

Mr. Truman Adds A Dimension

Whatever doubts we may have had concerning the wisdom of President Truman's fact-finding approach to industrial peace have been wiped out by the violent denunciation the scheme is receiving from both management and labor. With Philip Murray of the CIO rejecting the plan as "designed to weaken and destroy labor unions," and both General Motors and United States Steel refusing to have anything to do with it on the grounds that it jeopardizes the rights of management, it appears that the President has at last stepped out onto that lonely middle ground between the two extreme positions.

Behind all the fancy economic theories with which both sides pad their arguments—CIO is the champion of increased purchasing power for the masses, General Motors and Big Steel claim they cannot expand to meet America's great future unless they can spend their income as they see fit—the basic difference has involved the split of industrial profits during the boomtime of the war years. Even such price controls proposed are going to be high for the next few years and both labor and management have been insisting on the lion's share.

If profits are as high as the labor unions claim they are, and the right to own the means of production is being questioned by some public inspectors who indicate that they probably are a Government fact-finding board might come up with a recommendation for a three-way split—a small wage increase, a reasonable profit for the stockholders, and a reduction in prices to benefit the consumer who, despite price controls, is already suffering from the effects of inflation.

This consideration, we suspect, accounts for a good part of the violent opposition to the proposal. If labor and management really believed the high-lown arguments and fancy statistics they have been bandying about for the past six months neither party would have anything to do with a fact-finding investigation of corporate profits.

Somebody, of course, stands to profit from the maximum production of the next few years. Up to this point there have been only two contenders, but Truman's belated proposal adds a new dimension, taking into consideration for the first time the plight of the consumer from whom these high profits are to be extracted.

The President's plan is a radical to some, but to others it is a lifeline. Perhaps it is, for it is designed to benefit the voiceless little man who has been caught in the middle between two powerful and completely selfish pressure groups. The scheme may be a lifeline for the little man, and it can be woven behind the Congressional storm clouds gathering it may develop the powerful Federal machinery we must have before reconversion gets beyond the plush dreams of the advertising copy-writers.

An Overdose Of Democracy

When the Student Legislative Assembly met in Raleigh it was, of course, without legislative authority, a laboratory experiment, designed to bring a group of students together to study the workings of representative government under something approaching actual conditions.

The students clearly understood Roberts Rules of parliamentary procedure. They organized a committee, elected a speaker, appointed committees, worked out a procedure for bringing various matters to the floor for consideration. But it soon became apparent that the students, while well-grounded in legislative theory, were woefully unskilled in legislative practice. They did not know that there are certain issues that should not be discussed in public, matters that are broached only in safe and quiet committee rooms where the status quo is maintained without the meddling interference of the press.

Toward the end of their session, a resolution came before the Student Assembly calling for the acceptance of delegates from North Carolina's Negro colleges at the next session. There was a heated debate, but, under the majority vote according to Roberts, should prevail, the resolution was adopted.

Secretary of State Thad Eure, the great white father of the assembly, hastened to the legislative halls to warn the members that their untutored democracy had carried them beyond the pale. Their action, he said, was certainly not representative of the best opinion in North Carolina, and was, in fact, inspired by an outlander, a member of the University of North Carolina delegation attending college under the GI Bill of Rights. Furthermore, Mr. Eure warned, the adoption of such a resolution might jeopardize legislative appropriations for the University. In a normal legislative assembly these threats would have been sufficient to bring an errand faction back into line, but the students, in their innocence, could not see that there would be conspicuous results in inviting Negro students to sit with them in a legislative hall they could not enter as adults. They could not understand that there are unwritten traditions stronger than the law itself. Obviously they were not familiar with the system of compromise under which material progress is purchased through the abandonment of abstract principle.

There is an unreality about the headlong approach of the students to matters they do not understand, but there is an even more striking unreality in the manner in which their elders, who understand them only too well, retreat. There is something wistful in Mr. Eure's insistence that the idea of inviting Negroes to join the Student Assembly originated with the University of North Carolina, his conviction that such a heresy could never be birthed in a Tar Heel mind.

Mr. Eure, of course, is turning away from an unpleasant future and gazing hopefully back into a simpler past. The students, as is their way, are thrusting out in advance of their time. It is small wonder they cannot see eye to eye.

