



(ED. NOTE—While Drew Pearson is on vacation, the Washington Merry-Go-Round is being written by his old partner, Robert S. Allen.)

## WEEKLY NEWS ANALYSIS

# Truman Plumps for Brannan Plan; Union of European Nations Urged; Publicity Asked in Dollar Parley

EDITOR'S NOTE: When opinions are expressed in these columns, they are those of Western Newspaper Union's news analysts and not necessarily of this newspaper.

### FARM AID: No "Setups"

Whatever else his critics might say of President Truman, they couldn't charge him with picking any "setups" when he sets out to do battle. The President has a faculty, it seems, for jumping quickest to the defense of measures and proposals that have the least public support.

This was the case in the President's latest taking-up-of-arms for controversial causes. He espoused the Brannan plan of farm price supports in a speech at Des Moines. He warned that the nation faces unmanageable and costly crop surpluses, and urged a "modernization" of the farm price support system on the basis of the Brannan production-subsidy program.

This is an issue which promises to be one of the liveliest in the 1950 congressional elections, and if the President was aiming to beat his opponents to the punch on the issue, he had succeeded.

The President's recommendation was made in the face of disagreement among his own congressional leaders as to the best farm price subsidy program to adopt and organized opposition by many farmer groups against the Brannan plan.

MR. TRUMAN called the Brannan plan the most "promising method yet suggested," but left open the possibility that some other system could be substituted.

The Brannan plan is one, briefly, wherein prices on practically every farm commodity would be left to find their own level on the market with the government paying a subsidy to farmers in the form of the difference in price between what farm products brought on the open market and the established parity price.

Opponents of the plan point out that while the consumer might appear to be saving money on cheaper market prices for farm products, he would, in reality, be saving nothing, inasmuch as it would be his money that would be paying for the subsidy to the farmer.

### COMMANDER: Some Dispute

Amid charges that he was the candidate of the "kingmakers," and was under the domination of the old line leadership, George N. Craig, 40-year old Indiana attorney was elected commander of the American Legion. He was the first World War II veteran to be chosen for the post.

THE 3,344 delegates to the Legion's Philadelphia national convention gave Craig an overwhelming majority on the first vote. Craig's opponents took the rostrum at nominating time to label him the choice of those they claim always select the organization's national commander.

ELECTION of officers climaxed convention sessions in which the Legion urged continuation of aid to China, adopted a resolution asking the U.S. to curtail "as far as possible" any further immigration at the present time.

### HIGHWAYS: Rough Going

Thirty-four of these United States need 20 billion dollars worth of work done on their roads.

This huge highway repair bill, forecast by Senator O'Mahoney (D., Wyo.) was disclosed after a nationwide survey of road needs.

THE PICTURE was not as dark as it seemed. O'Mahoney pointed out the condition will serve as a backlog which "will afford an unmeasured market for business and industry."

He declared that everyone is aware of the depreciation of the American road system during and following the war, but added that "few, I am sure, appreciate the tremendous backlog of essential work which has piled up."

As chairman of the congressional joint economic committee, the senator recently sent inquiries to governors and highway authorities in every state to determine their highway construction and repair needs.

HE REPORTED 40 states had responded and that of those, 34 indicate an accumulation of highway deficiencies which would require the expenditure of 20 billion dollars or more.

The information obtained has been turned over to the U.S. bureau of public roads.

### 'DIVORCEES ANONYMOUS'

## Women Organize to Slow US Divorce Rate

Unhappy because they felt that in too many cases they rushed to the divorce courts too soon, a group of Chicago women have formed a group which they hope will have some effect in slowing down the accelerating U.S. divorce rate.

They call their group "Divorcees Anonymous" and their major aim is to salvage other marriages which are headed for divorce.

### Tito's Envoy



With Russians reported to be massing troops at his borders, Yugoslavia's Marshal Tito sent Dr. Josip Vilfan (above) as his envoy to lay the Yugoslav-Moscow dispute before the United Nations.

