

Are We Square Now?

One detects a telltale note in Budget Officer Walter L. Fowler's listing of the commendable achievements of the District government, evidently designed as an offset to what he describes as the "overdose of crisis, scandal and investigation" which hits the headlines "generally at appropriation time." Mr. Fowler, an excellent budget officer, wishes us to remember the good things about Washington as more deserving of praise than the bad things are of condemnation.

Had Mr. Fowler's suggestion come a little earlier, The Star might have complied by placing into effect, in its news columns, the following style of reporting:

1. Two condemned prisoners cajoled their Metropolitan Police guards into a game of gin rummy last night and escaped from their death cells and the jail. It should be remembered, however, that the city government has always been free from major scandal of corruption and is without a single penny of bonded indebtedness.

2. A Gallinger Hospital physician tells Congress that many infants there have suffered preventable deaths, result of a lack of nursing personnel. Yet 174 school buildings, erected at a cost of \$52,000,000, have housed a shifting, rapidly growing population "in a most creditable manner," with thirty-three of the buildings erected in the past fifteen years.

3. Experts in hospital care, after a careful investigation, say that the District's voluntary hospital plants are the worst in any comparable area in the country and a national disgrace. It should not be forgotten, however, that although it caused terrific confusion and upheaval in the municipal structure, the city has absorbed the shock of reconversion to a 40-hour week and nearly 100 per cent of the real estate taxes assessed have been collected.

4. Experts in public health say that the District's slum area conditions are "really appalling" and "perhaps its major health problem of any kind." The city mortality rate, however (according to Health Department statistics), was the lowest in its history in 1945 and the tuberculosis rate is dropping, the maternal mortality rate in 1945 was lowest among large cities of the country and only five large cities had lower pneumonia rates. Furthermore, a civilian defense organization, led by District officials "who received no medals," became a credit and a model for other cities of the Nation during the war.

Getting Out of Egypt

Winston Churchill, leader of the opposition, was right in stressing the momentous character of the British government's intended withdrawal of troops from Egypt.

The nub of his criticism was that this will leave the initial defense of the Suez Canal wholly to Egyptian forces and expose the tenderest spot in the lifeline of empire which traverses the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. The government's reply is that Egyptian nationalism has reached a pitch of self-consciousness which simply will not tolerate the presence of foreign troops in peacetime, and that the only basis on which a new treaty could be negotiated is their withdrawal. The alternative would be a virtual imposition of Britain's will upon a recalcitrant Egypt, bitterly alienating not merely the Egyptians but also all the other peoples of the awakening Arab world, already angered by the Palestine issue. Such alienation would, in the opinion of the British government, be more dangerous than the strategic weakness to the Suez Canal.

The government goes on to point out that the decision does not spell immediate withdrawal, which would have to be done by stages over a considerable period of time, during which the Egyptian government, in its turn, would have notably to increase its military establishment and defensive installations. Furthermore, British forces would be close at hand in Palestine, Trans-Jordan and Iraq, where they are by mandate rights or by provisions of treaties freely entered into by the native governments.

The significant feature of all this is the way in which political considerations today outweigh purely strategic factors. The day when Britain was supreme and unchallengeable in the Near and Middle East is long past. It must move warily to maintain a favorable balance in a complex and difficult politico-diplomatic situation, wherein the challenge of the Soviet Union is becoming a major element.

Another feature is the altered character of warfare. Mobility has become so stepped-up that British aircraft, including transport planes,

could reach the Suez Canal in a matter of minutes from nearby Palestinian bases, and motor convoys could arrive from the same source in a few hours. This is probably the reason why the British general staff gave its assent to the evacuation idea.

Barkley's Leadership

Even those Senators who sought to talk the British loan to death must admire the determined and expert strength shown by Majority Leader Barkley in smashing the parliamentary log jam that had threatened to paralyze the Senate not only on this issue but on extending the draft as well.

Last Saturday, after three weeks of repetitious debate involving tactics not unlike those of a filibuster, the loan was clearly imperiled. Selective service had to be extended before May 15 or it would automatically die on that day and thus create a crisis for the Army. Accordingly, the opposition had "good reason to believe that if it kept on talking long enough it could force a laying aside of the credit measure in order to clear the way for imperative action on the draft."

