

Weekly News Analysis

Isolation vs. Internationalism: Senate Debates Foreign Policy

By Joseph W. La Bine



THE PRESIDENT'S VISITING FIREMEN\* The conference was secret, but someone spoke.

EDITOR'S NOTE—When opinions are expressed in these columns, they are those of the news analyst, and not necessarily of the newspaper.

Defense

In dealing with today's international situation the U. S. government has its choice of two methods. Any citizen may hold to one or the other method with equal righteousness:

(1) Strict neutrality and isolation. Europe's affairs are no business of ours. We should have no arms secrets, no secret alliances; all U. S. activities should be strictly aboveboard because secrets are undemocratic and tend to create public doubt about the government.

(2) The antithesis. In 1939 one hemisphere's problems are another's. If the institution of democracy is worth saving we must join other nations in aggressive combat against dictators. This need not mean war, but constitutes economic and military favoritism to one group of nations, with sanctions against others.

In post-World war history, not until the current winter have these two contrasting foreign policies found such ardent champions as to cause a marked rift in Washington. Champions of the latter (favoritism) are President Roosevelt and administration leaders. Opposed is practically every Republican senator and congressman, plus a formidable bloc of insurgent Democrats. That this difference of opinion is partly a reflection of political animosity is a foregone conclusion. Administration forces favor internationalism as expressed in Secretary of State Cordell Hull's reciprocal trade treaties; contrarily is the traditional Republican tenet of high tariff walls and the isolation that inevitably accompanies them.

This winter's foreign policy battle got its real start when a bombing plane crashed in California, bouncing out a representative of the French air ministry whose presence in the U. S. had previously been kept secret. The subsequent revelations: That President Roosevelt had approved sale of U. S.-made warplanes to France, though army secrets were being carefully guarded from all foreigners. A few days later the senate's military affairs committee constituted itself a body of visiting firemen (see photo) to call on the President and get the real facts about a rumored U. S.-French military alliance.

The secret President Roosevelt reputedly told his visitors was so choice that some anonymous committeeman blurted to the press the minute the conference ended, which speaks the futility of any administration attempt at sharing its military secrets with congress. The alleged secret: That the U. S. is following a policy of selling arms to "independent states" as opposed to dictators; that the U. S. will give Britain and France every assistance but troops in case of war; that the "frontiers of the United States are in France."

If a vote were taken, most people would sympathize with the President's foreign policy, i. e., to help Britain, France and China against Japan, Italy and Germany; to improve trade and political relations with South America, where dictator states are attempting to gain sway. But for the President to speak openly of his purpose brings the situation into a shockingly sharp focus for the first time.

The net result will probably be open congressional revolt against secret alliances, against favoritism in military exports and even against the President's emergency defense program, which many legislators think is unjustified in view of the tax burden it would create. Tossed in along with other subjects of re-

\*Front row, left to right: Illinois' J. Hamilton Lewis, North Carolina's Robert R. Reynolds, Oklahoma's Josh Lee, New Hampshire's H. Styles Bridges, Vermont's Warren R. Austin, South Dakota's Chandler Gurney, Texas' Morris Sheppard (committee chairman), Colorado's Edwin C. Johnson, Utah's Elbert D. Thomas. Back row, left to right: Minnesota's Ernest Lundeen, Oregon's Rufus C. Holman, North Dakota's Gerald P. Nye, Missouri's Bennett Champ Clark, Alabama's Lister Hill, Indiana's Sherman Minton, Kentucky's M. M. Logan, and Wyoming's H. H. Schwartz.

sentment will be a broadside against the treasury's highly-secret stabilization fund, which congress fears is being used to further monetary agreements with Britain and France.

In the end a cumbersome, loud-voiced and highly opinionated congress may find itself incapable of taking a constructive hand in foreign policy. Though rightfully indignant over a Pan-Democracy alliance because future Anglo-French friendship is problematical, Massachusetts' Sen. David I. Walsh summed up the entire exasperating situation quite well: "In God's name, who are we (the U. S.) to determine where truth and justice exist? When we attempt it, we will find ourselves in trouble."

Treasury

Depressions hatch pension plans and this winter's congress is deluged with panaceas to make the U. S. safe for old people. Believing most such plans (like Townsendism) to be impractical, the administration has offered congress its own ideas via proposed amendments to the social security law.

Biggest amendment is that calling for a start on old-age benefit payments in 1940 instead of 1942, annuities to be based not on payroll taxes actually paid out on wage rates. Hence the social security



TREASURY'S MORGENTHAU Social security is costly.

board would simply make believe that benefit recipients had been paying taxes throughout their adult lives instead of a mere four years. Other proposals would (1) provide supplementary pensions for aged wives, (2) help widows and orphans of social security's insurees, and (3) enlarge the program to include farm laborers, seamen, servants, domestics and self-employers.

