

News Review of Current Events

CONGRESS ADJOURNS

Huge Relief and Priming Bill and Wage-Hour Measure Enacted During Closing Days of Session



Here Japanese soldiers with fixed bayonets are seen rushing a Chinese position in a part of Suchow which the Japanese artillery had reduced to flaming ruins. There, as elsewhere, the defenders practically destroyed the city before retreating.

Edward W. Pickard
SUMMARIZES THE WORLD'S WEEK

Congress Session Ends

THE Seventy-fifth congress brought its labors to a close and adjourned, thanked by President Roosevelt for the constructive legislation it had enacted. In its one special and two regular sessions this congress set a peace time record by appropriating more than 20 billion dollars.

Almost at the last moment the \$3 1/2 billion dollar relief and pump priming bill was enacted into law. The house accepted a senate amendment boosting the appropriation for administrative expenses of the Rural Electrification Administration from \$500,000 to \$750,000.

Agreement was reached on the 300 million dollar second deficiency bill when the senate concurred in the action of the house in knocking out \$325,000 to purchase additional land for the Lake Tahoe National park and \$1,300,000 for forestry.

Both senate and house re-passed over the President's veto the bill continuing the 3 1/2 per cent interest on Federal Land bank loans on farm mortgages.

Scores of bills of varying degrees of importance were lost in the confusion of the last hours of the session. Among them was the bill authorizing federal law enforcement officers to tap wires to get evidence of violations of law.

The relief and pump priming law as enacted includes one billion 425 million dollars for the Works Progress Administration for a period of eight months, beginning July 1; 175 million dollars for the Farm Security Administration; 75 million dollars for the National Youth Administration, and 965 million dollars for the Public Works Administration. It authorizes the PWA to lend up to 400 million dollars from the sale of securities pledged for previous PWA loans. It increases the lending limit of the United States Housing Authority for low cost housing from 600 million to 800 million dollars. It appropriates 212 million dollars for additional "price adjustment" subsidies to farmers.

Senators to Aid Van Nuys

FREDERICK VAN NUYS, senior senator from Indiana, is going to run for re-election as an independent because he was read out of the Democratic party for opposing the Supreme court and government reorganization bills. Now 11 Democratic senators have come forward to support him and will speak in his campaign. They are:

Bennett Champ Clark, Missouri; Burton K. Wheeler, Montana; Josiah W. Bailey, North Carolina; Royal S. Copeland, New York; Harry Flood Byrd, Virginia; Joseph C. O'Mahoney, Wyoming; Edward R. Burke, Nebraska; Tom Connally, Texas; Peter G. Gerry, Rhode Island; Millard E. Tydings, Maryland; and Guy M. Gillette, Iowa.

Joining with them are two Republican senators, William E. Borah of Idaho and Arthur H. Vandenberg of Michigan.

Wage Bill Now Law

WAGE-HOUR legislation, key-stone of the President's social reform program, was put through congress in modified form just before adjournment. The conference committee compromise was accepted by the house 290 to 89. About half the Republican members gave in and voted for the measure, but 48 of them and 41 Democrats were recorded against it.

This act, approved by organized

labor and generally opposed by big business, is designed to establish a 40 hour minimum hourly wage and a 40 hour maximum work week in interstate industries in seven years. It will achieve the goal by easy stages, beginning with a 25 cent wage and a 44 hour week in affected industries the first year and graduating to 30 cents and 40 hours in three years.

Thereafter quasi-public industrial boards dominated by a federal administrator, will fix the 40-40 scale conditions, and, in conformance with the major concession to the South, will exempt industries which can prove the scales will work an economic hardship.

Child labor under fourteen years of age is outlawed, except in seasonal and other specified industries. Specific exemption is provided for farm workers, processors in the area of production, executives, administrative and professional help, local retailing employees, seamen, air transport workers, seasonal industries, employees of weekly or semi-weekly papers whose circulation is less than 3,000, those whose hours are regulated by the motor carrier act, those under wage agreements, handlers of perishable goods and those represented by a collective bargaining agency.