This strategy, however, was met head on by Senator Barkley. Firmly, sincerely, with evident feeling, he served notice on the Senate that he would oppose "with all the power and influence" of his position any effort to suspend action on the loan, even if by so doing he helped to kill off selective service. He made clear, of course, that he considered the draft extension vitally necessary, but in his judgment the British credit—in terms of world peace and prosperity—was more important still, and he did not want to lay it aside, because he feared that that might be the same as burying it.

In taking this stand, Senator Barkley made a difficult and highly debatable choice between two measures of prime significance. But it was a bold move and its obvious sincerity was impressive. More than that, it proved to be leadership of the most effective kind, for from then on the log jam began to fall apart and words gave way to action. Consideration of the loan, which happily has at last gone to the House with Senate approval, was interrupted only long enough to permit the enactment of a necessarily makeshift resolution extending the draft on a stopgap basis. The majority leader, in short, came out of the fray with his colors flying on both counts.

To be sure, he was helped some by the fact that the Senators, with John L. Lewis in their minds, began to realize they would have to act on the loan and the draft (which embraces the Smith-Connally Act and the power to seize mines) if they were ever to do anything about new labor legislation. Taken all in all, though, it may fairly be said that they finally got down to work on these two measures largely because the majority leader, by his drive, his ability and his own hard labors, set them such a good and praiseworthy example.

Liquor License 'Racket'

The Senate District Committee was correct in deciding that the reported existence of a liquor-license-selling "racket" in Washington was not a proper reason for further delaying approval of the nomination of Commissioner J. Russell Young for reappointment. The license problem has no bearing whatever on Commissioner Young's fitness to continue in office. The problem is not of his or the other Commissioners' making, but all of them have manifested concern about it, just as the Senate committees have done in ordering an investigation of the matter.

The extraordinary situation which has developed here in connection with liquor license transfers thoroughly deserves the earnest attention of congressional investigators. The Alcoholic Beverage Control Board bluntly describes it as a "racket" that bodes no good for the liquor-selling industry in the Nation's Capital. It is a racket that has seen liquor licenses being sold at steadily inflated sums, until in a recent transaction an all-time peak price of \$140,000 was recorded. Other licenses have been sold for \$100,000 and slightly lesser sums, according to ABC officials. These sums represent the valuation placed on liquor licenses transferred in connection with the sale of liquor stores and are, consequently, in addition to the considerations given for building, stock and "good will" in other words, Government permits are being bartered at skyrocketing prices just as any scarce commodity might be in an unrestrained market.

The question naturally arises as to why it is possible, or permissible, to trade in licenses issued to particular individuals on the basis of their qualifications to engage in the liquor business. Actually, the transfer is made "subject to approval of the ABC Board," but the board has no basis for refusing approval if the new applicant can qualify—as he usually does. And the courts have held that a liquor license is "property" that is subject to seizure and presumably also subject to transfer, like any other property. ABC officials fear that the high prices involved in licenses may have a bad effect in the event of a decline in liquor prosperity, with unscrupulous dealers resorting to unethical or illegal practices in order to recoup their losses. The ABC Board believes that removal of the ceiling on the number of liquor licenses would knock the props from under the inflated price structure, but the Commissioners, supported by many civic groups, oppose any lifting of restrictions on the liquor business. One suggestion is that the District im-

pose a heavy tax on license sales. This would require legislation. All in all, the problem is so complicated that only a careful study of all the ramifications is likely to turn up a practical solution, if practical solution there be. The Senate District Committee will render the city a valuable service if it can find a way to end this disturbing get-rich-quick traffic in official licenses.

'Nothing Criminal'

James C. Petrillo and John L. Lewis have shown themselves to be resourceful in devising new and unusual ways of raising money for their respective unions. They have a worthy competitor, however, in the person of James Hoffa, business agent for the locals of the Teamsters' Union in the Detroit area.