Starting hearings on this program, the house ways and means committee was startled to learn that more social security would cost tremendously more money, so much in fact, that Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau Jr. was reported stroking his chin perplexedly. Morgenthau figures:

(1) It would cost \$1,000,000,000 a year more than at present.

(2) Social security's hoped-for 1980 reserve of \$47,000,000,000 would be cut to \$7,000,000,000, meaning that the U. S. must find from \$1,250,000,000 to \$1,500,000,000 new annual taxes to continue financing the program.

If the above details bother the committee, still more trouble will hatch when California's Rep. Bertrand W. Gearhart asks abolition of the present payroll tax and substitution of general revenue levies for a pay-as-you-go social security. Since the government must already levy extra taxes to pay interest on funds it is borrowing from social security's reserve fund, Mr. Gearhart's plan has attracted many congressmen who think it is fallacious to tax the public for borrowing funds the public has already been taxed for via social security. If the Gearhart plan is adopted, general revenue taxes must be hiked \$1,000,000,000 a year at present (under the unamended social security act), twice as much in 1950, four times as much in 1980.

Europe

After a nation wins so many victories as Nazi Germany has won in the past 12 months (Austria, Czechoslovakia, Spain) it can practically adopt a "peace" policy and continue to win concessions from weaker powers, who thereby gain the privilege of sighing with relief. In Germany's case a "peace" policy is the more practicable because the Reich must consolidate the past year's gains and pay temporary attention to repairing its internal structure.

How permanent Europe's "peace" will be is conjectural. But following Chancellor Hitler's half-threatening, half-reconciling speech before the Reichstag, most of the continent was able to settle back while the wiseacres drew a prediction from the hat. The prediction: That a peace era is dawning with Hitler at the reins, during which Italy will win territorial concessions from France, and Germany will regain her war-lost colonies. Moreover the Reich will probably wheedle a trade treaty out of Britain and—most dangerous of all to permanent peace—a military-economic peace with Russia. Point-by-point:

Russia. Thoroughly scared by the chance that Germany will dominate a Pan-Ukrainian movement in south Russia, the Soviet is ready to come to terms with Hitler. In exchange for surrendering his Ukrainian plans Der Fuehrer could tap Russia's endless supply of foodstuffs. The possibility is confirmed by Izvestia, Moscow Communist organ: "Should Germany extend a hand to Russia, it will not remain floating in the air." The gravest consequences might result from such an alliance, for Russian resources and manpower, coupled with German ingenuity, could throw a dictator scare into the entire world.

Colonies. Most of Germany's former colonies are mandated to Britain. Hitler's speech demanded their return and the next day Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain told the house of commons he would not discuss colonies with Germany without an agreed and ample measure of disarmament. This showed Mr. Chamberlain is nevertheless willing to return the colonies, and since the Reich's conquest is already almost complete Hitler should have no objection to a temporary arms reduction.

Trade. Hitler's speech declared the Reich "must export or die." Next day Robert Spear Hudson of the British overseas trade department said he believed "there is plenty of export trade to go around." More important was the announcement that German and British industrial representatives will soon meet at Dusseldorf to consider "mutual trade and economic problems."

Italy vs. France. Hitler promised to aid Italy in case of war, obviously referring to Mussolini's territorial claims against France. Since German-British relations are reaching an amicable stage, Britain would therefore not be prone to aid France against a German-Italian combination. Hence it can be predicted that Italy may get her share in the Suez canal, plus ownership of the Djibouti-Addis Ababa railroad.

Trend. Having boxed it's way into a position of dominant European power, the Reich is now ready to press its pants and assume a role of respectability.

Public Works

Created in 1933, the public works administration pays 55 per cent of local-sponsored construction projects. Scheduled to expire in 1940, PWA still has \$1,500,000,000 in projects on file and would like to become a permanent agency to combat unemployment and centralize federal relief projects. Soon to be offered is an administration bill embodying this program. No special annual appropriation will be asked but congress will get data to show the necessity of creating a "permanent financial reservoir" of \$1,000,000,000 a year.

Transportation

With fairs on both east and west coasts this summer, U. S. railroads figured most vacationists would take in one or the other, might-even take in both with a little incentive. Just announced by the Association of American Railroads is a "grand circle" fare plan which bids fair to boom 1939 passenger travel. The scheme: Beginning April 28, a person in any point in the country can travel to both New York and San Francisco exhibitions and back home at a total coach fare of \$90. First class fare is \$135, plus space charges.

Trend

How the wind is blowing . . . TEMPTATION—To lure 4,000 hunger strikers "back home" from their protest against corn beef hash, California's San Quentin prison set out coffee—with cream and sugar.

