

'What's The State Of The Political Union?'

With Snuff, Sand On Hand, Stage Is Set For Congress

By FREDERICK C. OTHMAN

WASHINGTON
WEDNESDAY'S big day of the year in the Senate is here. The Senate will report the black sand from the beach in Arabia is ready for the gentlemen. So's the Philadelphia snuff.

I mean the 83rd Congress convenes for its second session on Jan. 5 and we're ready for it. Or at least nearly ready. The Senate Office Building even has a fine new air raid warning horn on its roof. The House of Representatives has a new speaker.

The management said this was because some Senators (names unspecified) asked for a raid signal; the House members, being more sanguine about the prospects of peace or perhaps more absent-minded) didn't.

The Capitol, in any event, is shined up as never before. The clerks have spent almost all summer taking apart, putting back together and varnishing the Senators' private monorail subway cars.

There are two of these, running on rails, one on the floor and the other on the ceiling, one between their offices and their chamber. A Senator always gets a seat in his private subway car; if there's any room left ordinary citizens ride, too. They usually grin during their first voyage on this thing.

Down in the Senate floor the black sand is ready. This is an old tradition. George Washington had sand on his signature because he had no blotting paper. Neither does the U. S. Senate.

Each Senator has a cut glass bottle of sand, with a salt shaker top, for blotting purposes on his desk. For esthetic purposes this sand is black. It comes from one special beach in Arabia, which supplies the entire world with sand for blotting purposes.

During the last world war this beach was cut off, the commerce



**Hoffman Launches Inquiry
 Cost Of Junkets Studied**

WASHINGTON
BY CONGRESSIONAL QUARTERLY
FREE-SPENDING Congressional investigators who traveled abroad this summer have made the subject of an inquiry into their dipping, if any, into some convenient foreign funds.

Rep. Clare E. Hoffman (R-Mich.), in launching an inquiry into the cost of Congressional travel overseas has asked to know how much foreign currency Congressmen have drawn from "counterpart funds" set up by foreign nations for U. S. use.

Government agencies abroad may dip into the counterpart kitty only to the extent specified by Congress. Senators, Representatives and committee staff members traveling on official business can draw what they want in foreign currencies and no one except their committee chairmen may ask for a limited amount.

By tradition, a member of Congress never casts doubt on a fellow Congressman's scruples. But Hoffman, 49-year-old chairman of the House Government Operations Committee, announced Dec. 12 that he had asked federal agencies and the House Administration Committee for an accounting of what it cost to transport and entertain Congressmen abroad, and how much foreign currency was turned over to the visitors.

The State Department has advised Hoffman it will have detailed reports on Congressmen's counterpart funds early in 1954. In a letter made public Dec. 21, Thurston B. Morton, an assistant secretary of state, told Hoffman that, as far as the department is concerned, use of these funds by Congressmen is limited only by their availability.

Hoffman expects reports from the State Department, Foreign Operations Administration and Defense Department early in 1954.

COMMITTEE RULES NEED CHANGING

SENATOR GILLETTE, Iowa Democrat, has a valid point when he says that the Senate should limit Senator McCarthy's Government Operations Committee to its proper sphere, and prevent the Wisconsin solon from meddling in international affairs.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee, of which Gillette is a leading Democratic member, is the proper legislative agency for investigating the overseas policies and activities of the federal government. Far better than any other arm of the Senate, the Foreign Relations Committee is informed about the delicate and often strained relations between this nation and its allies. And it was never the intent of the Senate, we are quite sure, to grant to McCarthy the kind of built-in-china-shop role that he arrogated to himself.

Moreover, the whole question of subversive activities in government more properly belongs to the Senate Internal Security Committee, of which Senator Jenner is chairman.

But there is an even more important and fundamental problem posed by the free-wheeling actions of Senator McCarthy. The investigating function of the Congress is a necessary and useful device, but it cannot be effectively carried out

except by a responsible group of congressmen who not only represent their branch of the legislature but who also represent both major parties.