Lewis Twice Rebuffed

TWICE in the last days of the session John L. Lewis, C. I. O. chieftain, virtually ordered congress to pass the amendment to the Walsh-Healy government contracts bill so corporations that refused to obey NLRB orders could be blacklisted. Both times Lewis was re-buffed when Speaker Bankhead refused to permit suspension of the rules to bring the bill up in the house. The rules committee of the house was overwhelmingly against this action.

Lewis and some of his C. I. O. lieutenants had boldly marched into the speaker's office to make their demand, and Lewis had summoned congressmen before him in the room, this arrogance arousing extreme resentment. When he had been turned down a second time Lewis was enraged and threatened reprisal at the polls. Calling reporters from the press gallery, he said to them:

"The action of the rules committee is cowardly and pusillanimous. In a short time congress will adjourn, and many of the members will return to their districts seeking support as friends of labor. We want to know how good a friend they are before we give them our support."

Great Floods in China

POURING through broken dikes, the waters of the Yellow river inundated many hundreds of square miles in central China. In the first two or three days of the great flood it was estimated 150,000 Chinese were drowned and several times as many rendered homeless. Millions of others were threatened by the swirling waters. The fate of thousands of Japanese soldiers in the area was not known but it was thought many of them must have perished.

Far from the war and flood fronts, the Shanghai municipal council officially declared cholera to be epidemic in Shanghai. In the city's hospitals there were 123 cases, 73 of them originating in foreign-administered areas.

In the Yangtze river valley Japanese continued their drive by land and by gunboat against Hankow.

Finland Pays

ERO JARNFELT, minister from Finland, appeared in the state department on June 15 and proudly announced that Finland was paying its debt installment due that day and had deposited \$161,935 with the federal reserve bank in New York.

John Peleny, Hungarian minister, announced his government had paid 1 per cent on account against its post-war debt.

The defaulting nations were, as usual: Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Estonia, France, Great Britain, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Rumania and Jugo-Slavia.

John Roosevelt Weds

IN A little old stone church at Nahant, Mass., John Roosevelt, youngest son of President and Mrs. Roosevelt, and Anne Lindsay Clark were made man and wife. After the ceremony there was a reception in the old Nahant club, and the young couple then started on a honeymoon trip to Bermuda. There they were to stay at the estate of Vincent Astor.

Railway Aid Postponed

WHEN the leaders of the senate and house made up their minds to adjourn congress not later than June 15, they went to the White House and told the President the proposed legislation to expedite the reorganization of railroads would have to be postponed to the next session. They agreed, however, to put through two other railway measures. One permits RFC loans to railroads without interstate commerce commission certification. The other establishes a special unemployment insurance system for rail workers.

Healing Party Riffs

THOUGH it was believed Tommy Corcoran and his "eliminating committee" would continue the efforts to "purge" the Democratic party of opponents of administration policies, the President himself undertook to repair some of the breaks in the party ranks. For instance, he invited Senator Gillette, victor in the Iowa primary, to the White House where they took off their coats, ate luncheon together and, according to reports, planned common action against the Republican enemy in November. Also, it was disclosed, Mr. Roosevelt had sent word to the New York Democrats that the renomination of Governor Lehman would be acceptable to him. He has not liked Lehman since the governor came out against the court packing bill. There had been a plan to run Lehman for senator and Wagner for governor, but this switch presumably is now out.



Gov. Lehman

Our Slump Worst

ACCORDING to the monthly bulletin of the federal reserve board, the present business depression is more severe in the United States than in any other industrial country in the world.

The manufacture of war materials in other countries was pointed out, however, as one of the principal supports to business activity, many other industries showing almost as poor results as in the United States.

Japan's Demands Rejected

AMERICAN warships will remain in the Yangtze river and will go to any place where Americans are in danger. This despite the demands of Japan. Naval officials of Japan asked that all foreign warships leave the Yangtze river area between Wuhu and Kiukiang because the invaders were about to start an offensive toward Hankow, provisional Chinese capital. But Admiral Harry E. Yarnell, commander of the United States Asiatic fleet, rejected the demand sharply. Furthermore, he at once planned an inspection trip up the Yangtze and through the war zone, and he did not ask Japan's permission.

