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TUESDAY, JANUARY 6, 1959

This Little Fire Engine Was Tardy

THE arrival yesterday of the Institute of Government report on City Recorder's Court can best be described as anticlimactic—somewhat in the manner of the fire truck that finally makes it to the scene of a blaze after the debris has been cleared and carpenters are at work repairing the damage.

Hammers have been ringing on a new system of operation for Recorder's Court for months. The carpentry has not yet been completed, but many important reforms have been instituted as a result of last summer's startling revelations.

Still, late as it was, the Institute of Government report contained one or two worthy suggestions.

One had to do with warrants processed by the court. The institute recommended that they be pre-numbered at the printers. This would help authorities keep a closer check on the warrants and guard against any more mysterious disappearances.

The institute also frowned on the questionable practice of permitting the use of a rubber stamp of the judge's signature on official court records. But this had already been taken care of by City Recorder Basil M. Boyd. He now signs his own name on the records.

Otherwise, the institute had little to offer in the way of advice. Something was said about increasing court cost fees, cramped quarters and the necessity for court personnel to make a concerted effort to disburse "restitution" payments collected by the court, but these mat-

ters were of comparatively minor importance.

Far more substantial reforms were already in the process of being made before the institute's experts even arrived on the scene in response to the city's separate S.O.S. Charlotte simply could not wait. The erosion of confidence in the administration of justice here was too serious.

A new clerk of court has replaced the former clerk who resigned under fire and later criticized a plea of guilty to a charge of willful neglect of duty. In addition, a stenographer has been added to keep accurate records of court proceedings. Finally many detailed bookkeeping improvements have been made to make the bookkeeping more efficient.

These and other possible improvements would not have been made had there not been an insistent and wholly justified public demand for reform. Fortunately, the public awakened to its responsibilities in time to prevent an even more serious breakdown in the administration of justice. The system under which Recorder's Court operated was in a terrible state of repair. Something had to be done quickly.

Important measures have been taken. Others will no doubt follow. The public, meanwhile, has learned its lesson. It is an old one: Eternal vigilance.

Congress Returns To Hickory Sticks

THAT rowdiest of schoolhouses, the 86th Congress, will return to classes tomorrow.

Whittling their hickory sticks and gazing off dreamily into the general direction of the Rio Grande (and 1960) are two old schoolmarmers who will take charge of the pupils—Lyndon Johnson, Senate majority leader and Speaker Sam Rayburn of the House.

Perhaps the freshmen will not throw spitballs at these august and venerated teachers.

But while that is not a probability, every question of the coming session of Congress turns about the power and politics of the new members. Much has been said about the liberal dynamo instilled as of the November elections. But Congress assembled, the collective unit, has a strange knack for knocking off rough edges so that power becomes diffused and often personal.

Thus, in both organization and legislation, the big public question about the 86th Congress will be whether the much-heralded "liberal" power can make its voice heard in the corridors of the capitol. It will continue with the Wilderness of farm legislation, civil rights, the continuing failure of small businesses, funds for housing, conservation and education, the scandal of regulatory agencies, control of uranium and pension funds. Then there will be the massive Gettysburg of foreign aid and defense spending.

ership who claims the mantle of the fallen Sen. Knowland. This has gradually evolved into a thrust of liberal leadership in the 60's against the ancient and fast tradition since President Eisenhower refuses to take public sides. Sens. Aiken and Cooper and their group reportedly believe this to be an all-out fight to shed the crust of ancient Republicanism for modern—a fight to keep their seats.

In the House, where Speaker Sam Rayburn wields the cane and hands down the three R's of legislation and procedure, the big question fits the same pattern. The liberals, reinforced by the feast of November, are preparing for an open assault on the Rules Committee which sets the tone of House action, and about which the odor of magnolia lingers.

But when organizational rough edges are hammered out, what then?

That is the question to which no one has an answer, least of all it would go without saying, the congressional leaders. The skirmishing will begin with the Budget in the budget.

