

CONNING THE NEWS

"Non-Political" Politics, "Characteristic of Mr. Green," Second Wind in Spain

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S five-thousand-mile "non-political" tour of the drought area was climaxed Sunday night by one of his most politically astute "fireside chats." The entire "journey of husbandry," as the President termed his trip, was a masterly performance from a political standpoint. It kept Roosevelt constantly in the spotlight before officially even beginning his campaign for reelection, and it completely dwarfed the feeble antics of Landon and Knox. The drought conference with Landon, one of a series of such discussions, by its very nature placed the Republican candidate in a subordinate position and allowed him no chance but to accept with good grace.

If Sunday's speech may be taken as a measure of the concrete accomplishments of the tour, however, it offers little hope to the drought-stricken farmers. The President promised continued work relief at a "decent wage." The work he suggested, including chiefly road-building and erosion projects, is not work to which farmers are adapted, and no attempt was made to determine what constitutes a decent wage. Nor was anything said about the urgent question of the refinancing of farmers' debts or the loans which are needed to keep farmers on their property, and for which work relief wages are far from affording a substitute.

One effect of the drought which made itself strongly felt during the week in New York State was the threat of a milk strike for higher prices—the last resort of farmers made desperate by the burning of their pasture lands and the rising cost of feed for their cattle. In face of the impending strike, leading distributors jacked up the price to the farmer an additional 17 cents. This increase, however, they not only passed along to the consumer by raising the price of milk one cent a quart, but garnered an additional five cents a hundred pounds in the process. Inquired the *New York Post*: "Are the distributors going to take themselves a new profit on the drought, as they did on the drought of 1934?"

Except for a Labor Day proclamation, in which he reiterated the stand on unionism taken in his acceptance speech (indirectly a defense of the company union), Governor Landon made no contribution during the week to his presidential campaign. The outstanding effort on his behalf was the series of speeches which occupied Knox throughout the week. At Waterbury, Conn., he made what the *New York Herald Tribune* termed "a bid for labor support" by announcing that labor should be left to work out its own problems, because "our economic machine is controlled by the automatic sway of competitive forces, guided by the good sense and

energy and ambition of three million employers, seven million farmers, a half-million corporation managements, and fifty million workers." It is "preposterous," he said, for the federal government to attempt to substitute itself for this "combined wisdom."

In a subsequent effort Knox asked the question: "What happened to Russian labor when it established a new system that it thought would give labor all the product of enterprise?" No answer was forthcoming either from his hearers or from the Colonel, so the point of the question remains a minor mystery. Coming closer to home, Knox urged labor to keep out of politics, and to "fight its own battles." To which the American Labor Party replied: "Apparently he considers it perfectly proper for organized greed as represented by the Liberty League, the Manufacturers' Association, chambers of commerce, and others on the side of Governor Landon and Colonel Knox to be neck-deep in politics. Colonel Knox all but tells labor not to vote."

WHILE the candidates of the two old parties continued to shadow-box, Communist candidate Earl Browder followed a schedule of speeches clearly outlining the major issues of the campaign. Typical was the address Browder made at his home town of Wichita, Kan., in which he pointed out how the Hearst-Landon alliance made it imperative to defeat the Republicans if we are to keep out of war. "The war-makers," he declared, "led by the reactionary Hearst, are attempting to drive America into a Hitler-Mussolini alliance, thus placing America on the side of the world-wide reaction."

The Communist Party was heartened by the formation of a Committee of Professional Groups for Browder and Ford. The announcement of this committee, signed by Rockwell Kent as chairman, calls on professional and intellectual workers to support the Communist candidates as an "effective movement against reaction, fascism, and war."

Roosevelt's political sagacity, however, continues to attract liberals of varying shades to

his banner. Latest recruit is Mayor La Guardia of New York, who on Tuesday committed himself to Roosevelt by signing a call for a conference of progressives to be held in Chicago this week. New York's American Labor Party, affiliated with Labor's Non-Partisan League, ended its first month's activities on behalf of Roosevelt and Lehman with a paid-up enrolment of labor organizations totaling more than 300,000 in membership. And on the Pacific Coast the Washington Commonwealth Federation is reported by the *New York Times* as "rounding up virtually all the left-wing and discontented elements except the Communists" in support of Roosevelt and "against the Lemke-Coughlin-Smith combination."

