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Logical Re-organization

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The ranking Democratic member of the committee was Senator George of Georgia, and he became chairman upon the death of Senator Harrison. Senator George is an able man and, insofar as the country's foreign policy is concerned, was not disqualified for the post by recalcitrance or opposition. Nevertheless, the Georgia Senator has not seen eye-to-eye with the President on other matters, and it is possible that a feeling of opposition intruded into his direction of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Senator George willingly went along with the plan for reorganization, and accepted instead the chairmanship of the Senate Finance Committee. The Steering Committee then completed the readjustment by certifying Senators Tunnell of Delaware and Lee of Oklahoma to fill vacancies on the Foreign Relations Committee. Both these Senators are supporters of the President's foreign policy.

Senator Hatch of New Mexico, selected to take Senator Connally's place as chairman of the Privileges and Elections Committee, is entirely suitable.

Harvey C. Couch.

THE rise of the late Harvey C. Couch from railway mail clerk to utility and rail magnate was achieved solely by his own efforts and without ever abandoning the small town for the large city. Mr. Couch's career thus outdid the Horatio Alger success stories of a few decades ago.

In Mr. Couch there was the unusual fusion of dreamer and practical man, which enabled him to make a great contribution to the development of his home State, Arkansas. He was a modern pioneer in a long-settled State, who foresaw the possibilities of rural electrification, hydro-

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Army Clean-Up.

AFFIXING of the President's signature to the bill permitting the "washing out" of inefficient officers of the Army introduces a new era in peacetime military promotions. It is now possible to cut away the red tape which in the past may have kept physically fit but psychologically incompetent officers in posts of high command, thereby depriving the Army of the full benefit of the powers of aggressive and younger officers who have been kept down because atrophied seniors blocked the lines of promotion.

It must be obvious, however, that in the exercise of the powers granted the Secretary of War and the military general board set up by the bill there is danger of waste of both brains and material of the Army command.

It is true enough that youth has its value in war, in the posts of high command as well as in the ranks. This value is popularly supposed to have been enlarged by the technique of modern attack and defense. It is sometimes pointed out that Hitler's generals are young men, and critics even go back to Napoleon and his

their capacities and thus are blocking the full employment of the capacities of able juniors. Such officers might be found at the top of the list, or they might be found all the way down the list to the very bottom. Once these "bottlenecks" were eliminated from the promotion list, a firmer organization and a more competent and satisfied officer personnel would be produced by a general rule of adherence to seniority in promotions, with a competent board to watch for and recognize evidences of unusual talent in all ranks. In this process, those weeded out could be examined carefully to determine in each case whether an officer should be separated from the service permanently or placed on the available list for certain administrative and other jobs not involving field command.

Such a plan would seem calculated to eliminate most of the evils of hard-and-fast seniority and at the same time would not incur the evils of unregulated "selection" which might project favorites to the top and pocket able men who do not gain the favor of those above.

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News Behind the News

—By Paul Mallon

(Editor's note: The views expressed in Mr. Mallon's column are his own, and do not necessarily reflect this newspaper's opinion.)

WASHINGTON, July 31.—Heavy political engineering developed on both sides in advance of the latest Fortune poll announcement. Confidential copies were handed around several days before publication. Consequently both Wheelerites and Government authorities were able to make preparations to use to their respective advantages the pronouncement that "the American people have abandoned isolation."

The trickiness of the wording in the questions gave the supporters of Senator Wheeler their opening. Apparently 41.3 per cent of the American people who have "abandoned isolation" only answered affirmatively the question whether this country should "back" England. "Back" is an extensive word. "Backing England" is what we are already doing. No one asked the affirmative respondents if their interpreted "back" to mean a declaration of war, a new AEF or any of the other possibilities.

On the other hand the Government policy promoters claimed the noninterventionist views were adequately presented in alternative questions, and therefore the "back England" injunction really represented a call for doing more than is being done.

Trial by jury may be required to decide. The only indisputable deduction easily made from the poll is that polls are losing their weight. Disputes over the shaded meaning of words, and the propaganda usage to which polls have been put, have made them more of an implement for controversy than for the presentation of a convincing popular decision.

In political campaigns the theory has been accepted that polls influence election results because "everyone wants to be with the winner." I have never met a person whose opinion was changed by a poll. Every personal comment I have ever heard on any particular poll was either a conviction that the poll was crooked if it did not come out the way the commentator desired, or that it was just fine—the right side won.

Therefore I have come to the conclusion that polls strengthen far more opinions than they change. Differences are emphasized rather than obliterated.

There is more than a surmise here that the famed General Wavell is in Burma. The "demotion" of Britain's best general from the command in the Eastern Mediterranean may therefore turn out to be, not only a promotion, but a shrewd British anticipation of where fighting may next develop.

The well-drilled Burmese forces on the job have been strengthened

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