

# The Times-Picayune NEW ORLEANS STATES

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## 'The Best Recommendation'

Discussing the NATO defense plan at an Associated Press meeting recently, Gen. Alfred M. Gruenther frankly admitted his own preliminary doubts about the workability of the "European defense force" arrangement when the scheme was first advanced. But "We at SHAPE have examined it very closely," he continued, "and have been in close contact with the military people who are working out the details. And it is now our definite impression, our very definite conviction, that it is workable and extremely desirable for the defense of Europe. The best recommendation for it," he added, "is the almost frantic action which the Soviets are taking in order to block the creation of that force and create divisive influences among the Allies."

Moscow's fight to prevent the successful creation of Western Europe's planned defense force is being watched throughout the free world. But few long-range observers, we dare say, had looked upon that "almost" frantic Red effort as the "best recommendation" for the NATO plan and a tacit admission of its workability. Stalin seems vastly more concerned about it just now than about the situation in the Far East. His obvious drive to destroy it constitutes another argument for it.

As Gen. Eisenhower's chief of staff at SHAPE, Gen. Gruenther knows Western Europe's defense situation at first hand. Reporting the substantial progress of the organizational work, and the gain in "capabilities for defense," he warned that this does not mean we have, as yet, "the necessary forces to stop a determined Soviet attack. . . . We are trying to set up a defensive system whereby we will have relatively small forces in action and build up an effective reserve force. This," he declared, "we will have. This system will enable us to defend Europe within the limitation of preserving sound economy."

Fulfillment of that rather confident forecast depends of course upon successful completion of the program adopted by the NATO nations. Moscow's obvious fear that the defense program will succeed unless it can be defeated by economic disagreements and divisive Red intrigue among the Allies, counsels the NATO nations to maintain their unity and make good the mutual-defense obligations they have accepted.

## More Truman History

President Truman Thursday added further characteristic footnotes to history by divulging two "ultimatums"—used in a "nontechnical, layman sense" as the White House later hastened to explain—sent to Premier Stalin and to Marshal Tito. The one to the Russian dictator seems to have represented, according to the White House press secretary's explanations, a note on March 6, 1946, "making our position perfectly plain with respect to the situation in Iran." The press secretary pointed out that the Russians withdrew their troops from Iran in May, 1946, and thus supported Mr. Truman's earlier claim that this "ultimatum" was responsible.

However, we should like to credit the President even further than he credits himself. There were even earlier actions than the May withdrawal that Mr. Truman should have boasted about. For example, it was March 23, 1946, that Stalin replied to The Associated Press query as to his views on the United Nations and on peace and assured the world of Russia's peaceful intentions and full support of the UN. And it was March 24, 1946, that then Russian Ambassador Gromyko made an unheralded visit for five minutes to the White House—which might have been the occasion for bringing further assurances that Russia would get out of Iran. As a matter of record, by the following Monday, March 26, 1946, when the newly organized Security Council first convened in New York, there appeared some indication that Russia was preparing to withdraw its troops from Iran.

However, the facts of history do not confirm Mr. Truman's confidence in the existence of US armed forces in the Middle Eastern area and the availability of a UN Navy fleet there at that time with which, as he explained Thursday, he proposed to back up his "ultimatum" to Russia. According to the record, almost all US troops had been withdrawn long before from all parts of the Middle East, and the Mediterranean was without US naval units of any size. A scheduled naval cruise had been called off March 17—possibly because Mr. Truman already had been assured by that date that his "ultimatum" of March 6 would prove effective. True, the USS Missouri had sailed March 23 from New York for Turkey—but it would be April 6 before it arrived there.

A \$15,000 dogbite was settled in a Midwestern court the other day for \$700. But the dog owner must have found even that reduced bite rather painful.

## 'Profits Before Taxes'

In a statement before the Senate committee on labor, Price Stabilizer Arnall undertook to explain why his agency's "earnings standard . . . is based on profits before, rather than after, income and excess profits taxes." From the "press release" of his remarks, we quote the following:

"Congress, in enacting tax legislation, expresses its judgment as to the manner in which the tax burden should be allocated. The tax increases which have been required during this period of emergency similarly reflect the judgment of Congress as to how the added burden of defense costs should be distributed. If the contention of the steel companies were accepted, it would mean that OPS was, in effect, altering this congressional decision by permitting certain industries or certain groups of the population to shift their just share of the tax burden to those less able to support it."

The glib assumption that earnings before taxes are "profits" is an ideological twin of the earlier implication by labor "economists" that wages should not be figured in as part of production costs. We quote from a highly regarded periodical of national circulation, this other and more generally accepted definition: "Profits, to a business man, are the dollars that are left to him after business expenses are met and after taxes are paid."