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Wheels For Senatorial Claustrophobia

DEMOCRATIC senators, because of their overwhelming 64-34 majority, are going to be bunched up like sardines left of the center aisle when the Senate convenes. Some say it will be like a crowded school room, and it really has claustrophobes worried.

It'll be too close for comfort anyway, with no long curts to dip in ink wells; but will it not be disastrous when feeding breaks out, as it always does, in Democratic ranks?

What if Lyndon Johnson and Paul Douglas lock horns over the filibusters? Or what if Harry Byrd clashes with Hubert Humphrey over an item in the budget?

Can they stand, fists up, toe to toe, barking in a fighting circle without banking ships? Many a Democratic eye, we venture, will wander to the prairie-emptiness of Republican territory across the aisle—where Republican senators will be so far from each other they'll be talking in smoke signals. There is only one solution to this

grave problem on the left, and that is to put the august senatorial chairs on rollers and grease the rollers well.

"Thirty billion, for a rocket?" "Count 'em, Harry, 30 billion." "Un-American!" "Prove it."

But just as the fight warms up, here'll come Lyndon Johnson wheeling break-neck up the gangway, descending, and mightily shoving the squabblers across the aisle to patch it up.

Or when "Humman" Talmadge, Jim Eastland and their set feel conservative wings, given they're right, they'll come over across the pluck into another wing of the chamber — to brood in silent majesty.

Or when either Dirksen or Aiken has vanquished the other for the minority leadership, the winner could give the loser a powerful shove and send him whirling off to pasture in the gangway. There are infinite possibilities — and some legislation may pass, too.

Truman Preparing To Shoot Symington Into Orbit

By MARQUIS CHILDS

WASHINGTON FORMER President Harry Truman has told a half dozen of his closest confidantes in New York and Washington that he intends early in the new year to come out for Sen. Symington of Missouri as his choice for the Democratic nomination for President in 1960.

In private talks with associates out of his administration, Truman has expressed the conviction that by coming out early for his fellow Missourian he can determine the course of the convention and perhaps head off a bitter contest for the No. 1 place. In 1956 the former president waited until the Democrats met in Chicago to declare for the then governor of New York, Averell Harriman.

At a mass press conference with the White House in support of his own candidate, Truman, who has never lacked confidence in his own political wisdom, particularly following his extraordinary victory against all odds in his re-election in 1948, seems to feel sure that he can carry the day. He may, of course, be dissuaded, but he has always followed his own convictions with bold forthrightness.

The coalescing of the old pros in the party around Symington as a compromise candidate is seen in the report that Jacob Arvey,

man said that Adlai Stevenson could not win. He outraged Stevenson's ardent followers, and the convention, ignoring his counsel, chose the former Illinois governor as the Presidential nominee for a second time.

Among Truman's associates are those who doubt the wisdom of his current decision. They believe it would be wiser for him to continue the line he takes publicly—the Democratic party has many good candidates and when the convention meets we'll choose one of them. Certain of Symington's backers are known to feel that a Truman declaration might even harm the prospects for the Missouri senator, who has repeatedly insisted that he is not a candidate for the presidency.

NO LACK OF CONFIDENCE But Truman, who has never lacked confidence in his own political wisdom, particularly following his extraordinary victory against all odds in his re-election in 1948, seems to feel sure that he can carry the day. He may, of course, be dissuaded, but he has always followed his own convictions with bold forthrightness.

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HARRY TRUMAN Believes in His Wisdom

Democratic national committeeman for Illinois, is ready to start working for the Missourian. Arvey helped to initiate the boom for Stevenson that resulted in his first nomination for President in 1952.

As these experienced Democrats see it, the party dilemma looking to '60 is as follows:

LARGEST BLOC Sen. John F. Kennedy will come into the convention with the largest bloc of delegates. He will be opposed by a combination of the northern liberals, with Sen. Hu-

bert Humphrey of Minnesota as their torch bearer if not their favored choice. The bloody battle that could ensue, particularly over Kennedy's Catholicism and the allegiance of Catholic voters in the big cities, would be in the back ground could destroy what seems today the party's excellent chance to capture the presidency.

