor in the way a lot of senators and other government officials are running to cover. It has been almost a scramble among Democratic senators to let the public know by issuing statements that they would not have voted for Senator Black's confirmation as a member of the court if they had known he was a klansman. It makes one laugh again when one recalls how carefully the majority of the Democrats in the senate refused to hear evidence or hold any sort of a hearing concerning Mr. Black's qualifications. They did this by voting down a motion for hearings.

It is not pleasant to contemplate how the senate so many times passes on judicial appointments with the carefree abandon of a boy on his way home from school.

## Make Your Own Lace Accessories

By CHERIE NICHOLAS



**MISS COLLEGE GIRL.** Miss Debutante and matrons young and not so young who being active in social affairs need must "dress up" to occasion, here's telling you how to economically acquire that air of elegance which fashion demands for this fall and winter. No matter how ungenerous your clothes allowance may happen to be you can have a whole collection of lace "pretties" such as the sketches here show at comparatively trifling cost. In fact the idea that prompts this illustration, together with its story, is to give you "pointers" on dressing smartly and handsomely on a limited allowance.

A touch of lace will do it! Transform your simplest demure and unpretentious gown into a costume of distinction. And now that we've told you, the first step is either to let your favorite dressmaker in on the secret (show her these sketches) or perhaps you prefer to thriftily adopt the "make it yourself" course of action. Not that you have to be an expert with the needle, for, provided with carefully selected patterns, there is no reason why, if you should not successfully copy these charming fantasies. No matter how many you make of these lovely lace items you can't ever have too many.

Here's a word of friendly advice: don't stint in getting the best type laces for the finer and more exquisite lace you use in making these dainty fashions the more conclusively will they carry a message of high-style prestige.

If you are clever and have a knack of your own a pattern will not be necessary for the cape for it is cut along simple circular lines. However, a pattern similar to the model shown should be easily available. It has little tailored epaulet effects on the shoulders and cunning wee buttons with tiny thread-crochet loops to fasten it down the

front. You can get it hemstitched about the edge or finish with roll hem. As an evening wrap this cape of black Chantilly may be worn over the fashionable all-black gown or over the dress done in lovely pastels.

Have you heard the news about the stunning blouse and skirt or jacket and skirt formals that designers are featuring this season? They are quite the talk in fashion realms. The jacket is supposed to be of sumptuous fabric or lace in contrast color to the monotone skirt. Choose black lace if you want it to "go with everything," although metal lace is wonderfully effective, or if you cherish a color scheme why not a lace jacket in the new spruce green with a crepe skirt in darker rich green, or suppose we say any color just so the jacket is lace? It is no trick at all to get a simple basque-jacket pattern of the type pictured and it will be found easy to make.

The little white cotton lace bolero is very popular and it can be made up so inexpensively it is worth while to keep two or three in waiting for emergency calls. Wear it over simple afternoon dresses or over a floor length crepe sheath which transforms it into an evening ensemble. Jeff of London has made an effective accessory ensemble of black Chantilly lace. (See sketch to right bottom.) The jabot with its high neckline matches a pair of gaunlets of the same black Chantilly, and together they give the essential feminine look to the most tailored of suits.

### SILHOUETTE TRENDS FOR EVENING DRESS

By CHERIE NICHOLAS

Outside of that the pencil-slim Directoire with its high slit skirt and the revival of the Empress Eugenia, there is a definite tendency in many houses to a Spanish type of dress. This is usually marked by flounce ruffles. And one must not forget the gently widened skirt as evidenced also in the afternoon clothes. The most startling bit of material used in this has been the placing of various types of lace over lame to give the firmness and stiffness required. One more skirt—and the silhouette can be settled. That is the short front. This varies from the gradation effect to those cut off clear to the knees in front to show a filmy petticoat of ruffled net. A cross between this and the Directoire are skirts which are cut-away like a man's coat, to the knees and then come down to the ground at either side seam.

### Daytime Footwear for Fall

**Loses Rugged Sporty Look**

Most daytime shoes have lost the rugged, sporty look that formerly characterized the appropriate footwear for tailored suits. Smart, soft-toed models, many of them made with elastic insets and gores, mould the foot trimly. Others, constructed entirely of elastic leather, insure a streamlined silhouette, unmarred by gapping sides or fastenings that protrude.

These snug, form-fitting styles are as easy on the feet as bedroom slippers, partly because of their construction and partly because of their comfortable walking - height heels covered with matching materials or built up of little uncovered layers that are nick-proof and resilient.

### BRIDLE-PATH CHIC



To dress up to the part she plays should be the ambition of every true sportswoman. It may be along scenic bridle paths that the enthusiast guides her gallant steed or it may be in the glare of bright light and trumpet loud in the fashionable horse show arena that she will make her bow. In either event her riding togs must be correct down to the slightest detail. The picture shows a sartorially perfect outfit. We would especially call your attention to the horse's head carved from brown shell catlin that is nonchalantly pinned on her coat. During the summer it became quite a fad to wear novel carved catlin fish, frogs, snails and such, either clips or brooches, on one's bathing suit.