There are approximately 6,400 retail meat and grocery stores in Detroit and they rely on teamsters to haul the commodities which they sell. Heretofore they have been able to obtain the services of the teamsters by paying the usual charges, but that is not to be the case in the future. Hereafter, Mr. Hoffa has decreed, the teamsters will haul food only to the shops of those grocers who agree to pay a monthly "permit fee" of from \$2 to \$5. The indignant grocers, asserting that this is a form of "tribute," have said that they will not pay it. But the chances are that they will.

At any rate, they apparently will not get much help from the law. An attorney for the grocers appealed to the city prosecutor, who, after reviewing the facts, came to the conclusion that there was "nothing criminal" in what Mr. Hoffa was attempting to do. In all probability the prosecutor's decision is the correct one, for it can hardly be doubted that for a decade or more the legislative policy of this country and the trend of judicial interpretation of the laws have been such as to permit, if not actually to encourage, the type of activity in which Mr. Hoffa is engaging. And the further probability is that this will continue to be the case until public opinion is sufficiently aroused to demand an end to such abuses.

A Russian-born cockroach exterminator who did the Capitol of these pests declares he did the job for nothing out of love for his adopted country. It is too bad his talents cannot be utilized to get the bees out of the bonnets of his former fellow natives.

This and That

By Charles E. Tracewell.

Shakespeare called attention to a bank where the wild thyme blows and we know one where there are 16 different wildings doing well.

While honeysuckle is the main product, there are others, including dandelions, trumpet vine seedlings, wild strawberry, snow-on-the-mountains, barberry seedlings, privet sprouts, may oak and cherry seedlings, ground myrtle, English ivy, violets, buttercups, clover and chickweed.

It takes a bit of examining to find all these things, but the effort has its rewards, something on the order of putting a puzzle together.

The point is that there are thousands of similar places, where a little looking will reveal similar beauties, all the more pleasant because they are heaped to gether.

Wild things look best in the wild. Birds sing on a large part in the planting of this bank, a steep terrace. It was the lush growth of honeysuckle, of course, which held the seeds which fell.

Winds, too, played a part and, the whole being on a bank, the rains had something to do with it, washing down a few seeds.

The second point is that it takes a certain mind to see beauty in these confusions of nature. The mind so adjusted may feel sorry, and rightly, we believe, for the other type of mind which likes nothing but order.

We can conceive an owner who, looking at his steep terrace, would be horrified at such a list as we have presented. Immediately, he would take steps to tear out all except the prevailing honeysuckle.

The rest would have to go. They would offend his ideas of neatness. The only thing that would save them would be the fact that he might see them. There are two ways this might happen. The plants would be concealed in the growth of honeysuckle, or the questing eyes would not be adjusted to strangers.

The mind which likes such confusion in nature would rejoice at the way the little things hide among the larger. This is nature's own plan. We have spoken of it as confusion, but it is not so much that, except from a human viewpoint, as nature in the wild, which is the only real nature there is.

The careful householder knows how easily nature reverts to the raw. The raw, in nature, is not something inhuman, but simply "as is." It is natural for small plants, such as buttercups, to find a bit of soil and come up.

This coming up, among other things, is at once the triumph of nature and the solace of the human mind, rightly adjusted. Some minds are not adjusted to the things around them. They find more grimble in gardening than happiness. They ought to give it up.

Let things come to their place. In that way, without worry, one gets all that nature has to give.

It is true that on a bank instance some of the things must come out at last. No one wants cherry, oak or maple trees on a bank, as a rule. But for the time being, they are lovely, and deserve to have a place in the sun.

We hope the chickweed will be allowed to remain. And the ground myrtle, and the violets. A too tidy gardener might think some of these smaller growths just weeds, but the birds like them.

Birds love all wild growing places, whether in a corner of the yard, or on a bank. The fine growth makes up for other faults.

Birds like berry bushes, tall things such as sunflowers, and low trees such as dogwood. Every home grounds, however small, should have a wild corner to appeal to the birds.

"Too much cleaning up is bad. It replaces the way nature does things with the way the planning mind of man tries to do things. We are getting our fill, as a nation, of "planning" in the grand manner. All it leads to, evidently, is confusion and lack. Nature knows better. She is not too much set on planning. Growth is her ace up the sleeve. She did not plan on long ago that she has forgotten about it."

