

*Common
7/16/36*

The Townsendite Convention at Cleveland ~~has~~ has put on some dizzy transformations, with all the changes of a kaleidoscope. As recently as yesterday Father Coughlin, supporting the Lemke Third Party movement, was refusing to address the rally of the Old-Age Pension Plan. Today that was reversed, with the Detroit Radio Priest taking the Townsendite rostrum at Cleveland, He delivered the address of the day to the Townsend Planners.

Until today we had Dr. Townsend declaring himself against Third Party Candidate Lemke. The Doctor announced that if his Townsendite Convention did not name a candidate of its own, he would vote for Landon. But that too is reversed tonight.

(At Cleveland today Dr. Townsend came out in favor of the Lemke.

So right up to the last minute the indications were that there would be no fusion between the Townsendites and the Lemke-Father Coughlin faction. But it's all the other way around tonight.) It doesn't appear that the Old-Age Pension Convention will go formally on record as picking Congressman Lemke for its nominee. That decided step is opposed by a strong

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faction in the Townsend ranks. But (there's a loose and enthusiastic tie-up -- with the Doctor and his Old-Age Pension Planners supporting the Lemke Third Party movement as sponsored by Father Coughlin.) Also -- the Reverend Gerald ^{K. very much} Smith is ⁱⁿ the picture, with his ~~remnants of~~ Huey Long's "Share-the-wealth" plan. He and his followers are a third element in the Third Party. In fact, the Reverend Gerald Smith is credited with having brought Dr. Townsend and Father Coughlin together in that last minute reversal of policy. The reversal was accomplished last night, at a conference in Cleveland, a conference in which the Old-Age Doctor and the Radio Priest made a Third Party working agreement.

(Today, the Townsendite Convention ~~is~~ was stamped, stamped by Father Coughlin's address. The Radio Priest was blazing at his best, with a burning vitriol of oratory. His denunciations were unsparing.) He denounced President Roosevelt and the Democrats. He denounced Governor Alf Landon and the Republicans. He denounced Earl Browder, the Communist candidate, -- to which an echo might respond, "Why drag in Earl?" He

hasn't got a chance"

"All of us," the Radio Priest shouted to the Townsendites, "are against the unholy trinity of Roosevelt, Landon and Browder."

(He called the President "The great betrayer", and added, "Franklin doublecross Roosevelt.") He slashed into Governor Landon on the score of the Gold Standard and ^{called} ~~reputed~~ him as an "advocate of economic slavery." And he declared, "Where Browder stands, I will not stand." All of this brought a thunder of cheers. The climax came when Father Coughlin demanded, "How many of you will follow Dr. Townsend?" In response to that ^{the} Old-Age Convention went wild.

Attack on the G-Men, not by the underworld but from the inside at Washington. That may astonish a good many people - after all the glory that has been heaped on J. Edgar Hoover and his Criminal Investigation Bureau of the Department of Justice. ~~But I must confess that I myself was not astonished, when the news broke today.~~ *But at various times* In Washington, ~~I heard enough to indicate that~~ *has been shown* a good deal of hostility against the G-Men was brewing in various quarters of the government service.

Today, newspapermen brought into the open the rumor that the affairs of the Federal Agents were being investigated. (The report is that agents of the Secret Service in the Middle-west have been prying into the doings of the Department of Justice Agents.) Secret Service Men have been called from the Middlewest to Washington to explain their activities. Secret Service Chiefs deny any intention to investigate the G-Men. The newspapermen mentioned these reports to Attorney General Cummings, who is J. Edgar Hoover's boss. (And the Attorney General confirmed the rumor in these guarded terms. "There has been some activity, I suspect, of an ill-devised nature," said

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he.) Then the Attorney General made it clear how he stood.

"If," he declared, "anybody is shooting at ^{J. Edgar} Hoover, they are shooting at the wrong person. They'd better start shooting at me."

(Now let's see what there is to cause an attack on the G-Men. First of all -- jealousy. The Federal Agents have been

getting the glory and the appropriations. Congress has been generous in supporting them. Let's remember that there are other Criminal Investigation Departments of long and distinguished career. There's the official Secret Service, and there are the Postal Inspectors, who have solved many a difficult crime. These other government sleuths can hardly help feeling that the G-Men are the pampered pets of the nation.