## Fall Fashion Parade



**BE THE first to wear the new** Fall fashions in your group—let Sew-Your-Own help you to step right out in front, in the parade of new Fall Fashions. Today's trio gives you wide choice. Your first occasion frock if you are young and slim is a good looking basque model; for run-around a pretty yoke model that is as easy to make as it is to wear; and if you are full bosomed a jabot model that takes away inches.

**The Popular Basque Dress.** If you are twenty or thereabouts, you'll adore this pretty basque dress with its flaring skirt. The slim wasp waist and short puffed sleeves above a swing skirt are as young as the morning. Have it in a pretty dark print banded in velvet ribbon for every afternoon festivity. It's a dress that you'll wear all through the winter.

**Yoke-Style House Frock.** Every woman will be quick to see the advantages of this frock, in style and wearability. The round yoke buttons at front and gives a

fresh, young look to this design. Best of all, it is cut in one piece from neck to hem so that you can make it in practically no time at all. The waistline is darted for snug fit. You'll look and feel years younger in this model—wear it 'round the house and for afternoon, too.

**Look Slim and Sleek.** The newest fashions give you a slim, sleek look even if you are not blessed with a svelte figure. The jabot model in the illustration is designed to make even the woman who is a bit on the plump side look sleek and inches slimmer. Make this dress in one of the new thin wools and see how you'll stand out in your crowd as a fashion leader.

**The Patterns.** Pattern 1257 is designed for sizes 12 to 40. Size 14 requires 4 1/2 yards of 39 inch material and 11 yards of ribbon to trim. Pattern 1380 is designed for sizes 34 to 48. Size 36 requires 4 1/2 yards of 39 inch material. Pattern 1373 is designed for sizes 34 to 50. Size 36 requires 3 1/2 yards of 54 inch material and 3/4 yards of 39 inch material for jabot in contrast. Send your order to The Sewing Circle Pattern Dept., 247 W. Forty-Third Street, New York, N. Y. Price of patterns, 15 cents (in coins) each.

## Uncle Phil Says:

**And Is That True?** That all men are created equal is one of those things everybody says and means that all men are created to have an equal chance. We sometimes wonder if a pugilistic champion could stand three days of haying. A cackling laugh is not so cackling if it is at your comic remarks. When a young man who has a girl rents a safety deposit box, he's got a hope chest. **They Can't Follow Rules** Most people who are in jail are there because of defective judgment—on their part. Solon wasn't so smart. He said "Reprove thy friend privately; commend him publicly." Reprove thy friend privately and thou'll have none. We don't reprove our friends; we love 'em. If the bombing apparatus of war is developed any further, all the wars will be "dig-in" wars.

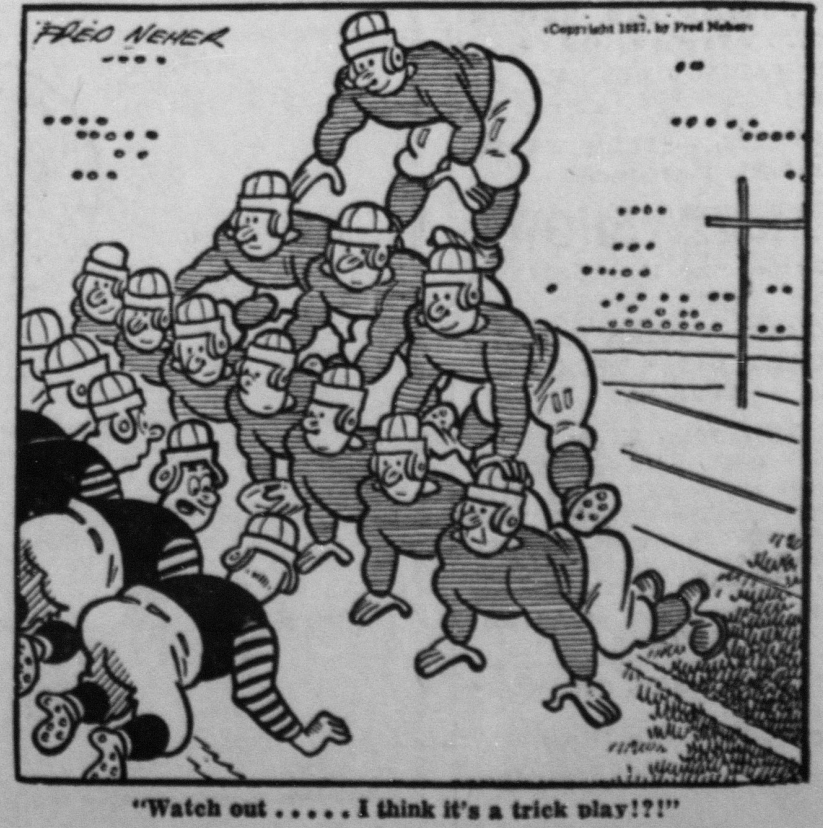
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