Letters to The Star

This May Clarify the Attitude of Indonesians Toward the Dutch

To the Editor of The Star:

I highly appreciate the publication by your paper of May 2 of your reporter's talk with me about Netherlands-Indonesian problems, but I beg your kind attention to some misunderstandings in the article and therefore trust your willingness to publish my correct views on the issue, which are the following:

1. Not because of anti-Dutch feelings but because of the combination of quick military success and the immediate and free distribution of rice, clothing, etc., the majority of the Indonesians cheered the Japanese military forces occupying Java.

2. Despite increasing anti-Japanese feelings due to their imposition of forced food deliveries and forced labor, there still is a marked lack of cordiality by the Indonesians toward the current Dutch troop arrivals, although an increase of hostilities can hardly be forecast.

3. I did not say that the Dutch proposals for a Commonwealth of Indonesia with a pledge that we may ultimately decide freely about our own future political destiny are unacceptable, but that, while I agree in principle with these proposals, I also have some reservations, particularly with regard to any loopholes permitting the re-introduction of some aspects of prewar colonial policy. Civil administration, justice and hygiene can be run by the Indonesians themselves, but regarding foreign relations, in broader sense, Indonesia still needs Dutch aid. The responsibility must lie with the cabinet of ministers and Parliament of Indonesia to be established and no longer with the crown's representative.

Certainly, I consider the present Netherlands government and its negotiators sincere with the proposals, with which the majority of the Dutch and especially the younger generation seem to agree. But many conservative Netherlands still want to maintain pre-war colonial policy, whereas numerous Indonesians aim at complete severance with Holland. So both Dr. van Mook and Sjahrir are now fighting on two political fronts.

A. KOESOEMO OETOYO,
First Secretary, Netherlands Embassy.

Urges Aid for Needy Mothers

To the Editor of The Star:

America gradually is developing a social security program which will cover a majority of the people.

But nothing adequate as yet has been done or even proposed in behalf of mothers who are not in position to support themselves. Most of them have worked hard from 40 to 50 years, bearing and raising children, keeping homes together, being in fact the real human fabric of the Nation. Then, when at last their families are reared and "on their own," these good women too often are left to shift for themselves with nothing to shift with or on. Or if a meager support is given them in grudging fashion, they are made to feel that they are ordinary objects of charity, without merit or desert.

I urge Government aid for mothers who need it. We owe that much to the women who have done so much for us, both as individuals and as members of society.

E. M. A 75-YEAR-OLD MOTHER
—WITHOUT FUNDS.

Honoring Mothers With Charity

To the Editor of The Star:

There is a real connection, besides coincidence, between Mother's Day and the National Emergency Food Collection both of which fall on May 12.

Mother won't mind if we share her gift with the starving children of the world.

I therefore would like to suggest that we turn a deaf ear or eye to the extravagant, foolish gifts offered by commercially-minded salespeople.

Instead of purchasing that cocky froth of a champagne tied to a box of candy for a mere \$8 or similar lit-or-miss gifts, why not really honor mother's holy way of life by giving her some flowers, a made gift, or prayers?

What remembrance is sweeter than that offered at God's altar, "Where remembrances are sweetest?"

Use the rest of the money for the emergency.

Any tender mother's tender heart, living or dead, will rejoice for our generous gift of cans or cash to those mothers who have suffered so cruelly, watching their children going without food.

MARIE C. COMBINS.

Suggests Study of Canadian Way

To the Editor of The Star:

Canada has few, if any, strikes. This being true, I think the people of the United States ought to know why it is so.

Specifically, I suggest that President Truman appoint a commission representing capital, labor and the general public and send this commission to Canada to study the Canadian system of maintaining industrial peace.

Should Mr. Truman decline to take this step, I believe he would be open to criticism for not taking it. On the other hand, if he will take it immediately, I am confident that he will deserve and receive the grateful thanks of his countrymen of all classes.

J. ARTHUR NEWCOMB.

Daylight Time Favored

To the Editor of The Star:

Daylight saving for the District should be given proper consideration.

Although there are those who do not want daylight saving, there is, in my opinion, a majority of Government workers who favor it.