REFUGEES—New York's Rep. Samuel Dickstein is drafting legislation to open Alaska to European refugees, a move recently suggested by German Jew-baiters.

MANGANESE—The price of Arkansas manganese, "starch for steel," has reached its highest point in years, thanks to European rearmament.

DRILL—"Squads right" is being omitted tentatively from new U. S. army drill regulations.

Bruckart's Washington Digest

Genuine Strain Being Placed Upon Administration Control of Senate

President's Appointments to Public Office Are Upsetting To Some of His Followers; Roper Virtually Forced Out As Secretary of Commerce to Make Room for Hopkins.

By WILLIAM BRUCKART WNU Service, National Press Bldg., Washington, D. C.

WASHINGTON.—President Roosevelt's followers in the senate of the United States are finding it increasingly difficult these days to stay off of a hot seat. Indeed, if I read the signs rightly, they are getting rather restive and there is a genuine strain being placed upon the administration control in that body of congress. Whereas, it appeared a month ago that the anti-administration senators would break out of control only on major issues, it now seems that there is a real threat of danger to the President on minor, as well as major, questions.

The new developments have come, and are continuing to come, from what some believe to be an unwise course on the President's part in the matter of nominations to public office—appointments that must have approval of the senate. Whether the President is to blame, personally, for placing these distasteful names in the mouths of senators, or whether, as heretofore, the condition results from the activities of the "inner circle," the effect is the same. It is a very real problem for the administration advisors to ponder, and it is entirely possible that Mr. Roosevelt will get a slap in the face by senate rejection of some of the nominees for judgeships and other public offices. It is just possible that some senators will gag at swallowing several of the names. If that happens, what will be left Mr. Roosevelt's mastery of the senate thereafter will be meaningless.

Observers here in Washington heard many private remarks of a very uncomplimentary character last fall when Mr. Roosevelt named Gov. James V. Allred of Texas to a federal judgeship. It was so plainly political that some individuals who are very close to Mr. Roosevelt were disgusted. They did not speak out then, but they are bolder now.

Shortly thereafter, Mr. Roosevelt named Floyd Roberts to a federal judgeship in Virginia. Now, apparently, Mr. Roberts is about as well equipped to be a judge as I would be—if we are to believe the public statements of Senators Carter Glass and Harry Byrd, both Democrats and both acquainted with the life and record of Judge Roberts.

Roper Virtually Forced Out As Secretary of Commerce

Subsequently, Daniel C. Roper was virtually forced out as secretary of commerce in order to make room for removal of Professional Reliever Harry Hopkins to a cabinet job. Hopkins thereby was taken out of the line of red hot fire about his spending policies. Homer S. Cummings quit as attorney general and Frank Murphy, Michigan's lame duck governor, was given the post.

Former Sen. James P. Pope who was licked in the Idaho Democratic primaries was named to the directorate of the Tennessee Valley authority from which Dr. Arthur Morgan was so unceremoniously dismissed. Rumor has it that former Sen. Fred H. Brown, lame duck New Hampshire Democrat, is to be given the juicy job of comptroller general of the United States as soon as it is evident that congress will not vote abolition of the general accounting office.

Rep. T. Alan Goldsborough of Maryland lately has been named a federal judge for the District of Columbia. It will be recalled that it was Mr. Goldsborough who invited President Roosevelt into Maryland last summer in the attempt to purge Sen. Millard Tydings from the Democratic ranks. In fact, it was at Denton, Md., Mr. Goldsborough's home town, that the President made his most vicious attack on Tydings and delivered his eulogy of praise for David J. Lewis in the senatorial primaries.

There have been other appointments mixed in here and there, some important, some just run-of-the-mine jobs, and they have not met unanimity. Even the selection of Professor Felix Frankfurter as a justice of the Supreme court of the United States did not arouse enthusiasm among the senators who voted approval of the nomination. I, personally, heard several senators remark that the Frankfurter appointment was so much better than that of Hugo Black, a year ago, that it was refreshing to vote for him. Yet, they added a qualification. Justice Frankfurter has brains, a fine mind—but he is looked upon as the father of so much of the New Deal that his presence on the highest court appeared none too pleasing.

Nomination of Amlie of Wisconsin Creates Fuss

But all of these appointments now seem to have been only a build up to a climax. They were to be followed by an appointment that caught the senators in the ribs. It was the nomination of former Rep.

Thomas F. Amlie, Wisconsin progressive and also a lame duck, to be a member of the interstate commerce commission. That nomination went to the senate without even the great progressive, Senator LaFollette, knowing about it, and there are those in the senate who believe that Senator LaFollette would have advised against it, had he been consulted.

