

## Season's Greetings

When we count our Christmas blessings  
And the gains the old year sends,  
We will find our richest winnings  
Not in money but in friends;  
For the heart and soul of Christmas  
Teach the truth none can evade—  
That the measure of our living  
Is the friends that we have made.

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Let us toss our cares out the window. It's Christmas! Join with us in celebrating the glorious holiday.

And Merry Christmas  
TO YOU

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MAY TRUE  
HAPPINESS  
IN ALL ITS  
FULLNESS  
BE YOURS THIS  
CHRISTMASTIME

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## Washington Digest

## Labor Disputants Must Heed Public's Interests

By BAUKHAGE  
News Analyst and Commentator

WASHINGTON. — Regardless of the bitterness engendered by the coal strike many real friends of labor in Washington watched the preliminaries to the opening of congress with far less apprehension than might have been supposed. But that wasn't true of some of the labor leaders.



There were several reasons for the fears of the latter. In the first place, it was no secret that a great many union members were getting decidedly fed up with the autocratic methods of some of the top dogs. Part of this may have been the general feeling that it was time for a change, which the voters registered so emphatically. Many of these voters were, of course, union men. Without labor's support the Republicans would not have made such great gains in many of the cities.

I talked to one union man who expressed this sceptical attitude toward the top leadership. He said there was discontent because of "too many strikes." He didn't mean strikes in his own group, necessarily. He was referring to the fact that when other unions walked out it affected him too. He didn't like the idleness that he had experienced. He resented the raising of his dues. He felt the pressure from the higher cost of living, which he did not blame entirely on big profits. He was not immune to the argument that lack of production due to strikes for which he was not

responsible was also partly to blame. His inability to control the strikes of other unions was not the only cause of his resentment. He felt that his vote in itself had very little effect; that "policy was hammered out by the big fellows."

Then, too, the stories of the fine homes and the big cars of some of the high officers didn't help. I found his attitude reflected in similar reports from other cities.

Most of these conditions to which my informant objected, of course, stood out at the very beginning of the coal strike with its powerful one-man domination and its crippling effect on other industries.

Another feeling registered by many workers was fear of a depression. They knew that that would weaken the unions because many men would do as my friend said he would do — forget the union and take any job he could get if work grew scarce.

**PREDICT CURBS ON AUTOCRATIC LEADERS**  
Since many of the men who followed this line of reasoning helped make the Republican victory possible, astute political leaders, with their eyes on 1948, are preparing to stop the "smash-the union" talk and substitute for it the slogan "smash the autocratic leaders" and keep them from smashing the union.

The "friends of labor" that I mentioned realize this. They are freely predicting that this congress will not produce "destructive labor legislation."

They feel that such radical moves as compulsory arbitration or rigid governmental control will not succeed. They do admit they expect

many of the advantages labor has enjoyed under the Wagner act will be pared down.

When the President said at a White House press and radio conference that he intended to write as strong a message as possible to the congress, it was not interpreted as meaning that any anti-labor back-log would rise. Harry Truman's whole record in congress is distinctly conservative but not reactionary. On the other hand, he doesn't intend to approach the subject from the New Deal point of view. As I pointed out previously in this column, he considers himself a "free man," bound by no restraints. He could not escape the tenor of the vote in November nor could he ignore the gunplay which John Lewis threw down.

Looking around the senate, the friends of labor feel they see evidence of enough wisdom and discretion to prevent any labor-baiting orgy even if some of the members of the house lean to extremes. After all, most legislation is written in conference.

Although there was considerable concern expressed by the laboring opponents, both Senators Taft and Ball, who naturally would be expected to initiate labor legislation, are considered too wise politically to overstep the bounds of what likely amounts to common sense on this question. Neither of them would be likely to do anything they could avoid to prevent the workers or anyone else from voting.

Another thing which the optimistic middle-of-the-roads feel sure will happen is that there will be a careful study, by congress of any measure which is proposed, unless, of course, some crisis develops which demands speed. In emergencies emotions run high and so rapidly merely to avoid capering, that legislators may swap the boat trying to reach an even keel.

Labor suffers most in an unstable economy. Therefore, it must have a "multiple objective," as Thurman Arnold and Walter Hamilton, contributing their "Thoughts on Labor Day" to the New Republic, last September, pointed out in these words:

"It must work for a stable economy with permanent high prosperity; it must hold and advance wage rates for the sake of that permanent prosperity; it must stand firm and even take the offensive against limitation of production and the degradation of the dollar."

Therefore, to succeed, "the labor movement must be a consumer's movement as well." The consumer's vested interest in labor legislation will not be overlooked by thoughtful members of congress. It was very plain that the will of the voter in the last election was expressed in the voice of the consumer.

**MUST CONSIDER CONSUMER IN ANY NEGOTIATIONS**  
One of the most searching surveys of the whole question of collective bargaining which undoubtedly has impressed our more studious legislators is a report, made two years ago by a special committee of the 20th Century fund. This report stressed the need of recognition by both labor and management of this "third party, the consumer." In that connection the committee recommended strongly "the use of economists, engineers, impartial fact-finding techniques."

They also suggested that "managements and unions together explore the possibilities of market-wide collective bargaining."

This is a subject of which you will hear more before long, I imagine.

The 20th Century fund study also

sounded a warning which might well have shown a foreknowledge of some of the big strikes which followed, including the coal strike. It concluded with the admonition:

"Unless spokesmen for Big Ownership, Big Unionism and Big Government acquire a sharper awareness of their separate and joint obligations to society all three will become like the dinosaurs which grew too big and stupid to survive. The representatives of each, sitting around the collective bargaining table, must become—more consciously than ever before—trustees of other people's money, skills and aspirations. It is the committee's earnest belief that this change in moral and psychological climate of collective bargaining is vital, necessary and long overdue."

That admonition, which went unheeded, was responsible in part for the temper of the people last November. No labor legislation of consequence by the present congress will stand long if it "includes the consumer out."

And if the consumer is protected both management and labor are as much like a human being as possible.

I won't use any words on paper or on the air I don't use on the street car and I will be sure I know what the words I do use mean.

I will not talk or write down to my audience or up to my news sources.

I will swallow my snorts and coughs and wheezes until I can signal the engineer to cut off the mike.

I will read all my mail and answer it in person if a stamp is enclosed, or on the air, if there is no other way, in spirit.

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Every day there are 1,800 fires; 1,000 home fires; 23 deaths by fire; 130 store fires; 100 factory fires; 7 church fires; 7 school fires, and 2 hospital fires.

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A BEAUTIFUL SENTIMENT THAT DOES  
MORE TO PROMOTE THE SPIRIT OF  
BROTHERLY LOVE THAN ALL  
OTHER INFLUENCES COMBINED.

THE HAPPY SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS  
IS DEEP IN OUR HEARTS.  
LET IT ECHO IN THE  
STRENGTH OF OUR VOICES AS WE  
GREET OUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS  
ON CHRISTMAS MORNING.

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