I believe that daylight saving would result in a lessened consumption of electric current. In view of the emergency of shortage of coal I feel that prompt institution of daylight saving is indicated.

X. Y. Z.

Depletes Communist Tactics

To the Editor of The Star:

On the fatal day when the late President Roosevelt officially recognized the communist government of Russia with all its promises, he opened the flood gates of hell on the American people.

One rat gnawing at the dyke can inundate a whole nation, and when we see, unless we are blind, the strikes, disorders and confusion prevailing throughout the whole country, we understand that they are the tactics of the communist creed. The trouble is making headway like a house afire and there appears to be no fireman in sight to subjugate the spreading disaster.

Says Ben Jonson: "Men might go to heaven with half the labor they put forth to go to hell, if they would but venture their industry in the right way."

LOUIS F. DILGER.

This Changing World

By Constantine Brown

Those who regard the British and French loans as remunerative financial transactions were right in describing them as poor cash dividend payers. These loans must be regarded very much like lease-lend. No American legislator actually believed in 1941 that the billions appropriated to enable the Nazis' victims to purchase defense materials in this country would bring us a cash return. We ended up five years ago to buy ourselves out of another world war—and didn't.

The western nations which are now seeking substantial loans in the United States are probably in worse shape than they were in the spring of 1941. The political body is even more weakened than during the lack of food and raw materials—necessary to put re-deployed men back to work and to help those recently engaged in war work to start afresh producing peacetime materials—has having serious political consequences.

The fifth columns of the enemy made little dent in the Allies in wartime. But the political propaganda favoring the neofascistism of today has made gigantic strides, not only in Western Europe but also in the United States, where it is camouflaged under the pleasing name of "liberalism."

Although neither the British, French nor American governments admit it openly, the loans now being sought are intended as much for political as for economic stabilization. Some of the highest officials in the administration admit that, had they not been afraid of devastating reaction in Congress, they would have asked that these loans be changed to outright grants, as was the case with most of the lease-lend monies.

In many respects the world situation today is worse than it was before V-E day. Axis totalitarianism has been crushed. But the U. S. S. R. appears to have replaced it, insofar as world politics is concerned. The United Nations—white hope of the nations for a long period of peace and security—is shaky. The attempts of American, British and French foreign ministers to blue-print a nearly equitable set of peace treaties at Yalta and Moscow were changed to outright grants, as was the case with most of the lease-lend monies.

Not only they refrain from "stimulating" American markets by asking and obtaining Export-Import Bank credits with which to purchase raw and manufactured materials, many of which will find their way into the U. S. S. R. in the shape of reparations.

Now the threatening situation was strong in the minds of high administration officials when they pressed Congress to approve the loan to Britain. The Government is more aware than the man in the street that unless the needy Western nations receive a shot in the arm in the form of loans, the huge armies of their falling prey to totalitarianism are dangerously great.

The Political Mill

By Gould Lincoln

The United States has reached a position in the world where it must pull up its reserves. It must do so for its own defense and for the protection of its interests in the Near and Middle East. In a recent letter to Secretary of the Interior Krug, Senator O'Mahoney of Wyoming stated the changed position of the United States in relation to world resources and production of petroleum. For 65 years up to and including 1944, this country has been a net importer of oil. The reserves of oil in the United States are estimated at only 32 per cent of the estimated crude oil reserves, while the Eastern Hemisphere possesses 53.9 per cent of these reserves.

All of which explains the intense interest with which the maneuvers of Russia in Iran, and in the Middle East, generally are being followed.

Testimony before the Senate Special Committee on Petroleum Resources showed that in the past 65 years, up to and including 1944, 53.9 per cent of all the world production of petroleum came from the United States, with only 23.3 per cent from the whole Eastern Hemisphere. The center of gravity has changed, so far as oil production is concerned, from the United States to the Near and Middle East.

Up to and through 1944, the petroleum production of the Near and Middle East was only 3.8 per cent of the world supply. But the estimated reserves of the Near and Middle East today of the world total are 42.18 per cent, whereas the reserves of the United States are estimated at only 32 per cent. It has become, therefore, of great moment to the country to increase its potential reserves through discovery of new fields.