Moreover, there's politics. ^{We have often heard} ~~So far as I have been~~
~~it said that~~
~~able to understand~~ politics have been kept out of the Department of Justice. The politicians don't like to be kept out of anything. They'd like to have a hand in appointing G-Men. Those glamorous jobs would do nicely as political patronage. ^{The} ~~the~~
51 ~~rumor has been printed in the past that~~
~~heard it said how~~ a prominent politician spoke out at a social gathering and said loudly - ~~that~~ they'd get J. Edgar Hoover.

~~And further~~ Some Senators and Congressmen have had a feeling of misgiving about the great prestige and power gathered by the G-Men in their exploits against crime. Some have been saying - "Suppose corrupt politics were to have its way with the

Federal Agents, wouldn't that turn their prestige and power into something exceedingly dangerous? Mightn't there almost be an American agpu?"

(There have been remarks in Congress and elsewhere about the way the G-Men have shot down and killed desperadoes and kidnapers -- Dillinger, Baby Face Nelson, and the others. The nation applauded that swift extermination of those murderous criminals, but some people with legalistic minds have said - "Shouldn't those outlaws have been arrested instead of being killed on the spot?") To this J. Edgar Hoover has repeated over and over that no Public Enemy was shot down, save notorious killers who pulled their guns when the G-Men appeared. And the Chief of the Federal Agents adds that only eight Public Enemies were wiped out, while four of his own G-Men died at the pistols of hunted criminals.

~~Right there you can formulate the surmise that the G-Men have been particularly relentless with G-Men-Killers. In every police force there is a vindictive spirit against criminals~~

who kill a policeman - the natural desire to avenge the murder of a comrade. So it ^{is unlikely} ~~isn't surprising to think~~ that the Federal Agents would ~~not be likely to~~ do any gentle fooling around with a Public Enemy who had killed one of their comrades, and who showed signs of pulling a gun when arrested.

^{At any rate} add up those three factors, jealousy, politics and some legalistic misgiving, and you have the reasons for the undercover drive that has been going on against that Department of the Federal Government which has turned this nation from a bad example of a crime ridden country, into a shining instance of desperate crime struck down with unrelenting certainty.

I've heard it said that, whatever moves may have been made against the Department, the Federal Agents have had a source of support in the White House - the President's children, who, like youth everywhere, are said to enthuse ~~xx~~ about the G-Men.

AUSTRIANS

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The Austrians seem to have a sense of the dramatic, but just what kind of drama it's hard to say. July the Twenty-fifth will be the second anniversary of that notorious Nazi putsch in Vienna in which the Austrian Hitlerites, trying ~~it~~ vainly to seize power, captured the government buildings in Vienna and murdered Chancellor Dollfuss. Today hundreds of Nazis ~~it~~ who took part in the affair are in prison. But they won't be there long. Because the Vienna Government has come to an agreement with the Nazi Berlin, as we heard a few days ago. So the Nazi political prisoners in Austria are to be turned loose. The amnesty was announced today. When does it go into effect? That also was announced too. Amnesty Day for the Austrian Nazis is that same July Twenty-fifth, the anniversary of their attempt to seize the government, in the course of which they killed Chancellor Dollfuss.

The number one prisoner to be released is Dr. Anton Rintelen. He was one of the greatest personages in Austrian political life. He had been governor of the Province of Styria. Was known as the uncrowned King of Styria. He was

Austrian Ambassador to Rome when the Nazi putsch was staged, and he was deeply implicated in it. Arrested, he shot but failed to kill himself, now he goes free.

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This amnesty is one way of putting into effect the agreement between Vienna and Hitler. Another way concerns the membership of the General Council of Vienna. That council is the virtual government under ^{the} Schussnig semi-dictatorship. Today a list of the new members of the council was announced. There are no Nazi names on it. But the list was accompanied by a cryptic announcement which states that more names are to be added. In Vienna tonight the opinion is unanimous -- that ~~these~~ those future added members will be Nazis. Two of those named were Cabinet Ministers of Former Governments, and they're members of the outlaw Pan-German Party -- in other words -- Nazis.

The Austrians may be compromising with the Hitlerites, but they are bearing down on the ^a Socialists. Today's news from Vienna ends with the announcement that ^{Socialists} ~~red-radicals~~ are being arrested by the wholesale. This follows a spread of underground Socialist propaganda within the last few days.