When the Democratic members of Senator McCarthy's committee walked out in protest over his arbitrary tactics in the controversy over J. B. Mathews, McCarthy held together the semblance of a committee, at least, by having other Republicans on hand. After Congress recessed last July, however, he tended more and more to run a one-man show, with no other senator on hand.

The net result has been that McCarthy's recent investigations have not represented in any way the authority of the United States Senate. Rather he has taken advantage of loopholes in Senate rules to run the show according to his own whims.

No one man should be clothed with so much authority as McCarthy has enjoyed. No one man can speak authoritatively with the voice of the U. S. Senate.

Senator Gillette's suggestion that McCarthy be restrained from meddling into international affairs is but a partial solution. More essential is a change in rules that will require the approval of other senators of both parties before a committee chairman can set hearings, subpoena witnesses, recommend contempt citations, and make reports.

SENTENCE THEM TO THE BACK SEAT

FRIEDLY the Motor Vehicle Safety Responsibility Law went into effect. Because of this law, the risk of being hit by a financially irresponsible driver has diminished sharply. After the law has been in effect for a while, the number of financially irresponsible drivers will be reduced further because some of them, after being involved in accidents, will lose their driving privileges.

Thus will highway hazards be decreased. But what will be done with the driver who is financially, but not otherwise, responsible—he who causes damage or death, satisfies liability claims, then goes on to wreck damage or death again?

Often drivers in this category pay big fines. Sometimes they go to prison, although they are not criminals in the usual sense of that term. Because they are not, they may be paroled quickly—and return to the highways.

Recently a Montana district judge meted out a more effective type of punishment, a type which should be dispensed more frequently. A young defendant, convicted of manslaughter, was given a five-year suspended sentence with this restriction:

"The defendant must not drive any vehicle during the five years. The judge added this exposition of his views:

"To send a young man like you to the penitentiary might tend to make a criminal of you more than it would do any good, but I do feel that within these restrictions—and they are harsh—if you are compelled to live up to your restrictions for the full period of time of your suspension, that more good might be accomplished than would be the case if you went down to the penitentiary, only to be liberated in a few weeks.

"I think this, too, that every time you would drive an automobile during the next five years, it will make you stop and think."

The judge was applying a concept of justice that long has been applied to the airways. Revocation or suspension of flying licenses has been the Civil Aeronautics Authority's best method of removing reckless fliers from the skies. Now that the financially irresponsible drivers of North Carolina are being clamped down on, it is time to consider more effective controls over the "otherwise irresponsible" drivers. The Montana judge has pointed the way.

HOFFMAN'S QUEST GETS OUR VOTE

AS a rule, the ostentatious and often irresponsible Republican from Michigan who is now chairman of the House Government Operations Committee. But Mr. Hoffman is currently engaged in a quest for information, the success of which is of considerable importance.

Elsewhere on today's editorial page is a Congressional Quarterly analysis of a legal gimmick whereby congressmen traveling in those countries on the foreign aid list may draw unlimited expense funds and spend them liberally without making an accounting to anyone.

Mr. Hoffman believes that congressmen should make the same accounting of their use of public money that other

government officials are required by law to make. He is concerned over news stories from abroad describing the eagerness with which traveling congressmen have dipped into counterpart fund coffers, not only for legitimate expenses but also for frills and luxuries.

If and when he gets a full report from the State Dept., the total amount involved in the financially irresponsible dip into the astronomical foreign aid expenditures for all purposes. The principle, however, is important, regardless of the amount of money involved. Congress has no right to arrogate to itself privileges and perquisites from the public purse. Full exposure of the matter, Hoffman will be a real service to the people.

WHY THEY WENT RED

WHY did over 20 American boys choose to stay with the Communists in Korea?

To provide some facts upon which to base an answer to that question, The Boston Globe made home town surveys of the formative years of these soldiers' lives.

This is what The Globe found:

Every one of them came from the lower—often the lowest—economic strata in America.

Many came from broken homes.

Many left school early. None went to college.

Only one had a background deeply influenced by religious training.

Perhaps no sure conclusion can be drawn from these facts, because there were so few soldiers who chose communism.