That, at any rate, is the fear of the experienced politicians out of the Truman administration. It explains what appears to be a growing determination to make Symington the natural and inevitable choice and thereby avoid a bruising showdown.

Symington's voting record is, by the progressive yardstick laid down by Americans for Democratic Action, almost perfect. But he does not frighten the conservatives, who feel that basically he is one of them.

FRIENDS IN EVERY CAMP The Missouri senator, ever-whilingly re-elected to a second term last November, has kept friends in every camp. He served as the first secretary of the air force under Truman, and his backers believe that his continuing concern over strengthening America's defenses has helped to keep him in the forefront as a national figure.

Truman's rule in the party, as the Democrats face a difficult decision in '60, is interesting. Some critics are beginning to say that his forthright and often violent personality that captured the headlines tend to stamp the image of the troubles past on the party and to identify it with the Truman era.

A LOT TO SAY

But the Democratic National Committee is about to ask Truman's permission to make his 73rd birthday on May 8 the occasion for a great national rally, with a closed-circuit television show equivalent of "This Is Your Life" celebrating the nation's most famous Democrat.

Whether he launches months in advance of the convention a drive to determine the nominee or whether he merely presides over the nomination of a man who has served as the nation's most famous Democrat, Truman is bound to have a lot to say about the politics of the coming presidential year.

Concerning The Arkansas 'Sticker-Blitz'

By DORIS FLEESON

IT APPEARS almost certain that Dr. Dale Alford, the victor in the sticker-buzz campaign against Little Rock's Representative Brooks Hays, will be seated in the new Congress pending an investigation of his election. And only a little less likely is the prospect that he will be seated as a Democrat.

A sampling of the temper of retiring members of the House of Representatives indicates that the House, voting solely on questions of legality, will overturn the three to two recommendation of a sub-committee of the outgoing House, and vote to seat the man entirely on legal rather than sentimental or ideological questions. Members, including some outstanding liberals, point out that the man has been certified as elected by the state of Arkansas, and the fact that his opponent, Hays, did not appeal the verdict.

A LONG TIME COMING

Nevertheless, it seems equally likely that although Dr. Alford will be seated, there will be an investigation of the circumstances of his election. Some members expect that a report of that investigation will be a long time coming in. Few expect it much before the end of the new session. The prevailing opinion among members of the House seems to be that whether Dr. Alford is entitled to his seat or not turns entirely on legal rather than sentimental or ideological questions. Members, including some outstanding liberals, point out that the man has been certified as elected by the state of Arkansas, and the fact that his opponent, Hays, did not appeal the verdict.

PRACTICAL MATTER

As a practical matter, they decide, since Hays did not contest the election, the only result of a finding against Dr. Alford would be a declaration that the seat was vacant, thus requiring a new election. Hays has said that in such an event he would not be a candidate.

QUESTION OF MOMENT

In the other question of moment to liberals which will be decided very early in the new session, that is, the continued presence of the Rules Committee to prevent the House from voting on controversial legislation, the answer still depends almost entirely on the mood of Speaker Sam Rayburn when he arrives back from Bonham, Tex. Even if they say they are, even if Dr. Alford were refused status as a Democrat, precedents require the majority party to take care of committee assignments of so-called independent members.

AN EMBASSY

Within a few hours of his arrival he will receive an embassy from the liberals, who it is now claimed number about 150, in the person of Rep. Chet Hoffield of California, one of the ablest and most distinguished members of the House.

It would be Hoffield's task to persuade the speaker to hold a meeting with a committee of liberal members to discuss the complaints against the Rules Committee. If the speaker should refuse to do so, Hoffield would probably be named to fill the vacant committee at all. It would probably be no real but just re-voit would not be any further for the record.