There is a very real possibility—although not conclusive—that the senate will reject the Amlie appointment. The pressure against him is quite unusual. Even the legislature of his home state adopted a resolution, memorializing the senate in opposition to confirmation.

Whatever virtues Mr. Amlie may have, his qualifications to be a member of the interstate commerce commission cannot be numbered in that list. He knows nothing about transportation; he is not an economist, and if his record as a member of the house of representatives here is a proper criterion, he is lacking in judicial characteristics—well, he simply does not have them. His work in the house was distinguished by the fact that he headed a conglomerate group which was attempting to "co-ordinate liberal thought" in the nation. But apparently the folks in Wisconsin rather doubted his value for they refused to select him as the progressive senatorial candidate—who, incidentally, was doomed for a licking anyway in the November election.

Appointments Upsetting to Followers of President

One never can tell what trades may be made within the great club known as the senate, but surely Mr. Amlie will be discussed fully before he is confirmed. And as I said above, he may not be approved at all. The appointment may be the straw that breaks the camel's back.

When Mr. Roosevelt began making appointments three or four months ago that were upsetting to some of his followers, they had to decide between their loyalty to him and their convictions. The bulk of them stood by him. He was the head of the Democratic party; party unity was, and is, essential, and they justified the votes in confirmation in various ways. The Hopkins and Murphy appointments were confirmed because it always has been the philosophy of senators that cabinet jobs are intimate associations with the President. He is entitled, therefore, to have whom he desires to sit with him at the cabinet session and to advise him when he seeks advice. I think there was an inclination to accept Mr. Murphy, too, because it was known he wanted to crush the sit-down strikes at their inception and was confronted with White House refusal of support.

There were fewer votes against him for that reason than against Secretary Hopkins. On the other hand, Senator Vandenberg, the Michigan Republican, said he voted against the nomination because "the issues were the same as in Michigan's election last fall when Mr. Murphy was repudiated."

When it gets to cases like the Allred appointment for Texas judge and the Roberts appointment in Virginia, there simply is no explanation available—unless as I said, the "inner circle" is leading Mr. Roosevelt into a morass. Senators Glass and Byrd are going to fight the Roberts nomination. Senators Sheppard and Connally were not consulted about the judgeship in their state. As far as it has leaked out, nobody was asked whether the Amlie appointment would arouse enthusiasm or hatred.

Congress Shows Disposition To Assert Independence

The proposition thus settles down to only one possible answer. Since the last election removed the rubber stamp from the hands of the New Dealers and the congress has shown a disposition to assert its independence of the unelected "inner circle," they are resorting to a new strategy. They can not always control congress but they have access to the appointive power vested in the hands of the President. They have this because they have the President's ear and they take pains to see that none of the practical politicians, like Vice President Garner, or Sen. Pat Harrison, or Speaker Bankhead, wield any influence.

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SAFETY TALKS

Rural Traffic Accidents Increase Traffic accidents in the rural districts are mounting by leaps and bounds. Since 1924, the National Safety Council says, motor vehicle fatalities have increased 172 per cent. In cities over 10,000 population they went up but 30 per cent.

Of course, the council points out, a large part of this increase may be the result of much-increased rural travel. But most traffic authorities believe, however, that the more favorable city record can be traced to the more effective traffic control measures in municipalities.

In 1937, the loss of life to traffic accidents in rural districts and cities under 10,000 population was 27,400. In cities over 10,000, there were 12,100 killed.

While collisions with pedestrians constituted the major fatal accident problem in cities, rural districts had their greatest difficulty with collisions between two or more motor vehicles.

Tale of Two Brothers

A man of 75 told a judge the other day that he had only had one brother—and he died 125 years ago.

His father, it seems, was 70 when this man was born in 1863. He had been married before—at 20—and had had a child, who died a day or two after birth, in 1813.

So the man told the truth. Only his brother was really a step-brother.

A longish "step," too.

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Without Progress Leisure without books is death, burial alive.—Seneca.

Watch Your Kidneys!

Help Them Cleanse the Blood of Harmful Body Waste Your kidneys are constantly filtering waste matter from the blood stream. But kidneys sometimes lag in their work—do not act as Nature intended—fail to remove impurities that, if retained, may poison the system and upset the whole body machinery. Symptoms may be nagging backache, persistent headaches, attacks of dizziness, getting up nights, swelling, puffiness under the eye—a feeling of nervous anxiety and loss of pep and strength. Other signs of kidney or bladder disorder may be burning, scanty or too frequent urination. There should be no doubt that prompt treatment is wiser than neglect. Use Doans' Pills. Doans' have been winning new friends for more than forty years. They have a nation-wide reputation. Are recommended by grateful people the country over. Ask your neighbor!

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