But surely these case histories substantiate the premise, sometimes overlooked in the search for Communists in the schools and pulpits and among officials with a social conscience, that the educators, the ministers, the social workers are among the most relatively small in proportion to those who hurl grave and unwarranted charges at these people, who are rooting out the seeds of communism, undermine freedom's bulwark.

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FROM THE ASHEVILLE CITIZEN

EUREKA!

BELL TELEPHONE CO., over the phone, is running experiments on a telephone booth equipped (as to telephoning) with a built-in loud speaker and microphone. Thus the customer does not have to hold a receiver; he plunks down his dime—and, look Ma, no hands!

Somewhat we suspect that this is going to be one of the most popular innovations since the day Alexander Graham Bell and Thomas A. Watson stumbled on the secret of sending human speech along wires.

For instance, a number of ladies we know cannot converse without a vigorous and illustrative waving of hands and wagging of fingers, even if the auditor is a mile away. One we know broke her right wrist and was speechless for weeks.

Think how much sooner the little woman will finish her conversation, out of sheer manual exhaustion, and let you get to the 'phone!

Pravda, which insists the American workers are starving, might have found an interesting item on Thanksgiving Day in the spectacle in many cities of young men fighting over a little piece of pigskin.—FORT MYERS (FLA.) NEWS-PRESS.

Many husbands now take their wives to a nightclub instead of to a theater. That's about the only place still open by the time she is ready.—CARLESDA (N. M.) CURRENT-ARGUS.

How Counterpart Funds Work

COUNTERPART funds amount to one of the strongest strings in the United States attaches to its foreign aid grants. Each country receiving military or economic help sets aside, in a special account, enough of its own currency to equal the value of American aid. This money can be spent by the foreign country only on projects approved by the U. S. government, such as airfields, defense production, farm machinery, etc.

Furthermore, 10 per cent of each country's counterpart funds are "kicked back" to the U. S. government to pay some of its expenses. For instance, the purchase of strategic materials and cost of the information technical aid programs.

From 1948 to the end of fiscal 1953 (June 30, 1953), European nations put \$11 billion worth of their own currencies into counterpart deposits. All but \$1.4 billion then was used by those countries to deduct from their own predecessor, the Mutual Security Administration.

Under the Far East program, which did not begin until June 30, 1950, foreign currencies worth \$229 million have been deposited as counterpart

Congressional Quiz

Q—I read that President Eisenhower vetoed 10 measures passed by Congress in the first session. Is that very many?

A—The record for vetoes is held by the late Franklin D. Roosevelt who refused to sign 631 bills during his 12-year tenure of office. Nine of his vetoes were overridden. Former President Harry S. Truman vetoed 250 measures, was overridden on 12 in almost eight years. The last Republican President, Herbert C. Hoover, vetoed 37 measures, had three overridden, in four years.

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

WASHINGTON
PRESIDENT EISENHOWER definitely plans to move to the left in his forthcoming state of the union message by proposing a ten-dollar across-the-board monthly increase in old-age pensions. The move should win Democratic support, but will bring howl from some of his own right-wing party members, particularly Congressman Carl Curtis of Nebraska and the U. S. Chamber of Commerce.

Details of the pension increase have not been worked out, but in a general way the \$10 will be paid for by broadening the tax base. It is now proposed to increase the \$3,600 annual limit on the deduction from gross salary up to \$5,600 annually. Above \$5,600 there is no deduction. It is now proposed to increase the \$3,600 limit to \$4,600 or \$4,800. From this larger salary there would be payroll deductions, but not beyond.

Ike also proposes to drop the increased social-security deduction from payrolls, which went into effect automatically on Jan. 1. Administration leaders are extremely anxious to get rid of this added payroll deduction, since a one-a lower-bracket taxpayer it would offset the automatic 10 per cent income-tax decrease.

Many Republican congressmen are muttering about a \$10 increase in old-age pensions is reminiscent of New Deal, hand-and-glove, pie-in-the-sky days. Fact is, however, that with increased prices, U. S. old-timers have a hard time making both ends meet.