A Few Funny Faces Are Not So Very Funny

By ROBERT C. RUARK

PALAMOS, Spain ANY day now, I should imagine that the newest night-club in the great city of Madrid will be a "Funnist" thing happened to me today on my way to the studio.

I was walking down a street and I had just pushed a rock off a bridge and shattered the windshield. The baby's live, but we were worried about my wife and little boy. This is what is called a fair fight, if one can go by the fun-loving standards of some hearty youths who recently started toppling load-lifters off a bridge on the Westchester Parkway. One 16-month-old child hospitalized, and two cars heavily damaged.

NOT SO FUNNY

It wasn't quite so funny the other day when a crowd of similar comedians invaded a subway train and had themselves a real pre-holiday ball. They pulled knives on the passengers, slashed the seats, and jerked the stop cord, which was little more than a few feet of squares when the subway stopped abruptly and threw them to the floor.

Javelin fun is not limited to mere mayhem, today, or even to kicking a man to death to steal his clothes. One of the stars of the stage, a recent recipient, sure-footed laugh-getters, have been spinning a blind man around until he falls, and a man who with his pencils, pouring lighter fluid on a cat and setting it afire, the usual for a king of radio antennas, smashing windshields on cars, slashing tires . . . but that's kind of stuff.

A LUSTY CHILD

A real, hearty yuck was produced by that dauntless youth of yesteryear when he bet his arm to death because she cut off his TV ration. He was a lusty child, a lusty child who was able to slug her, knocking her down, whereupon he kicked her. Broke an empty soda bottle over her head, and made her with a lamp until it splattered. Swung an axe at her so hard the head flew off. Then he took her to the jar of a power plant operator. Stabbed her eight times in throat and body with a kitchen knife. He was planning to hang her with fatigues overcame him, so he washed his bloody clothes and went peacefully to sleep.

"I just got mad," he told police. Perhaps we are raising more robust delinquents these days, due to the lack of healthful proteins and plenty of green vegetables, although in the instance of the hoodler-dropping the cops thought that the hoodler were heavy for an average teen-aged punkster. I disagree, in light of young Master Marston's wise words through disposal of his dear auntie, chronicled above, would have done credit to a task force. When young Master Marston gets mad, he ain't kiddin'."

'SQUARES'

Whatever the reason for the wanton destruction and criminal amusement which afflicts our metropolitan areas, these days, it certainly saddles my generation with a shocking lack of imagination. The tougher rebellion of my set have an occasional drunk through the window if a vacant house, kicked over a trash can and occasionally, on Halloween relocated someone. I am afraid to greater pastures. But I can't say my gang was a bunch of squares, devoid of any inspiration. Possibly because we had no TV or child psychiatrists. We even went so far as to obey teachers and seldom smoked marijuana in the little boys' rooms.

Single-Entry Ledger



People's Platform

There Is Enough Killing In Traffic Editors, The News

IN other days, sword play or fencing, was one of the manly arts. A man who did not play might not feel very long or else he might be considered a man who would not defend his pride or honor, as they called it.

Today, men may fight with knives in some of our dives or bars. But common fighting with all kinds of swords and knives is no longer in vogue. There is enough killing on our highways and other accidental deaths to satisfy most people. Yes, we still have murder and we allow many to escape punishment by pleading insanity. As soon as they escape punishment by pleading insanity then they start to prove that they are sane. Our murder mysteries and detective stories are no longer in vogue. There is still blood run through the imagination or otherwise.

But, all in all, we are getting to be less bloodthirsty. Maybe it shall come up for debate when we shall not feel that we need blood.

I have no fight against any union organizing private business. They just don't belong in city, county or state affairs. —W. C. McINTIRE

Council Should Say 'No' To The Unions Editors, The News

I CONSIDER all of the City Councilmen good citizens, good businessmen and my friends. I do think their answer to any city employees wanting to join any unions should be: No.

It may be hard for them but they should say it plain: No!