From The Greensboro Daily News:

Toward The Same Purpose

With all the attention which has been given to the more dramatic aspects of the hospital situation as relating to the mentally ill and deficient in North Carolina, the strictly business side of the problem may be generally overlooked by the public. It is good and reassuring to know, however, that the new unified board of controls is not overlooking this side but is manifesting a diligence and soundness which are certain to aid the program generally.

Understand the Daily News is not for a moment paramounting the business side or suggesting that this distinctly human problem be put on a dollar-and-cents basis. But we do think that the very enormity and cost of the hospitalization program demand a type of management which will enable those who need hospitalization and those who are providing it to get the most from their funds available. Otherwise the program itself, with emphasis upon both physical facilities and therapy, will suffer, be narrowed or held back unwarrantedly by the want of funds.

It is for this reason that we welcome revelation that the board is working out new schedules for patients more in keeping with actual cost of hospitalization, that progress is being made in collecting accumulated assets, that ease workers are investigating the status of every incoming case and that patients who have the means will be required to pay accordingly. Lack of means of course should have no effect in preventing admission of patients but those who can pay or whose family can pay should not be palmed off as wards of the state. Declarations of indigency have heretofore been entirely too routine and too general.

There are two ways of bettering and enlarging the state's mental hospitalization program without merely dumping it back on the taxpayers for increased appropriations, although they will doubtless be necessary to meet society's full obligation. The first of these is to provide the sort of treatment which will return patients to normal and get them back into self-sustaining activity. The other is to do what the board is doing in provision of sound management and equipment that those who are able to pay do so. By this dual approach facilities already available will be made available to more people and the income which the institutions receive from their own operation can go much farther towards assuring both the therapy and the physical plants which a challenging situation demands. Here is an opportunity, obviously complementary, in which professional and lay members of the board and advisory commission ought to keep in full cooperation and application of their pooled intelligence and accountability.

A little patience and understanding will enable the returned GI to get along with civilians who have been studying up on how to understand the veteran.

In New York a mortgage paid 92-1/2 cents a dollar is still in force. They don't build bonds like that any more.

WASHINGTON

Shortly before he left Washington, Austria last week, Foreign Minister, Dr. Herbert E. Evans, held a press conference at the State Department to announce that the members of the Far Eastern Advisory Committee had reached a complete agreement on the control of Japanese shipping. Evans was still ebullient.

As he was about to open the conference, Evans looked around and asked for a reduction in prices to benefit the consumer who, despite price controls, is already suffering from the effects of inflation.

Mr. Todd, who will be interested to note, said that he had ten nations sitting here on the Far Eastern Advisory Committee and we all got along well, although the Soviet Union was not represented by an eleven men to play football. Do you think your people will join the team?

Todd laughed but made no reply.

NOTE—Despite Russia's absence all ten members of the committee agreed on a considerably tougher directive for Japan's control than that originally worked out by the State Department and Gen. MacArthur.

"Red" Dean Acheson

Under Secretary of State Dean Acheson made a speech on friendship with Russia at a recent mass meeting in New York's Madison Square Garden. The Dean of Canterbury, sometimes described as the "Red Dean," also talked on the same program. Next day one newspaper carried the headline: "Red Dean calls for friendship with Russia." Underneath was a picture of Dean Acheson.

The paper came to the attention of Henry Wallace, who sometimes is accused of being radical. He tore out the page and sent it to Dean Acheson, onetime attorney for the big power companies, with a note saying:

"Thank goodness they haven't gotten around to calling me 'Red Henry' yet."

Management Battles Itself

Few people know it, but the Labor-Management Conference came within a hair's breadth of making some progress before it broke up. The big fight took place at a secret management caucus which lasted until 2 A. M. The Johnson of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce, David Sarnoff of the Radio Corporation of America, and Herman A. Siefrink, president of Bridgeport Brass, pleaded with their management colleagues to soften a bitterly anti-labor resolution on collective bargaining. The resolution not only required performance bonds from labor for violation of contracts but also went so far as to demand anti-trust laws for unions, abrogation of the Wagner Act, and repeal of the Norris-La Guardia Act which prevents injunctions against strikes.