Apparently Coughlin has more to worry him at the moment than the W.C.F. It becomes increasingly difficult for him to deny that the Vatican has come to regard him as a first-degree nuisance. The other day the quasi-official Vatican organ *Osservatore Romano* termed "improper" Coughlin's use of the epithet "liar" in connection with President Roosevelt. The paper also stated that press dispatches quoting Bishop Gallagher as saying, "The Holy See fully approved Father Coughlin's activities" did not "correspond with the truth." Nevertheless Bishop Gallagher repeated, on arriving in New York, that the Vatican had in no way criticized Coughlin. Belittling his own mild rebuke to the Detroit priest, made just before he sailed, Gallagher said, "We must show respect to the President. . . . It may look as if the President is telling lies, but we don't tell him he is a liar." The Bishop merely smiled, however, when Coughlin described the election as a choice between "carbolic acid and rat poison." Bishop Gallagher denounced the People's Front of Spain, favored the fascist cause, criticized Roosevelt for having shaken "Litvinov's bloody hand," and wound up by telling the crowd at the pier: "I am happy to see this proof of loyalty to your leader. . . . It's the voice of God that comes to you from this great orator of Royal Oak."

OVERSHADOWING political developments of the week was the suspension of ten international unions from membership in the American Federation of Labor. Along with the expulsion of these unions for affiliation with the Committee for Industrial Organization, went fully one-third of the A.F. of L. membership. By failing to withdraw from the C.I.O. in accordance with the executive council's ultimatum, William Green argued, the C.I.O. unions automatically "withdrew" their affiliation with the A.F. of L. David Dubinsky, of the International Ladies Garment



Erica Volsung

John L. Lewis

Workers' Union, who had resigned earlier in the week from the executive council, characterized Green's statement as "thoroughly inaccurate" and "a distortion of the facts." The C.I.O. unions, he contended, along with all the progressive labor leaders, were "illegally suspended." John L. Lewis, chairman of the C.I.O., had nothing to say beyond the remark: "That's characteristic of Mr. Green."

William Z. Foster, who led the 1919 drive to organize steel, pledged full support to the C.I.O. drive, which is making rapid headway. The chief advance of the week came with the affiliation of the National Council of Gas & Coke Workers to the C.I.O.'s United Mine Workers. The C.I.O. continues to draw remarkable support from labor councils and draft unions throughout the country. To date, the Executive Council's stand has been protested by three international unions, fourteen federations of labor, and forty central labor unions.

ON THE WHOLE, however, reaction during the week kept pace with progress. In Michigan, while the state proceeded slowly and with little ardor to press the trials of the twelve indicted Black Legionnaires, the real powers behind the movement, apparently, were left untouched. Said Lyle D. Tabor, a Pontiac attorney and head of the citizens' committee that demanded the Grand Jury investigation of the Legion last June: "Any one who presumes that the Legion has been smashed is deluding himself. Still 500 strong [in Pontiac] and under new leadership, the Legion is working quietly and effectively to nominate its slate of county officers in the fall primaries." Meanwhile, in Oakland County more than fifty public officials actually named as members of the Black Legion by the Grand Jury still retain office despite demands of citizens' committees.

In New York State the Ku-Klux Klan emerged for the first time since 1931, advertising its call to members and promising a series of meetings. In the same state the United Spanish War Veterans met and passed such vicious resolutions as one to expel 10,000,000 aliens from the United States to relieve unemployment. Washington contributed its bit by refusing to take action on the plea of the Civil Liberties Union to admit to this country Willie Gallacher, Communist member of Britain's Parliament. And Doubleday, Doran, publishers of *It Can't Happen Here*, on whose board of directors sits Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., added a nice little touch by advertising that anti-fascist book as follows: "Sinclair Lewis' powerful novel makes revolution seem a frightful possibility for America. Read it before you vote!"

The week saw a sound drubbing, however, administered to America's arch-reactionary, William Randolph Hearst. The long strike on his *Wisconsin News* in Milwaukee came to an end with the publisher agreeing to a five-day, forty-hour week, wage increases, recognition of the principle of collective bargaining, and reinstatement of the thirteen strikers



Boysen

who had stuck it out for months on the picket line. Capitulation came after the *News* had dropped 50 percent in circulation, and was induced in part by the astounding support given by Seattle labor to the strike called three weeks ago against the Hearst paper of that city. The Seattle journal is still not publishing, and a citizens' committee has been formed to fight the vigilante group of employers who threaten to use force to smash the strike.

Aside from Seattle, the most significant strike situation of the week is the walkout of flour workers in Minneapolis. The huge Pillsbury Flour Mill closed down when 1800 workers struck for better wages and union recognition, and other flour mills are expected to go through the same experience in the next few days.

