

The Indianapolis Times

A SCRIPPS-HOWARD NEWSPAPER
ROY W. HOWARD WALTER LECKRONE HENRY W. MANZ
President Editor Business Manager

PAGE 10 Monday, Mar. 31, 1952



Owned and published daily by Indianapolis Times Publishing Co., 214 W. Market St., Postal Zone 8. Member of United Press. Scripps-Howard Newspaper Alliance. NEA Service and Audit. Second-class circulation.

Price in Marion County: 25 cents a copy for daily and the week, daily 25¢; Sunday only 50¢. Mail rates in Indiana daily and Sunday, 25¢; weekly, 50¢. Postage in U.S. and Mexico, daily 25¢; weekly, 50¢. Postage in Canada and Mexico, daily \$1.10; weekly, \$1.50.

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Give Light and the People Will Find Their Own Way

The Great Decision

ALTHOUGH its official opening is not scheduled until July 21, the 1952 Democratic Presidential Convention began at 11 o'clock last Saturday night.

It began the moment President Truman, in a dramatic and extemporaneous addition to his Jefferson-Jackson dinner speech announced:

"I shall not accept a renomination."

It was the answer to the great political question of the day: Would he run, or wouldn't he? It was the question Mr. Truman for many months had left hanging, tantalizingly unanswered.

In answering the question as he did, the changeable, unpredictable Mr. Truman raised several other interesting questions. Since the original text of his speech, distributed to news services hours before delivery, did not contain the momentous announcement, did Mr. Truman make up his mind suddenly, or was he merely being theatrical?

WHAT WAS the basis for his decision? Mrs. Truman's wishes? The Kefauver victory over him in New Hampshire? Or a long long-nosed intention to retire?

Whatever the President's motives or thoughts, and regardless of whether he attempts to name the Democratic candidate, the Democratic convention, for the first time since 1932, now is free and open.

Mr. Truman's announcement will end some of the feuds within the faction-split Democratic Party, but it may start others. It may, or may not, ease the tension between the White House and Congress. It will put new emphasis and importance on the inevitable fight over the platform at the Democratic Convention.

The announcement disperses the "stop-Truman" drive inside the Democratic Party, and leaves unanswered forever the question as to whether it might have succeeded at the convention.

IN SOME degree, the announcement will de-personalize the record of the Truman administration as an issue in the 1952 campaign. But it still will be the principal issue on which the judgment of the voters will turn in November. Republican candidates and leaders and Mr. Truman himself agree on that.

It will enliven the already exceptional interest in the presidential election, and thus serve a healthy purpose.

It means that this year rank-and-file sentiment in both major political parties will have more impact on the two presidential conventions than it has had any time in the last 20 years. It's about time.

The Great Throwdown

NOTHING could more clearly demonstrate the abject confusion of the Truman administration's economic policies than the resignation of Defense Mobilizer Charles E. Wilson.

Mr. Wilson quit, he says, because the President changed his mind. And that's the story of the Truman government's economic policies—the President changed his mind.

When the going was tough, and inflationary pressures were at their peak—right after the Korean War broke out—the President didn't think price and wage controls were necessary.

Months later, when the buying rage had subsided and there was reason to believe that the danger of a maverick inflation was somewhat less, the President set up an organization for imposing controls. Mr. Wilson, in this setup, was the man with the power. His, according to an executive order of Mr. Truman, was virtually the power of the President.

But last May Mr. Wilson's power was dissected by the creation, on presidential order, of the present Wage Stabilization Board.

Mr. Wilson now resigns because, he says, he believes the steel wage decision of the Wage Board is inflationary and the President, whom he had expected to agree with him on principle, now takes a different tack.

THE PRESIDENT, in his letter accepting Mr. Wilson's resignation, is careful not to throw down Mr. Wilson personally. He praises Mr. Wilson's patriotism in taking on this impossible job in the first place, and acclaimed his "vigor, competence and effectiveness."

So what has thrown Mr. Wilson is not any personal ineffectiveness, but the lack of system in the Truman economic policies. It isn't that the President just changed his mind again. What is at the bottom of this is that he has not had any over-all, genuine policy.

Mr. Wilson, in resigning, said he had tried to compromise the steel dispute. Apparently, he had reached the end of the compromise rope.

In any program for controlling inflation, there can be no compromise. Either inflation is controlled, or it isn't. In this case, it isn't.

PRESIDENT TRUMAN has demonstrated that he can demolish a straw man and remove a roadblock at the same time.

SEN. BYRD (D. Va.) would have paid \$100 for the Jefferson-Jackson Day dinner in Washington had he been guaranteed that President Truman would check out.

THAT LOUD screech after the Truman speech was caused by the Democratic machines grinding to a stop.

IT IS tougher than ever for Sen. Taft to hold on to the title "Mr. Republican" after the Maine bout.

SEN. KEFAUVER may be disappointed in suggesting that President Truman retired to make the Democratic Party safe for democracy.

FROM the "Democratic front"—Sen. Kefauver (D. Tenn.) now is squirming oil at his opponent, Sen. Kerr (D. Okla.), hoping the Oklahoman will hit the skids.

U.S. CULTURE NOTE—Imported to India, our bathing beauty contest caused a riot among Hindu fathers who didn't like seminaked Indian girls trying to be "Miss Delhi."