On the other side of the fence were John A. Stephens of U. S. Steel and Almon E. Roth, representing West Coast shipping interests. At 1 A. M., Roth and Stephens finally yielded slightly. They agreed to soften the language of their resolution by not mentioning the Warner Act or the Norris-La Guardia Act by name; but

their substitute draft meant almost the same thing. Sarnoff and Stephens, who knew that labor leaders could never afford to agree to the Stephens-Roth proposals without silencing their own throats, begged their management colleagues to reconsider. Finally, at 2 A. M., the meeting recessed.

Early the next morning, Johnston called John Stacy, the conference chairman, and asked that the day's meetings be postponed from 10 A. M. to 3:30 P. M. in the hope that management could reach an acceptable compromise in the interim.

However, the conservative management clique still refused to yield further. When the meetings were resumed, the CIO and AFL offered to accept the entire management proposals if the four-anti-labor points were eliminated. This sent management back into caucus again. However, Stephens, Roth and John Clement, president of the Pennsylvania Railroad, still refused to go along; so under the rule of unanimity, the conference blew up.

Labor Also Split

At the end of the three weeks' maneuvering, labor also was split wide open.

John Lewis made the most hypocritical speech of all at the conference's close when he talked about the urgent need for labor unity.

Other labor delegates laughed behind their hands, because for three weeks Lewis had done his best to split the CIO and AFL again, however, he was outsmarted by his old enemy Phil Murray.

Here is what happened:

Just before the conference closed, Murray rose and offered the conference resolution calling for "substantial wage increases now" for labor. Citing case after case of high corporate profits, he urged that purchasing power of the consumer be maintained and pointed out that wage increases were in the national interest. President Truman incidentally had made a similar plea a month before.

Murray's unexpected bid put the AFL in a tight spot. Earlier the AFL had made a secret agreement with Lewis and the Mosher of the National Association of Manufacturers to maintain a united front and not ask for increased wages at the conference.

Therefore, when Murray finished talking, the AFL's Dan Tobin demanded an AFL caucus. Lewis joined this caucus, and management went into a caucus of its own. One AFL leader especially on the hot spot was David Dubinsky, who, at that very moment, was negotiating for wage increases for his garment workers.

So at the AFL secret caucus, Bill Green moved an immediate amendment to Murray's resolution, calling for "general wage increases" instead of "substantial wage increases." By doing this, Green reneged on the AFL's secret agreement with the National Manufacturers to keep the wage issue out of the conference. He had a tough time trying to explain why at the start of the conference he was opposed to wage increases while at the end of the conference he was for them. The reason, of course, was that he couldn't afford to let Murray get ahead of him.

However, both the Green and the Murray resolutions went along with either.

AGRIAN REFORMS

The way Mr. Stein lays it out is to note that while we are destroying the remnants of feudalism in Japan, and setting the small farmer free, for the first time, a precisely defined policy is being followed in China. There the Kuomintang Government, a government of rural landlords, is opposing the agrarian reforms. The Communists, which says Mr. Stein, are the forces that favor the possibility of rural landlords in Japan. The possibility exists, therefore, that a purged and decentralized Japan may arise as the dominant power, in Asia, precisely because of the fear of Communism in some quarters.

NEW YORK

It is being reported, almost with an air of consternation, that the German people dislike us heartily. A poll taken by a German Army study, just released at Frankfurt, is cited to show that the population in our occupation zone is vehemently opposed to us for having won the war, for living in German houses, and for carrying on with German customs.

As news this ranks with a note that the effect that the sun rose yesterday.

I find rather more important a Berlin dispatch to the New York Herald Tribune which reveals that other Army studies apparently not the same as that detailed in the Frankfurt documents show that a chief barrier to German economic education is the fact that many Germans firmly expect a war between America and Russia. They have found that German civilians are following with fascinated interest all signs of discord between the two great powers; and that is really news.

Here we see one definite result of the breakdown in relations between America and Russia, and it is of the greatest practical importance for Germany who expect a war between the United States and the Soviet Union, will not feel themselves under any great compulsion to solve their own problems, or to accommodate themselves to the world as it stands today. So long as outstanding questions between Russia and America have not been settled, the best of German confusion may take refuge in the hope that nothing has changed in the European situation, that, in the event of a crisis, he may find himself being wooed by one side, or the other, or by both.

DISTORTED THINKING

Nothing could do more to distort the thinking of the average German than this illusory notion. It must shine before his eyes like a phony, giving him hope that he may yet save something out of the wreckage.



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