Dodged in House

NO credit for bringing the situation to the attention of the country can go to the house of representatives. It did not even consider any restrictions on the use of the money when the bill was up for passage there. The leadership in the house is controlled by Mr. Roosevelt, but even then it was surprising to see such upstanding, square-shooting men like Speaker Bankhead and Majority Leader Rayburn of Texas side around the hot spot. Sam Rayburn is one of the really splendid men in the house of representatives, but he dodged on this thing and it is not commendable.

Eight Army Flyers Die

EIGHT army aviators from Chautauque field in Illinois were caught in a storm, lost one wing of their big bomber and crashed in a farm field near Delavan, Ill. All of them were killed and the tanks burst into flame. Three of the victims were commissioned officers.

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

WASHINGTON.—The most important news story in Washington and throughout the country now is the use of relief funds for political purposes. It is not only the most important news at this time, but has been the most important and will continue to be the most important for weeks to come. This is so because the amount of money involved is vast and the number of votes possible to be influenced by that money is so great. The stakes are high and the unscrupulous are going to play for them to the limit of their capacity. I think that perhaps the corruption of the Harding administration with its shameful oil scandal was more sensational, but surely no one condones the present situation any more than the scandals of the earlier malfeasance of office holders.

In the Harding oil affair, there was perhaps 5 per cent as much money involved. Few, if any, votes of private citizens were at stake; certainly, no votes of persons who through no fault of their own found themselves destitute.

It was the late Thomas Walsh, Montana Democratic senator, who conducted the earnest fight to purge the country of the crooks at that time. And now that the senate again has taken notice of the conditions, one cannot help but wonder whether there will be the same high-type of statesmanship displayed, the same courage shown by some Republican or Democratic senator. For the sake of the country, I hope that no stone will be left unturned by the senate investigation which, though ordered belatedly and after an irritable reaction from the country, nevertheless was ordered by the senate.

The senate deserves no credit for having moved to expose the condition which Senator Wheeler of Montana described as "playing politics with human misery." It had three chances to show its courage and its statesmanship before it would take hold of what many recognized as a political firebrand. It ran from those opportunities in the most cowardly fashion, under the lash of New Deal leaders in the senate. On three occasions, I repeat, the senate had a chance to assert control over the \$5,000,000,000 borrowing-spending-lending bill and prevent, to some extent, the further use of taxpayers' money for electioneering purposes. And, I repeat, each time the vote was against inclusion of preventative clauses in that appropriation measure. So, none can say the credit should go to the senate even though now it promises to uncover facts which anyone, with an eye half open, knows exist.

There can be no credit to the administration because President Roosevelt spoke not a word in behalf of use of funds for relief and for the removal of politics. Indeed, he praised his relief administrator, Harry Hopkins, for publicly backing Representative Wearin, the New Deal candidate for the senate nomination in Iowa. Mr. Wearin was well licked by Senator Gillette, an old line Democrat. Nor did the President tell the senate publicly that he favored a curb on the use of the money. Quite the contrary. Whether the President urged them to do so or not, his board of strategy (the new name for the brain trust) put the steam on and made enough senators vote against the amendments to curb politics to insure defeat. They even forced Senator Barkley of Kentucky to take the floor in favor of the use of money in any way the relief overseers want to use it—and Senator Barkley is seeking renomination in his native Kentucky. So, no credit for the move to draw back the curtain can possibly be given to the White House or any of the President's advisors or strategists.

As to the phase of conditions "back home," the word seeps through to Washington that a good many persons who are seeking house or senate nominations against New Deal aspirants are finding strong WPA organizations against them and in favor of the New Deal candidate. And the full import of that strength comes to mind quickly when one thinks what a hungry person will give up in order to have food.

Senator Tydings of Maryland is the sponsor of the move to clean up the mess in relief. Of course, Senator Tydings, while a staunch Democrat, seldom has done anything to cause the New Dealers happiness; on the contrary, he was marked for "liquidation" long ago. It is much better that an outstanding Democrat should have proposed the investigation than to have had the proposal come from a Republican. Had a Republican introduced the resolution, the thing would have been called political, purely. But it would have been a move calculated to demonstrate the genuineness of the New Deal if some Roosevelt 100 per center would have brought up the proposition.