### EUROPE: Stronger Ties

At Strasbourg, France, the council of Europe's consultative assembly called for creation of a union of European countries with real power in a limited range over the governments of member nations.

There are many students of world problems who are convinced this procedure is the only one which may eventually do away with war, but being realists, they concede that man has not progressed in selfless thinking to a degree where governments will agree to overall control of any kind or degree.

THUS it appeared the idea broached at Strasbourg was doomed at its inception, but men of goodwill must keep trying, no matter how difficult the task, if world peace is ever to become more than an illusory goal.

It has not been too difficult to get the best minds committed to a problem to see the way to its solution; the obstacle always has been that the individuals to whom the procedure must be entrusted fall in the scope and breadth of the wisdom necessary for solution.

So, when the 12-nation assembly meeting in France voted by an overwhelming show of hands for federal authority for the council of Europe, it was a manifestation of hope and desire, rather than any real accomplishment.

THAT the delegates were on good, solid ground is indicated by this portion of the resolution for federal authority:

"The government should undertake systematic instruction of the great mass of the people, pointing out to them the undeniable advantages of union for Europe and at the same time the dangers inherent in national isolation."

### DOLLAR PARLEY: Information, Please

Great Britain took the lead in stripping any secrecy from the progress of the critical conference on England's dollar crisis.

OFFICIAL SOURCES credited Sir Oliver Franks, the British ambassador, with a proposal that detailed daily reports be made in order to keep the American, British and Canadian people advised of developments.

This system of daily briefings has been followed at meeting of the Big Four council of foreign ministers in the past, although top-level international postwar financial conferences have been a bit more secretive.

The publicity problem was among the first which had to be ironed out by the principals in the monetary discussions, as decisions will have a vital bearing on reducing British dollar drain and bolstering her position.

THE PROPOSAL for daily briefings was said to have support from Dean Acheson, U.S. secretary of state, but the attitude of John Snyder, treasury boss, was unknown when the proposal was first broached.

The federal administration already had indicated congressional leaders would be kept informed on the progress of the conference.

The British proposed that officials of the three powers take turn-about in giving the briefings to the press.

### CLOAK & DAGGER:

#### Russian Wise Guy

It was beginning to appear—as pieces of the picture fell together—that Uncle Sam had been played more or less for a sucker by a Russian wise guy who pretended to be won over to the American ideology by the Voice of America broadcasts, and who wanted to come to America and be a United States citizen.

LAST October 9, two Russian air force lieutenants, Anatol Borzov and Peter Pirigov, landed in the U. S. zone of Austria in a stolen Russian bomber. They had had enough of Russia, they said, in effect, and would like to become U.S. citizens.

According to the Soviet Embassy, Borzov suffered a change of heart late in July and begged for "prodigal son" treatment. Meanwhile, U.S. agents had discovered the "change" and Borzov was arrested by U.S. agents and held secretly at Ellis island. Then he was flown to the U.S. zone of Austria and returned to Russian jurisdiction.

DURING the interim, Pirigov, who says he wants to stay in America, told newsmen that Borzov tried to bribe him with Soviet embassy funds to return to Russia. It was reported that Pirigov had been beaten by Soviet agents.

The one essential element to the chain of events as to whether it proved Borzov a spy was missing. That was confirmation. The U. S. state department would neither confirm nor deny any of the stories being circulated.

IT merely revealed that a U. S. note on the Borzov affair had been delivered to the Soviet embassy.

There is an old adage that it is "very easy to believe what one wants to believe." It may have been that sort of wishful thinking that led state department officials to smile benignly on Comrade Borzov's desire to "change" allegiance and become as one with Americans.

### 'FAIR DEAL': Author Irked

President Truman continued in a fighting mood. He told newsmen he was going to keep Maj. Gen. Harry Vaughan as his military aide—apparently despite anything the current "5 per center" probe might develop.