~~The reds have been circulating~~ secret propaganda that the
Vienna government has made Austria a bridge between Fascist
Rome and Fascist Berlin, a bridge between two centers of war.

The attempt ^{on the life of} ~~to assassinate~~ King Edward turns out to have been one of those freak affairs, the doings of a crank. Still, for a moment it looked like another desperate try at king killing, regicide. And right here there's one detail that takes the attention sharply -- the king looked surprised. I suppose any of us would look surprised, if not terrified out of our boots, by seeing a pistol pointed at us. The dispatches from London, while dwelling on the royal coolness and courage, emphasize the expression of astonishment on his face.

The guard paraded through a street near Buckingham Palace in all the panoply of military pomp, the king, riding at the head of his household troops. A cheering crowd packed the sidewalks of the street. And suddenly a man thrust himself forward, pistol in hand. In the hurly-burly of the scene that ensued, eyewitnesses differ about what occurred. Some describe a missile shaped like a brick, hurled by the would-be assassin and hitting the king's horse -- which thereupon shied. A later account is that the missile was the pistol, knocked from the ^{man's hand} ~~man's hand~~ ^{by a woman,} ~~man's hand~~ and sent flying to hit the royal horse, ^{whereupon the} ~~man's hand~~

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miscreant was mauled by the crowd, seized by the constables, and hurried away to jail. Such was the scene which put that look of surprise on King Edward's face. In fact, his whole attitude toward the crazy affair of the man with the pistol was one of unreserved astonishment.

Why shouldn't he have been astonished? -- just as we all are upon hearing the news, ~~of the attempted assassination.~~ You'd think that Edward the Eighth would be the last person of power against whom a hand or a pistol would be raised. So genially popular as the Prince of Wales, so human in the concern he displays ^{for} ~~for~~ the well-being of the common man, so much a symbol of empire rather than an active doer of political deeds that might arouse enmity! Maybe the best way to summarize the event in London today is with the phrase -- the king was surprised. And so are we all. He is the most popular of monarchs in a land devoted to its monarchs. After His Majesty, King Edward the Eighth, got over his astonishment, he went out to the links and played thirty-six holes of golf.

Meanwhile, at the Bow Street Police Court, so memorable in

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annals of British Justice, a man stood before the magistrate. He was slender, middle-aged, baldheaded, a cripple. The London dispatches emphasize the fact that the man is an Englishman. That information is given to us with something of a tone of surprise, that the attempt on the life of His Majesty should have been made by one of His Majesty's own subjects. George Mahon is the man's name and he describes himself as a journalist.

Obviously a crank, he was wildly excited, incoherent, mumblin^g and stammering. He rung his hands and told the court that he did it only as a protest. He said he had tried vainly to communicate with Home Secretary Sir John Simon about his protest. Just what he was protesting about he didn't say. As further evidence that the man is a crank -- he displayed no great interest in his own plight, what might happen to him. He was vastly concerned to learn whether the King was injured or not. "I didn't mean to hurt him," mumbles the limping, baldheaded fellow, who, pistol in hand, ~~apparently tried to assassinate~~ Edward the Eighth.

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The police think he's cracked, probably insane. Tonight he

is under medical observation to determine his ~~san~~ sanity, but held on nothing more than a charge of possessing fire-arms.

TALL ENDING

T. C. Vinson writes me from a place with a mighty colorful name, Paint Lick, Kentucky. He asks:- "Are you still interested in tall stories?"

The answer is, "Yes, indeed." But the tall story sources seem to have about dried up. However, any letter that comes from Paint Lick, Kentucky, deserves a second look. And here's the yarn Story-teller Vinson sends me from Paint Lick:-

"A life insurance agent," says he, "was recently delivering an insurance policy to the home of a Negro couple, in the part of Kentucky affected by the T.V.A. A pickaninny was playing around and his mammy kept saying to him: 'Lectricity do this and Lectricity don't do that.' This friend of mine finally asked: 'Why do you call your baby Lectricity?' And the mammy replied: 'Well, my name is Dinah and my husband's name is Mose and I always heard that Lectricity came from dynamoes.'"

And,

SO LONG UNTIL TOMORROW.