On the educational front, Harvard showed the way during the week with a tercentenary celebration that took the form of a brain circus. Savants gathered from far countries to calculate horn angles, play games with numbers, and figure out—to the last nuclear unit—the number of elementary electrical particles in the universe. Yale, not to be entirely done out of front-page publicity, announced that henceforth its football games—all strictly amateur, of course—would be broadcast through the courtesy of the Atlantic Refining Company, "makers of White Flash Gasoline." The university will draw \$20,000 for six games. Other schools were quick to follow the Yale lead, outstanding being Michigan, whose sons hereafter will hit the line for Kellogg's Corn Flakes.

ACROSS the Atlantic Spain prepares for swifter suppression of the fascist revolt. To this end a new People's Front government, headed by Largo Caballero, was installed. The composition of the former ministry, exclusively Left Republican, had limited its effectiveness in the conduct of the civil war. Six Socialists, two Communists, two Left Republicans, a Republican Unionist, and a member of the Catalan Left form the new cabinet. His government, says Premier Largo Caballero, "considers itself directly representative of all the political forces fighting on various fronts for the preservation of the democratic republic." While not in the cabinet, Anarchists and Anarcho-Syndicalists are backing the new government.

Anticipating Rightist charges of Socialist dictatorship, Caballero defined the government's program as anti-fascist, and "based entirely upon a firm intention to hasten the triumph over the rebellion by coordinating

the strength of the people in united action."

Expectations that the cabinet change would have an invigorating effect on the loyalist forces were confirmed when General Franco's personal guard of Moors and Foreign Legionnaires, his shock detachment for the advance from the south on Toledo and Madrid, were beaten in an initial encounter at Talavera. Though superior armament and greater numbers gave the fascists the advantage in their drive to recapture San Sebastian, news from all other fronts augured well for the government.

The defeat of Irun's Loyalist defenders by troops armed by foreign fascists found the Blum government in France hard pressed to justify its policy of banning supplies to the Spanish government. There was the fact, admitted by Rome, that seven days after Mussolini's agreement to the French non-intervention plan, Italian ships had unloaded twenty-four planes of Italian manufacture at Vigo, Spain, for the use of the anti-government forces. The consignment, it was explained, had been ordered prior to Italy's non-intervention pledge. Charges from Lisbon that the Salazar dictatorship has made Portugal a supply base for the Spanish insurgents have not been denied. But Blum, in replying to the Communist demand that the blockade on Spanish democracy be lifted, protested that France is bound to strict observance of the non-intervention agreement. Two hundred thousand Paris metal workers censured Blum's policy with a one-hour strike marked by the slogan: "Airplanes for Spain!"

WHILE international tension surrounding the Spanish crisis continued dominant, significant realignments were in progress on the Continent. General Rydz-Smigly, chief of the Polish General Staff, returned to Warsaw from Paris with a pledge of renewed Franco-Polish military cooperation and promise of a generous allowance in trade credits. The rapprochement was hastened by ill-concealed Nazi designs upon the Corridor, Poland's only gateway to the sea, and by the effect of Hitler's recent conscription decree upon France and Poland. It tends to offset Hitler's gains in Central Europe, which included entrance of the Rumanian government into the orbit of Nazi diplomacy.

With the world in suspense over the Spanish crisis, Mussolini explained fascist foreign policy for the benefit of the unenlightened, saying "we reject the absurdity of eternal peace which is foreign to our creed and temperament." Meanwhile, in Brussels, 6000 delegates from peace organizations throughout the world gathered under the sponsorship of Lord Cecil and French Air Minister Pierre Cot in the World Peace Congress. Placing its reliance upon the peace action of the world's peoples, the Congress resolved to organize a Universal Peace Day; to create a World Peace Badge for all peace advocates; to arrange international visits of prominent peace leaders, and to organize national peace congresses in every country.

The Cadillac from Wisconsin

*A short story from the author of "You Can't Sleep Here,"
whose work is attracting steadily increasing attention*

By Edward Newhouse

AFTER Tony finished repairing the tractor he came into the house and we both put our good suits on. Steve Akosy was supposed to call for us in his truck, but he didn't. We waited till half past eight, then we rolled up our trousers and began tramping through the fields. For all that mud around, we might as well have kept our overalls. Tony's good suit was too small on him anyway. We came into Andy's Skating Rink looking like a couple of chumps, and it was lucky for Steve he had a good excuse about the truck. Not that the other guys were any cleaner. Compared to the girls we all looked a sight. The girls wore mail-order gingham and federal-relief calico, but in some way of their own they had kept from being muddy or crumpled. When we finally joined them inside the rink they looked very fine standing together, and the table they had set looked very appetizing. They had all brought cakes of one sort or another. One of these cakes was a large, five-layer thing full of pecans and a soft, rich, coffee cream.

