

Washington Merry-Go-Round

BY DREW PEARSON.

NAPLES, Italy, Dec. 31.—In France a lot of people on New Year's Day don't say "Happy New Year" any more. They say: "Here's hoping you don't have any worse year than last year."

As we begin the year 1948 the big problem is to prevent that year from becoming another 1939. War is easy to start when men lose hope. When they have nothing to lose they take desperate gambles. One big problem now facing the world is to restore men's hope. Another is to persuade people that they must work just as hard to win the peace as they did to win victory in war.

When war strikes, Congress throws economy to the winds. People work long hours, pay heavy taxes, put up with all kinds of sacrifices. When the war is won, Congress immediately begins whittling down all important instruments for winning the peace. The State Department, just as important to peace as the army and navy are to war, gets its budget pruned instead of increased. Having chopped away all our instruments for keeping the peace we pretend to be surprised a few years later to find ourselves at war.

The same Republican isolationists who voted against defenses for Guam and have been trying to make their constituents back home forget that fact, now have been sabotaging our defenses for peace. If 1948 or the years immediately following should bring war, the debates on the State Department's budget and on interim aid for Europe and on the Marshall Plan will be adjudged just as important cornerstones for defense as the pre-Pearl Harbor votes of all the others who tried to obstruct wartime preparation of the United States.

I am convinced that the American people are frequently ahead of their government in believing that we must work just as hard to build for peace as we did to win the war. Letters, talks and especially the reaction to the Friendship Train indicate this to be the fact.

European Public Impressed.

In Europe the public seems to have been impressed with the people-to-people feature of the Friendship Train. Even the Communists, who have been waging the most vitriolic anti-American campaign since the days of Hitler, have been forced to treat the Friendship Train with cordiality. Politically, they couldn't afford to do otherwise. The Communists have been telling the European people that all Americans are bandits and imperialists; following which, a gesture comes from school kids and the labor unions and the railroads and the churches and businessmen of America which proves that they're not bandits at all.

Folks over here have been impressed with the fact that Brazilian Ambassador Oswaldo Aranha came to Philadelphia to bid godspeed to the first Friend Ship when it departed for France. Brazil was getting no part of the food and they wondered why he came. It took them some time to understand that a lot of people in other parts of the world wished Europe well. It gave them hope.

Foreign Minister Gruber of Austria was disappointed because the Friendship Train did not visit Austria. Actually Austria is getting part of the recent congressional interim-aid appropriation; also, several United States cities allocated friendship boxcars to Austria through church world service. Gruber wanted the Friendship Train itself to come to Austria so his people could know about it.

Experiment in Brotherhood.

During the war we dropped rifles to the Maquis in France and with the rifles we dropped bags of tea and messages of cheer. We also dropped cakes of soap over Germany, with messages on the wrappers calculated to woo the people away from Hitler. We sent American labor leaders behind enemy lines to win over the enemy's labor unions. In fact, we stopped at nothing, spared no dollar to hasten the end of the war. This was important and successful strategy.

Successful strategy in war, with slight variations, sometimes can be equally successful in peace. Amon Carter, publisher of the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, together with the Lions Club and various other big-hearted Texans, carefully stamped their flour bags for the Friendship Train with messages to the French and Italian people. Those flour bags are certain to be used as dresses for children and for dishrags and washcloths and the messages of friendship will be read and reread.

Likewise will be read the messages sent by President Truman's

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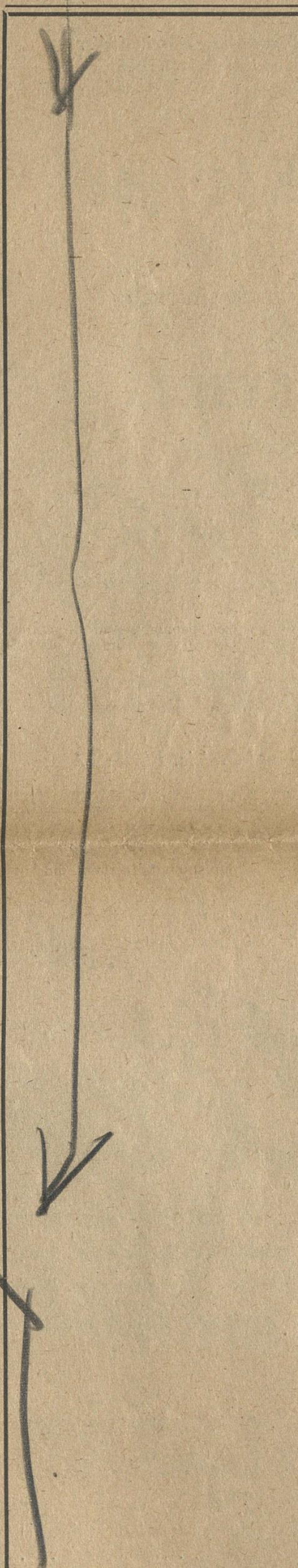
BY RAYMOND MOLEY.

Since the new year will certainly be marked by a fierce attack on the private transactions of members of the Truman administration, it may help to recall a principle upon which this long Democratic regime was brought into power nearly fifteen years ago. This principle was laid down by Franklin D. Roosevelt just as he was entering the final stages of his campaign for the nomination.

In February, 1932, Governor

home folks in Jackson County, Missouri, and by various others, including, we hope, the message we are pasting on friendship food.

There are all sorts of ways of making friends, of getting people close to people—from exchanging students and books and professors to sending American labor leaders to convince left-wingers that we are not imperialists and that our only ambition is to get along peacefully with the rest of the world. So far, we haven't even scratched the surface and it's going to take a real offensive for peace if we are going to win the peace in 1948 and the immediate years to come.— (Copyright, 1947, by the Bell Syndicate, Inc.)



whom we seek favor is not politeness. It is only fawning.