The federal government and Congress recognize that principle by permitting the subtraction of state, municipal and county taxes to establish the "net income" upon which their income tax is levied.

The CIO, OPS and presidential teamplay on "profits before taxes" seems as logical—and as lethal—as the exploded implication of 1946 that wages should not be considered a part of production costs. For if the wage stabilization board's proneness to pile wage increases on wage increases to certain organized labor groups were continued to its full length, the wage payments could eat away so much of the so-called "profits before taxes" that there would not be sufficient earnings left to pay the federal government's mounting tax levies.

In authorizing controls, Congress directed that wages as well as prices should be controlled. Wage ceilings have been shot to pieces repeatedly. Price controls are being rigidly enforced. In this political year—seemingly for the same political reasons. The result has been the throwing of the controls system out of gear. The definition of profits as earnings before taxes seems to us a camouflage too transparent to deceive business, or the general public.

## Sir Stafford Cripps

Through all of his adult life, during much of it occupying public posts with distinction and devotion, Sir Stafford Cripps was the champion of the British underdog. It was ironical that as minister of economic affairs and later as chancellor of the exchequer, he should have been called upon to demand extreme sacrifices from the very people he had long championed, as he forced individual and public austerity upon the British following World War II.

Historians undoubtedly will label him "Austerity Cripps" as the British people have done. But they will credit him with starting Britain into the difficult but absolutely essential program of economizing that thus far has kept Britain from bankruptcy. For had not the nation accepted the cuts in food, consumer goods, and the general standard of living urged by Sir Stafford, the chances are that Britain's economy today would be broken.

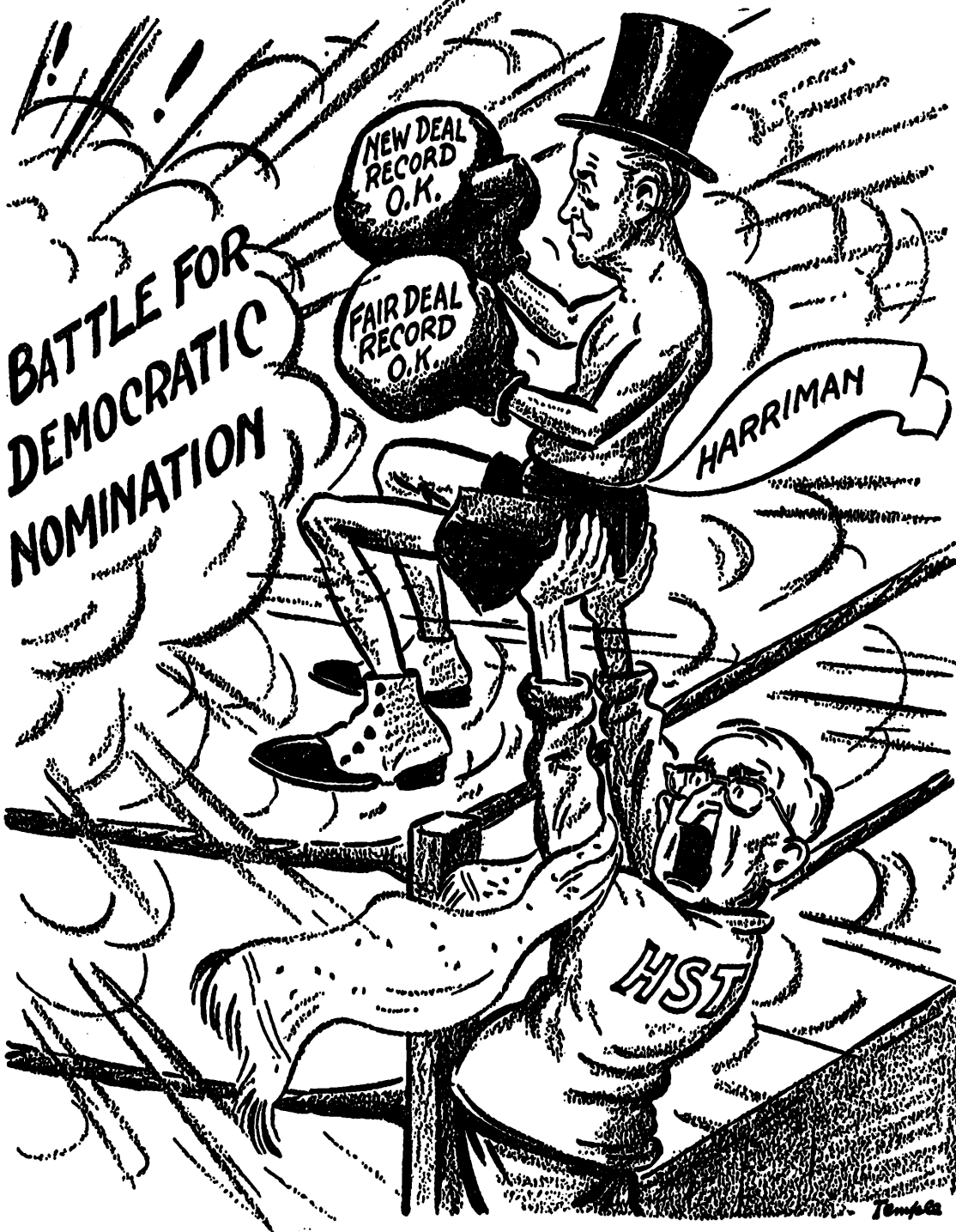
Personally Sir Stafford was even more austere than the program he succeeded in getting his people to adopt. His selflessness, his vegetarianism, and his humanitarian ideology have become legendary.