DEAR BOSS . . . By Dan Kidney Young Halleck New Ensign

WASHINGTON, Mar. 31—Last week Ens. Charles W. Halleck reported for duty aboard the USS Rockbridge, an attack transport operating out of Norfolk, Va.

A graduate of Williams College, Mr. Halleck had planned to take up law as a profession—in doing so he would be following in the steps of his father, Rep. Charles A. Halleck, Rensselaer Republican, and his paternal grandparents.

But these are times when young men must serve instead of choose. So although he was married, Ens. Halleck joined the Navy last August as a seaman recruit for a four-year hitch.

He took his boot training at Great Lakes and was graduated from the U. S. Naval School for Officer Candidates on Mar. 21. He was among the top 10 in a class of 518. And his proud parents went to the school at Newport, R. I., to watch their son receive his ensign commission.

Lands Attack Troops

THE USS ROCKBRIDGE carries a crew of 300 and can accommodate 300 combat troops. It is equipped with 28 motor-driven landing craft which are launched off shore in combat zones. As a junior line officer, Ens. Halleck will accompany attack troops in ship-to-shore operations.

As an ensign he will serve on active duty not less than three years, after which he plans to continue his college training toward a law degree.

To the thousands of fathers whose sons have gone or are about to enter the Armed Services, this cold war seems just as anxiety-ridden as World Wars I and II.

And to the sons who have entered the service, whether by enlistment or the draft, it must be painful to read such reports as a recent one from the Agriculture Department. It showed U. S. farmers planned to plant a total of one million acres less this year than last year, although often their sons are permitted to stay home and help them.

Less Corn

THE Agriculture Department's biggest problem is that five million fewer acres of corn are planned than it is estimated will be needed by the livestock industry.

Acres reductions are blamed by the farmers on price declines and labor shortages.

To the fighting men stuck in the mud in Korea, such excuses must appear inadequate. Just how tough a time they have had there was summed up by Rep. E. Ross Adair, Ft. Wayne Republican. He pointed out:

"The fighting in Korea has lasted longer than this country fought to win World War I, and the cost in lives and material has been far greater.

"During the first 18 months of the Korean 'police action,' there have been more American casualties than we suffered in the Pacific in the first three years of World War II.

107,000 Casualties

"AMERICAN casualties in Korea have passed the 107,000 mark.

"The total number of Americans killed in Korea is more than our nation suffered in the American Revolution, the War of 1812, the Mexican War, and the Spanish-American War combined.

"All that makes the question 'Why are we in Korea?' the most important one today, particularly to fathers with young sons in the service."

Sen. Brian McMahon (D. Conn.), chairman of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, attempted to give the administration's answer to that question in a long statement published in the Congressional Record.

It closed:

"We are in Korea because we have no alternative. We are in Korea because we prefer honor to dishonor. We are in Korea because we are determined to nip aggression in the bud at the outset rather than to wait until it engulfs us. We are in Korea, above all, because we want to prevent a third world war."

Views on the News

IF SEN. BRIDGES (R. N. H.) weren't so bogged down being GOP floor leader, he probably could save a lot of dough for taxpayers he doesn't know.

IT WOULD surprise nobody if Sens. Burton (D. Conn.) and McCarthy (R. Wis.) joined in trying to get the latter's \$2 million libel suit against the former tried on TV.

FRENCH opposition to home rule in Tunis may be based on their Paris experience.

RUSSIA'S Jacob A. Malik . . . double cross is against the International Red Cross because it isn't double.

COMMUNISTS and Fascists demonstrated in Rome and nobody could tell the difference.

HAROLD STASSEN may be running to help hold the Republican Party together. He has Taft and Eisenhower forces in Wisconsin agreeing that Stassen is a stooge.

SIDE GLANCES

By Galbraith

UNTIL YOU'RE WITH ME

EACH second you're not with me . . . seems like eternity . . . each minute I'm without you . . . I'm blue and lost at sea . . . each hour I'm alone, dear . . . and you're not by my side . . . is like a day of misery . . . drift on the flowing tide . . . each day's a week when you're gone, love . . . and the weeks are like months of pain . . . and the months seem as years of sorrow . . . and my skies are all filled with rain . . . for without you there is no reason . . . and my life is a drudgery . . . that continues to break my heart, dear . . . until you're again with me.

The Condemned Man Ate a Hearty Meal



CONGRESS ROUNDUP . . . By Charles Egger House Trims Spending Bills

Foreign Aid

GENERAL ALFRED GRUENTHER, Gen. Eisenhower's chief of staff, reported to the Foreign Relations Committee that his boss is all for the Truman administration's \$7.9 billion foreign aid program. Gen. Gruenther said a substantial reduction would put this country at a disadvantage.

But Gen. Gruenther emphasized that Gen. Eisenhower believes the long-haul defense of Western Europe must come from the countries themselves.

Red Curb

A BILL depriving diplomatic and consular officers of their immunity from registration as foreign agents was passed and sent to the House. The measure is designed to stop the increasing flood of political propaganda from Soviet-controlled embassies.

McGrath Satisfied

ATTORNEY GENERAL J. HOWARD MCGRATH said there was nothing wrong with the Justice Department.

He promised full co-operation to a subcommittee investigating the department, but said he won't give the committee free access to department files unless President Truman tells him to do so.

It Closed:

"It is closed."

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