There is a great opportunity for this new senate committee to serve the country well. It can, and should, go into every report its investigators obtain to learn to what extent taxpayers' money is being employed to influence elections. It has an outstanding piece upon which to work, at the very start. Did not Mr. Hopkins horn into the Iowa primary? And everywhere there was the question whether the WPA and other relief workers in Iowa would not construe the Hopkins announcement in behalf of Mr. Wearin as an "order" for them to support the same man.

But more important than Mr. Hopkins, this investigation—if it is seriously made—can point the tremendous fallacy and danger of relief being administered from Washington instead of from the states and the counties where the money is spent. If the country is made fully aware of true conditions, I believe there will be changes in the relief methods that will allow more than 60 or 70 cents out of each dollar expended to be used for food and clothing as is the case now.

It might be well to review the senate action when it ran away from an honest job on the relief appropriation. First, there was the amendment by Senator Hatch, Democrat, New Mexico, which was to prevent use of relief funds for political purposes by the simple expedient of dismissal for the official who had control over such funds; second, there was the amendment by Senator Lodge, Massachusetts Republican, which would have required a distribution of the relief funds on the basis of the number of unemployed in each state and which, thereby, would have prevented use of vast sums in some states where the political battle might be going against the candidate with a New Deal blessing, whether the opponent be an old line Democrat or a Republican; third, there was the amendment by Senator Rush Holt, Democrat, of West Virginia, which merely proposed to make all federal relief officials responsive to civil service laws insofar as political activity was concerned; and fourth, there was the amendment by Senator Austin, Republican, Vermont, which would have made it unlawful for any person whose compensation comes from relief funds to solicit, or authorize the solicitation of, funds as contributions to any political party.

Well, as I said, the senate ran away from them and it seems to me that any senator who voted against those amendments has a pretty difficult job to explain that vote. As much as I admire Senator Barkley, the basis of his argument was so sour that it smelled to high heaven. The Kentuckian told the senate that the amendments would destroy senators and give all of the political power into the hands of state political machines which could use that power against senators seeking reelection. Senator Barkley is being challenged for renomination in his state and, I suppose, the matter strikes right close home with him.

Whether senators who voted against those amendments so intended or not, what they have done, when the picture is examined in an unbiased fashion, is to put the whole Roosevelt administration in a ridiculous position. It was their action which makes the record show that the whole administration is willing to let politics run riot in relief; it is against a fair and equitable allocation of money among the states in accordance with the number of unemployed who must be fed.

The Folks
'Back Home'

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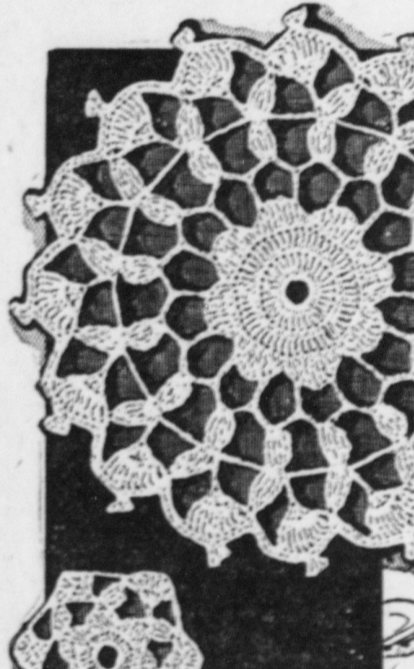
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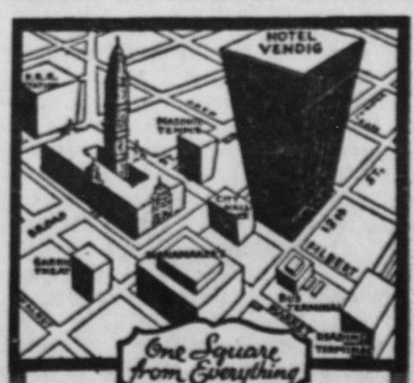
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