With his death, the British people have lost a great public servant. The Labor party lost his services when he was forced by ill health to retire in the fall of 1950. But it seems to us that Prime Minister Churchill already has provided a tacit expression of his and the Conservative party's high opinion of Sir Stafford by sticking pretty closely to the Cripps economic and financial program since their return to power.

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt criticized resolutions adopted by the Daughters of the American Revolution at its recent convention. The DAR can criticize, too, and some interested bystanders are waiting to see whether Mrs. Roosevelt didn't overmatch herself on this occasion.

If "clarifiers" have to be added to Mr. Truman's White House staff, how many of 'em will have to be provided for the other executives, bureaus, departments, divisions, agencies and what have you. Doesn't gobbledegook need clarification as well as Mr. Truman's historical notes do?

## 'In My Cornah!'



## National Politics Press Confab Set to Stay

By PAUL P. LEACH  
WASHINGTON, D. C. — Here's one Washington reporter who fails to get all smoked up over fears that the next President of the United States will cut back on White House press conferences and go back to the Coolidge written-question formula.

As it has developed today, through the FDR and Truman 20 years, it is a good weekly source of copy for the reporters, with its give-and-take of oral questions and answers.

It is also an excellent rostrum for the President. He can get across Page-One headlines nationally for his pet causes, likes, dislikes and gripes, to say nothing of hours on TV and the radio. He can always control it.

THE NEXT PRESIDENT is likely to think twice before he lets that get away from him. No matter how much he may want to live and work in seclusion, the President today is in a goldfish bowl.

It is much more important that the new President and his chief press assistant, who earns his \$17,500 if he keeps the public in mind, have a clear understanding of government's obligation to that public. There is very little going on in the many bureaus that should not be a matter of open record.

Well meaning though he insists he has been, Mr. Truman stubbed his toe on that shortcoming. There can be no quarrel with his order permitting heads of all departments to withhold anything that would endanger the nation's security, if the bureaucrats stick to that literally.

But it's too easy to put a top-secret stamp on anything that might embarrass the bureaucrats. There would be a few scandals today if Mr. Truman had insisted on open records, openly arrived at—and kept an eye on them himself.

TAFT ALWAYS has been a free talker with reporters wherever he is. So far the Ohio senator appears to be a man who would take top secret stamps away from everybody but those handling top secrets—and tell them to keep their confidences where they belong.

Eisenhower has caused some concern by the fact that he has been in the military all his adult life, and by his recent Paris action. Following the Minnesota and New Hampshire primaries he called the scribes, read a statement—and said he would answer no questions. He has indicated he will follow that course when he comes home in June, too.

If he does he will play directly into the hands of the Taft strategists. They are dogging him now with a sheaf of questions which they have given wide circulation.

But like is a rational guy, despite the old Army rule of getting ahead by keeping your mouth shut and your finger on your promotion number. He talks frankly and freely with individual reporters, or small groups. My guess is that he will answer questions and take care of himself doing it.

Kefauver, Kerr, Harriman, Russell, Barkley—these top Democrats all realize the value of good press relations. Kefauver's crime quiz would have flopped without it.

## Ultimatum That Wasn't Sent

President Confused in Middle East History  
By PETER LISAGOR

WASHINGTON — President Truman failed to keep his reputation as a history scholar at his latest news conference, when he impressively disclosed an "ultimatum" to the Russians that was never sent. In fact, as his harried press aids later discovered, there had never been any ultimatum.

For two hours, before the White House issued a correction, Mr. Truman appeared to have rewritten the history of our times and dealt an ugly blow to the claims of the United Nations Security Council.