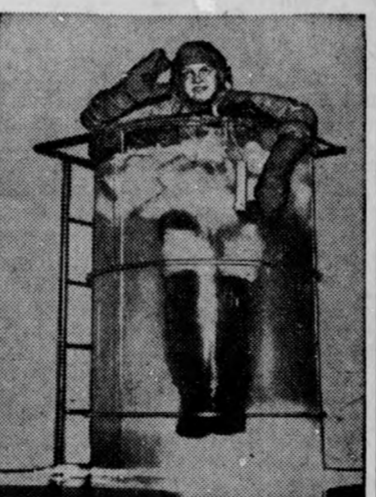
Then, setting the theme of the 1950 congressional campaign, he lashed out with a slashing attack at his recent pet aversion—"organized selfish interests" which, he asserts, are trying to block his fair deal program with a "scare-word campaign."

HE DECLINED to name the "selfish interests," still campaigned against the 80th ("do nothing" he called it) congress. Evidently, Mr. Truman felt he knew a good thing when he saw it. If he could be elected to the presidency—when few felt he had a chance—by campaigning against the 80th congress, campaigning against it again ought to do good for his side in 1950 ballot tests.

Getting away from the 80th for the moment, he talked about the great mass of the people, declaring that the Democrat-controlled legislators had made progress with his Fair Deal program in the teeth of "trumped-up slogans" like "statism," "welfare state," "collectivism," and "socialism."

THE PRESIDENT said the people will not be disturbed by such "scare words" dreamed up by a "lot of paid agitators, promoters and publicity experts who make a fat living by frightening the people in the high-income groups about forward-looking legislation and by organizing campaigns against it."

### Cold-Water Suit



Looking like a swizzle-stick in a giant-size highball, Melvyn M. Maki is shown demonstrating the navy's new submergence suit which will enable its wearer to spend as many as three hours in freezing water.

### NEW LOOK: Next, the Male

The American male would be smart to move cautiously, for fashion designers have launched a movement to give men's clothes a "new look" every five years.

"The men's apparel industry is in bad shape," was the dim view of the situation expressed by Myron Kahn, executive director of national fashion previews of men's apparel, incorporated. He complained of no changes.



PONTIFF AND HIS AMERICAN VISITORS . . . Pope Pius XII rests at his summer residence at Castelgondolfo, Italy, and receives as visitors two Catholic church dignitaries from the United States. They are Edward Cardinal Mooney (left), Detroit, and Samuel Cardinal Stritch (right), Chicago. They visited the pontiff during their "ad limina" visit to the Eternal City.



MASH RASH . . . Nolan Holdridge, San Francisco, was sued by his wife in Los Angeles for divorce on grounds she is allergic to him. She says she breaks out in rash from head to toe every time she is near her mate.



SPECIAL "INVITE" . . . Richard, radio-talking parrot, signs an invitation to Myrna, a bird living in President Truman's temporary home, Blair House, to break bird seed with him on a radio program.



"BUSTED" . . . Col. William L. Lee, March Field, Calif., had too much "push" and not enough "pull" when he commanded 15th air force in Italy. He pushed influential John Maragon in the face for "sticking his nose into things" and was demoted from general to colonel.



THESE LITTLE PIGGIES WON 20 . . . They went to market for the Boston Red Sox and brought back 20 victories. That many victories are enough to make any pitcher smile, but being the first to reach that pinnacle is even more of a thrill. That could be why hurler Mel Farnell (left) got his battery mate, Birdie Tebbetts, to add an extra smile and 10 fingers for the accomplishment. The combined efforts of this team afforded Farnell his 20th win.



MADCAP PRINCESS . . . Superstition hath it that females born at Glamis castle, as was England's Princess Margaret Rose, will wed before they are 20. The princess has just turned 19. Here she poses for her portrait.



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