Andy's was a good place for a social. Besides the bar, he had a bowling alley and indoor horseshoes. In front there was the state road and on both sides he had some dog kennels. Behind his garage there was an orchard and behind that thick woods with all the soft grass a couple would want. The rink itself was fairly clean. The girls had made a dance floor out of it with soap powder. Steve Akosy was good for six hours of accordion playing if you treated him right. All he needed was a comfortable chair and an occasional beer. I believe Steve got more fun out of playing than most people did out of dancing. We would waltz past him and he'd grin.

The things Steve could play best were csardases and polkas. To tell the truth, that's what most of the young people there could dance best anyhow. They were all American born, but they had learned to dance at local weddings or at the affairs of the Ukrainian sick and benevolent order. Stella Yarosz was about the only one who preferred the Lindy Hop. Still, she could do most anything in the way of dancing. Stella Yarosz and Steve took turns in calling the numbers for square dances.

Tony never could dance with a single partner, but in the square dances he got by all right. Between all that dancing and cake eating he was having himself a pretty good time. He sat on the railing next to me and he said, "How do you figure Stella would go in the movies?"

"She's good-looking enough," I said, "but she's too big for the movies."

"She's got a cousin that's a photographer in Fort Wayne. He said she'd go good."

"She's too big," I said. "Stella weighs about a hundred and thirty. She'd tower over a guy like Cagney or George Raft."

"What do you figure she's going to recite?"

"She wouldn't say."

We were all wondering what Stella would recite but the girls were keeping it for a surprise. We stopped dancing for a while and Margie Danachek sang "Home on the Range." She had to repeat that and then she sang a Ukrainian song with an easy refrain which we could pick up.

Tony and I were comparing cakes when a strange fellow came in from the barroom. He was tall and very good-looking and extremely well dressed. He was too well dressed to have come from Fort Wayne even. He had Harvard or something written all over him.

He said, "Pardon me for intruding. A couple of girls and my friend and I just stopped off for gas and sandwiches. You seem to be having such a good time here, the girls began wondering if we might join you. There are only four of us and I assure you we'd not be in the way."

"Sure," Tony said. "We ain't exclusive."

"Thanks a lot," the young fellow said. "My name's Waldo Hackett."

He went out and brought in the other three, and their names were Bill, Doris, and Kay. Bill was not nearly as good-looking as Waldo, but he was dressed just as well. Doris and Kay wore evening gowns. They were about the best-looking girls man had seen in Cayuna County.

They all shook hands with Tony and me and sat down along the railing.

"Here is where Stella gives up the idea of going into the movies," I said.

"Are them two movie actresses?" Tony said.

"They might just as well be. Did you ever see such lookers?"

"Not me," Tony said. "Man alive."

"Let's join the square dance, Doris said.

"You better not," I said. "It's about over now."

"Will you have a drink?" Waldo said. He took out a flask.

Tony and I drank. Even Tony, who made

his own moonshine, could tell Waldo's brandy was good. Bill, too, had a flask, and he offered it to Kay, who took quite a slug. She had brown, wavy hair and deep-set eyes and a belly that showed through the satin. Doris was peaches and cream.

Waldo said, "That's quite an orchestra there."

"Steve's all right," Tony said.

I went out and I said to Andy, "Didn't I tell you to keep strangers out?"

"Why in hell didn't you keep them out? He asked you. Look at the bus they got." They had a big Cadillac parked in front of Andy's kennel.

"Where they from?"

"I don't know," Andy said. "Wisconsin license. What are you going to do with them?"

"I don't know."

WHEN I got back to the rink Steve Akosy was playing a fast Polish number, but the dance floor was empty. Most of the boys were gathered in a semicircle around Doris and Kay. Margie Danachek and Stella and the rest of the girls sat in the opposite corner behind the cake table. I went over to them and said, "Why aren't any of you dancing?"

"What do they want to come in here for?" Margie said.

"They're not doing any harm. Just ignore them."

"Why don't they go back to Fort Wayne where they belong?" she said.

"They're from Wisconsin," I said. "This Waldo seems to be a nice guy. Go offer him some cake and loosen up for Christ's sakes."

"I wouldn't give them any cake."

"Nor me neither," one of the girls from the mill said.

"Well, dance with me, one of you, and stop looking like a funeral."

But none of them would dance. They sat there in the mail-order gingham and the federal-relief calico, looking sorer by the minute.

"What do you have against these people?" I said. "They haven't done you anything. Go offer them some cake at least."

"I wouldn't give them any cake," Margie said.

"For Christ's sakes," I said. "You don't want to go and break up the social. Stella, will you recite your poem now?"

"No."

On the other side, the semicircle gave way and the two girls, Doris and Kay, came on the dance floor and began trucking. I must



H. M.