That body, since 1946, had pridefully pointed out to its critics that it had been instrumental in three peace-preserving actions — the Palestine truce, mediation in Kashmir, and the withdrawal of Russian troops from Iran in 1946.

With an almost casual disregard for history, the President said that it was an ultimatum he sent to Joseph Stalin that caused the Russians to leave Iran (or Persia, as he put it).

THE PRESIDENT ADMITTED a little confusion about the date, having first said it was in 1945. But he was grimly insistent that he told Stalin, in effect, to get and that he got.

That the White House later calculated that Mr. Truman had in mind a published note of March 7, 1946, not an ultimatum in the technical sense, hardly mitigated the President's potboiler approach to history, in the view of most observers.

It also didn't ease the grief caused newspapermen by the President's assurance that his "disclosure" had not been made public before, and that a certain date had been set for withdrawal, or else.

Skeptical newsmen, however, pressed the White House staff for verification of the date of the ultimatum and got the rueful reply that the President referred to American leadership in the United Nations and to the "very strong" note of March 7, 1946.

THE NOTE, it is true, was a forceful one. It reminded the Russians that they had violated their pledge to get out of Iran by March 2, as agreed in the declaration of Iran of Dec. 1, 1943.

It said plainly that the United States "cannot remain indifferent" to the maintenance of Russian troops in Iran.

Two weeks later, however, the Iranian question was brought before the UN, leading to Russia's first walkout in the person of Andrei A. Gromyko. Secretary of State James F. Byrnes supported Iran in a personal appearance at the UN.

Almost a month later, Russia and Iran signed an agreement in Teheran whereby the Russians would evacuate Iran by May 6.

It was not the first time that Mr. Truman, with his gift for free-wheeling, imprecise responses, found himself in an embarrassing spot.

On Nov. 30, 1950, at a famous news conference mixup, he was asked whether the United States was considering the use of the atomic bomb in Korea. His reply, later corrected, suggested such a possibility and also intimated that Gen. MacArthur would have the decision to make.

This so frightened the British, among others, that Prime Minister Clement Attlee was in an early

## Quixotic

Has Stalin maybe decided not to take over the USA  
Until its flood control system is completed, proven effective—and paid for?

plane headed for Washington for a high level pow-wow.

MORE RECENTLY, Mr. Truman responded to an editor's question about whether he felt that his inherent powers by which he seized the steel industry might also apply in some future emergency to newspapers and radio. His later attempt to clarify his reply caused the "ultimatum" statement. He sought to make clear that he had no thoughts of taking over the press and radio and that he had difficulty imagining the government doing that.

Mr. Truman's light treatment of history is almost certain to amuse, and fortify, one man—Gov. Byrnes of South Carolina.

BYRNES has been in a running rhubarb with the President over whether he kept Mr. Truman informed of what went on at the Moscow conference in 1947.

The President is generally held to be a simple, unpretentious man by most observers. In only one respect does he deviate from that characterization, in the opinion of these observers, and that is in his pretensions as a student of history.

(Chicago Daily News Service)

## Today's Talk The Big Sea

By GEORGE MATTHEW ADAMS

Mystery, beauty, drama, and terror are in the sea. The sea is a thing of moods, and almost constant motion. It is an ever changing spectacle. It is a tragic watery graveyard as well. It has taken to itself many a heroic sacrifice, and within its bowels are the wrecked hopes of endless enterprises. It has taken its toll of many a brave adventure and buried the once proud fleets of fighting ships of war.

But the sea has served its mighty useful ends, through commerce, communication, and exchange of the products of the earth. Great artists have gained fame from depicting its beauty, power and movements. How many of us have gained soothing solace from merely sitting upon the sandy shore and listening to the ebb and flow, and its rhythmic song.

Rachel Carson's book, will introduce you to facts and details that will amaze you, as to the sea's structure, history, and life within. That thrilling story by Stephen Crane, "The Open Boat," is one example of adventure, told by those who have braved the sea after a shipwreck. As those four men rowed, hoping for a safe landing, Crane remarked that "none knew the color of the sky!" It was a race of the soul, as Eddie Rickenbacker's was, when with his companions, he was tossed to the mercy of the sea.

Recently we read in our newspapers the stirring saga of one man, Kurt Carlsen, upon his disabled ship, "The Flying Enterprise."

## Views on Sundry Topics

From Readers of The Times-Picayune

Men's Mistakes Brake Tag Experience

New Orleans. Editor, The Times-Picayune: When, day after day, we read in the daily papers and magazines, and hear over the radio of the horrible results of men's mistakes, we women of the world stand aghast and look with fear to the future. We are in such a vulnerable position and not able to help ourselves or others in regard to these man-made crises.