For instance, what if there is a bus drivers' strike and trouble arises? How could a politician do his sworn duty? No man can serve two masters.

If some big business was having union trouble and fire broke out and the union told firemen belonging to the union, what would happen? The building would burn down.

It just doesn't make sense for an employee working for the state, city or county to belong to any organization that would interfere with his loyal duty to his job.

Don't Jump From Pan Into The Fire Editors, The News

I NOTE that your cartoonist quotes like saying, "I think it is a sad sort of thing." The sad action was when the voters put Ike into the White House and not the nation's business into the hands of others. Why? Because he was not familiar with the line of action called for. So, the voters can see now that they scratched an "X" by the wrong name at the ballot box. But there is no use to grieve. There are so many people that cannot see until someone puts glasses on them.

Nov. 4, 1958, was a stinger for Ike-bickers, but I hope that those who go to the Democratic Convention will discuss the complaints against the Rules Committee. If the speaker should refuse to do so, Hoffield would probably be named to fill the vacant committee at all. It would probably be no real but just re-voit would not be any further for the record.

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

WASHINGTON MOST people don't realize it, but the selection of the President of the United States is frequently influenced by events two years in advance. Two years ago, in fact, the choice of the next President. One event is in Albany, N. Y., the other in Washington, D. C. They are:

Fortnight Reports

In Albany, Nelson Rockefeller is planning a series of fortnight reports which will be issued by Rockefeller brothers and will cover such vital problems as housing, highways, the concentration of big city populations, foreign trade, education and other problems. The reports will be written by college professors and scientists, the type of

Rockefeller's GOP & The Fear Of Sam

men who masterminded FDR's New Deal. And the first report is scheduled for release at about the time of the governors conference in July.

GOP Rejuvenation

These reports, coupled with an expected fortnight Rockefeller administration in New York, coupled with the fighting bloc of Republican liberals in the Senate, will set the stage for a rejuvenation of the Grand Old Party. Republican planners expect to build in such a way as to attract Democratic and independent voters. They plan to court Rockefeller liberalism with old line Rayburnism in Congress.

Is Rayburn Too Old?

Specifically this revolt is aimed against Congressman Howard Smith of northern Virginia, who will debate at length "The Love Life Of The Inca" or "Diseases Of The Horse," but who has frequently prevented debate on such vital questions as age disposal, TVA, and legislation affecting millions. The Rules Committee passes on all legislation to decide whether it shall come up for debate or not, and Smith, plus William Colmer of Mississippi, plus a bloc of Republicans, can near-

ly always stymie legislation they don't like. Though the House Democratic revolt is officially aimed at Smith, actually goes much deeper. It is aimed at the coalition of conservative Republicans and southern Democrats which has dominated the House. Privately it is also aimed at Speaker Sam Rayburn.

They Fear 'Mr. Sam'

If a secret ballot were held in the Democratic caucus Mr. Sam would probably be reversed on the question of the Rules Committee gap. If the vote is in public he'll be upheld. It will be largely up to Congressman Mel Price of Illinois, and chairman of the caucus, and a man with a record, but who also fears Mr. Sam.

From The St. Louis Post Dispatch

DAME GOSSIP MEETS THE QUEEN

QUEEN Mother Elizabeth was unquestionably kind to a gossip columnist she met at the Women's Press Club in London, and perhaps too kind to the institution of gossip. Evidently she was taken aback when her question, "What do you do for your paper?" was answered, "Gossip," for at first she said only "Oh, with a pause for reflection. Then she added graciously, "That's all right. I suppose, if it's kept within bounds. Then it can be quite gay."

Gossip is often a number of things, beginning with malice. Frequently it is false. Usually it is trivial it may be taken over, or insecurity in the gossipier more surely than it reflects unfavorably upon the object of the gossip. But perhaps given that they might gossip's comment suggests to us, all this may be the fault of the gossip-monger rather than of the gossiper. If there is going to be any of it at all, we rather agree with the Queen Mother—gossip should be gay.