For this reason Senator O'Mahoney is backing legislation which would fix the royalty rate—payable to the United States—on exploratory leases at 12½ per cent. Under existing law the rate for oil leases run 25 per cent to 32 per cent, depending largely on the character and size of the oil production. Mr. O'Mahoney is firmly convinced that it is necessary to bring about increased activity in the field of oil exploration—a field which requires the expenditure of a good deal of money, and that the

of State Byrnes. Neither the United States, Great Britain nor France are protesting against large Russian trade missions being sent to South America, although they have positive information that the trade commissioners are accompanied by specialists in Communist propaganda.

It was consequently logical for Mr. Byrnes to ask for equal opportunity to send the same kind of Central European and Balkan, particularly since it meant merely resuming a situation which was interrupted by the war and Nazi-fascist machinations. We were bluntly told in Paris to keep our noses out of the European area.

The truth is that trade agreements have been rammed down the throats of those new satellites of Russia, whereby any business transactions between them and the western world must go through Moscow.

A similar situation is expected to develop in the Far East. Last March, on the eve of the withdrawal of the Red armies from Manchuria, the U. S. S. R. indicated to Chungking that it would like to negotiate an economic agreement regarding that province very much along the line of the trade agreements with the Balkan satellites. Chungking refused. The result was that the Red armies managed to infiltrate large Chinese Communist forces into vital portions of Manchuria, equipped them with Russian and Japanese weapons and placed them in a position to take over the bulk of China's richest province.

The trade opportunities of the western world consequently are becoming more and more restricted. Our production will not be affected for some time, so long as the rest of the world is seeking UNRRA aid and other assistance. It is probable that the Russian satellites for some time to come will accept whatever they can get for nothing from the United States.

Nor will they refrain from "stimulating" American markets by asking and obtaining Export-Import Bank credits with which to purchase raw and manufactured materials, many of which will find their way into the U. S. S. R. in the shape of reparations.

Now the threatening situation was strong in the minds of high administration officials when they pressed Congress to approve the loan to Britain. The Government is more aware than the man in the street that unless the needy Western nations receive a shot in the arm in the form of loans, the huge armies of their falling prey to totalitarianism are dangerously great.

incentive of a flat 12½ per cent royalty would go far toward increasing the efforts at new oil discovery.

The five principal public lands States, California, Colorado, Montana, New Mexico and Wyoming constitute a huge field for oil exploration. Since 1939 new discoveries of oil have been made on 128 public land leases as follows: New Mexico, 61; Wyoming, 21; Montana, 20; California, 14; Colorado, 3; Utah, 1, five principal States for oil exploration, combined, is 623,472 square miles, of which 253,200 are classified as possible oil lands. The public lands in the possible oil area of these States amount to 25,570 square miles. It is Senator O'Mahoney's contention that if the Government in connection with the oil deposits on these public lands, a royalty payment of 12½ per cent, it will lead to exploration on other lands, too, and that the entire West will have an opportunity to make valuable contribution to the Nation's total oil reserves—and production.

Indeed, a law passed in 1942, which was sponsored by Senator O'Mahoney, provides for a flat 12½ per cent royalty for 10 years after discovery on all production from leases on which new oil gas deposits have been discovered. This was regarded as a concession, a wartime measure, to stimulate the discovery and production of additional oil. It is Senator O'Mahoney's contention that the incentive plan must be made permanent and that is what he is seeking, despite the fact that the Interior Department in March reported that the need for such encouragement "in normal times" is not apparent. The Wyoming Senator insists that while the war is over, these are not normal times, and he cites the world oil situation and the scramble for oil by various powers, and particularly by Russia.

Fifteen United States oil groups now own or have a share in the ownership of crude oil reserves in 20 foreign countries. Some of these reserves are in the Near and Middle East. The American oil companies own some of these reserves in connection with the British, the Dutch and the French. However, that unless the United Nations is able to maintain peace, these investments of capital in the Middle and Near East may turn out to be an investment in a new war.

Mine Seizure Effect Weighed by Officials

Smith - Connally Act Protects Those Who Just 'Cease Work'

By Bertram Benedict