We have just come through the Holy Lenten season, commemorating the death and resurrection of Christ Who died to save the world. If Christ should come to earth again today as He came before, men would not crucify His body. Oh no, we are too humane for that; but an attempt would be made to crucify His soul. Men have learned to do that down to the last refinement.

Like Mary Magdalene at the tomb of the Risen Christ, we women cry out in anguish. "They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid Him."

E. J. BERNARD WOOLNER, Chairman.

## Washington Scene

### Ghost Gets Into the Record

By GEORGE DIXON

WASHINGTON — Ghostwriters not only write speeches for senators these days but attach instructions on how to deliver them.

The spook scribes underline passages to be emphasized, give pronunciations of long words, and provide instructions on how to stand, gesture, and gesticulate. Most ghostwritten speeches are accompanied by instructions in elocution.

The cue sheet is reserved strictly for the eyes of the senator. But there was a slip-up recently and one of these cue sheets got into the Congressional Record.

Sen. William Benton, Connecticut, came up with a speech entitled "Is Public Service for You?" In line with the peculiar game of modesty our solons play, Sen. Benton did not refer to it for publication in the record himself, but had it done by a buddy, Sen. Lester Hunt, Wyoming.

Unfortunately, in this case, Sen. Hunt neglected to detach the cue sheet provided by Sen. Benton's administrative assistant, and this is what came out in the Record:

"Prof. Harold Lasswell, of Yale, although he uses very long words, has made a career of trying to bring political science down to earth. . . . He developed the thesis that politics — and I am going to use his own words for you here — 'Politics consists of the displacement of a private effect (Bill, the accent is on the first syllable here) upon a public object.'"

CONTRADICTION of the week: Sen. Homer Capehart, Indiana, received a letter from Mrs. Amy Jolly, of Friendship, Ind. She took a sad, unfriendly view of conditions.

HEAVENS ABOVE, Myrtle, this sounds as if President Truman was being advised to commit bigamy!

Testifying before the House appropriations subcommittee, F. T. Gertside, assistant superintendent of the national capital parks, said the White House should have an assistant housekeeper, and added eyebrow-raisingly:

"We figure we must have a housekeeper there at least 16 hours a day, and the only way you can get a 24-hour-a-day housekeeper would be to marry her, because certainly we cannot get anybody to work on that basis."

IF YOU FEEL MAD enough to

## Flashback

### New Orleans a Century Ago

As The Picayune Saw It

APRIL 27, 1852— Among rights advertised for auction by the dissolving Orleans Navigation Company, for use or claim by a possible successor company, was a 40-foot canal route in the middle of Canal and Basin streets, from the river to Basin Carondelet, agreed upon with the city in November, 1807, pursuant to an act of Congress of March 3, 1807. A proviso of this act, which quieted the city the adjacent commons and a 600-yard belt beyond the fortifications, was that the city donate to a company a passage through the commons to continue Canal Carondelet; and also that sixty feet on either side, in the space later known as Canal, be kept forever as a public highway. Offerings included a large mud flat, two small flats, and mud spots; rights respecting roads on either side of the bayou; and the obligation to make a new basin at the Canal-bayou junction.

Oliver H. Perry, New Orleans, son of Com. Perry of the navy, was en route to New York to go out with his father's squadron to California and Japan, and thence to Shanghai as agent of Howland & Aspinwall, great New York shipping firm.

Messrs. Smith, Brothers & Co. were producing colored steel engravings of city views northward from St. Patrick's tower, undertaken in 1850, and from the Lower Cotton Press.

The Board of Assistant Aldermen, meeting in the First District Hall, voted against permitting tables on the vacant ground between the French Market beef and vegetable sections.

The Board of Aldermen contended that when the General Government removed sand banks at the Mississippi mouth, a new objection to a naval depot here, raised by the Superintendent of the Docks and Yards Bureau, must vanish.

The Picayune previously was somewhat surprised to find among its telegraph despatches, the statement that the House had voted for removal of rocks, obstructing navigation, from the river mouth.

Among offices under the new charter was that of city gardener, to care for trees, grass, walks and plants in the public squares and in such streets as Rampart and Esplanade.

Water in the lake was never known to be so low. A wide, dry beach glittered where previously were waves and fishing craft. Steamboats could not depart, but there was great fishing and sealing in the deep holes remaining. The water was blown out by a strong wind, prevailing several days.

Daily Bible Verse  
Romans 10:13  
For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.—Miss Anne E. Leight, 3332 Canal.