Grumpy Uncle Dan
 RELATIONS between the White House and grumpy Congressman "Uncle Dan" Reed of Dunkirk, N. Y., chairman of

McCarthy's Man Friday

WASHINGTON
McCarthy's Man Friday the President to withdraw the name of Robert E. Lee from the federal communications Commission and thereby avoid a nasty campaign fight with the Democrats. The latter are sore over Lee's appointment after they had shown up his strange activities for Senator McCarthy in the Maryland election of 1952. They believe that Lee's confirmation in the Senate, the tax-writing War's Means Committee, are drifting from bad to worse.

First, Uncle Dan took a walkout on the White House legislative conferences just before Christmas. Now the White House is taking a walkout on Uncle Dan.

When Reed was invited to the three-day sessions attended only by GOP leaders to shape the legislative program, he sailed off on a cruise to Panama. Privately, he told friends his committee had decided on what kind of tax bill to write, and he didn't have to have any White House advice.

Understandably, the White House was sore. So when Ike's aides made up the list of both Democratic and Republican names to be appointed to the bipartisan White House meeting tomorrow, Reed's name was omitted. Ike didn't want to be stood up twice.

The 78-year-old congressional prima donna, however, may have the last laugh. In addition to taxes, Reed's committee holds the key to the new social-security law and the reciprocal-trade program. It's almost impossible for Ike to move without him.

Senators Are Sore
 THE post is now held by able old Lindbergh Warren, of North Carolina, who has saved the taxpayers millions. Warren, not in good health, is not averse to resigning, but he has the idea of handing it to a McCarthy man, who had been under fire in a Senate investigation, take his place. He wanted his career assistant, able Frank Weiser, to succeed him.

So, to appease Senator Bridges and Congressman Taber, the White House appointed Robert E. Lee to the Federal Communications Commission.

"It was a case where we thought he would be less dangerous over there,"

Ike May Have To Kick Shins To Get His Program Approved

By JAMES MARLOW

WASHINGTON
IN HIS talk to the nation tonight President Eisenhower steps across the line dividing his first and second years in office and two periods in his life.

By the calendar his first year doesn't end until Jan. 20. But his second year actually begins tonight with his broadcast report which is preliminary to the return of Congress Wednesday.

For Eisenhower 1953 was a period of preparation. The public, regarding him with high esteem and patient expectation, waited while he postponed action on some major issues and got ready the program he would hand Congress in 1954.

Now the period of performance begins. It is a period of patience, restraint, and mildness; with Congress so evenly divided between both parties he'd need help from men on both sides to put his program across.

Moreover, nothing could have tarnished his luster so quickly as a major fight with the House of Representatives. It's possible he can pursue that path, though, if his administration gets his program through as he wants it, make no enemies, and have to endure no personal attacks. But it isn't likely.

Quote, Unquote

"If President Eisenhower thus far has shown a salient weakness, it is that he wishes too much to be liked. In the long run, the mass of the people admire a president most for the enemies he has made."

This observation may be accurate within bounds, but a course of action by which a president makes enemies of the mass of the people is guaranteed to lead to death of him and his administration.

Adams explained to a friend, "However, Democratic senators don't see why Lee has to be appointed to any post unless qualified. And his chief qualifications are that he has been a producer on the Carl-Hunt TV program, 'Facts & Forum.'"

Lee also handled a check for \$5,000 in the McCarthy campaign against Senator Ted Young and the chairman of the Senate and House appropriations committees. They wanted Lee, who was working with the committee, appointed as comptroller general of the United States.

This is one of the most important posts in the entire U. S. government. The appointment is for a four-year term, non-renewable by the President, and it's the job of the comptroller general to scrutinize all government expenditures. He is the watchdog of the Treasury.

Under The Dome
 SENATE Democrats will caucus on three issues as Congress convenes: strategy on the confirmation fight against FOC Commissioner John J. Connelley; alleged illegal firing of postmasters with civil-service status; and an increase in the number of Democratic House committees, now that the Dems have the majority in the Senate.