

# WAR HITS THE CAPITAL

"Washington's a madhouse"—  
but it's a grim workshop, too

by J. P. McEvoy

Wartime Washington is Hollywood when sound came in; Miami at the height of the Florida boom; New Orleans and a continuous Mardi Gras; Kansas City with an American Legion convention; Times Square on New Year's Eve.

It is also the City of Time-Wasting Distances and Disappearing Taxicabs; the Bivouac of Embattled Democracy; Custer's Last Stand of Private Enterprise; the World Capital of the Four Freedoms and the original shrine of V for Victory (and Votes).

Dizzy, delirious, majestic, glamorous and cock-eyed—everybody who is anybody is in the Mayflower lobby trying to get a room or won't get out of the room you are trying to get into; the pests you left home to get away from have just rented the last empty apartment or bought that Georgetown rat-trap and are going to remodel it into a boarding house for girls—four rooms to a floor, four girls (at 50 bucks per month each) to a room.

Hunting hopelessly for a place to park I was offered one of these rooms. The four girls hadn't moved in yet, which shows you how poorly the Civilian Morale programme was working, for me, anyway. Later I was told that women will be needed in the war effort and the supply will be rationed by Leon Henderson. We soldiers on the home front will wind up retreading our old ones.

Among the many who would like to be moved to a less hectic spot are a thousand Chinese who live in Washington and spend all their time explaining they are not Japanese. A class of political science students from Mount Holyoke College went to Washington to see Dr. Hu Shih, Chinese Ambassador, and one of the questions they asked was how to tell a Chinese from a Japanese. The answer is: You can't always tell. My method in the Far East was to look at their feet. If they wore straw slippers, they were Chinese. If they wore spats with soles on them and a private compartment for the big toe they were Japanese. Anyway, the girls learned how a Master could combine diplomacy and Oriental cunning: "I am told," Dr. Hu Shih said, "Amherst men *dance* with the girls from Smith and *marry* the girls from Mt. Holyoke."



**WASHINGTON CABBIES** advise more visiting business men than all the Government agencies extant. When Philip D. Slingluff (left) of Short Hills, N. J., blew into the wartime capital to sell lamps to the Government for the Radiant Lamp Co., he listened to advice offered by Cabbie Ralph A. Cruze (right). Visitors have an almost mystic faith in the inside information that Washington cabbies allegedly get by overhearing conversations.

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## Capitalites Live in Attics And Travel to Work by Horse

Candidate for the picturesque role left vacant by the late rumpled and baggy Heywood Broun is Price Czar Leon Henderson who, more harassed than any of the other top men in Washington, eats at his desk, apparently sleeps in his clothes and looks for all the world "like an unmade bed." When he laid out the seven classifications for those entitled to new tires he neglected to include himself. He also left out the taxi drivers in Washington who wear out six sets of tires a year and who are getting even now by making themselves hard to find around the OPM building.

The brewers tried to persuade Leon that beer was a food and consequently they were entitled to new tires. "Get a horse!" wise-cracked Leon and sure enough the Tru Blu Brewery of Washington looked up "Horses" in an old file and there they were, six of the biggest horses ever seen by a Washington street cleaner. "White wings never grow weary, eh?" moaned William Xanten, head of the Refuse Department. Mr. Xanten has only 180 lads of a newer and softer generation with sissy whisk brooms and dustpans, compared to the 360 brawny-armed bravos with huge scoops and sturdy brushes who firmly kept the situation under control in the good old horse and buggy days.

But then, as if to further thwart and torment the unlucky Mr. Xanten, a real, live, breathing horse and buggy appeared on Capitol Hill with dashing "Evie" Robert, Washington society's "blond bomber," chauffeuring Senator Radcliffe of Maryland. Only a few years ago "horse and buggy" was a term of reproach to the Supreme Court. Today a new horse and buggy era is dawning in Washington and on the Supreme Court



**THE HORSE AND BUGGY RETURNED** to Washington before the war was really under way. Rationing of tires and cars and an awareness of the war importance of gas have led many to do more than their share to save on anything that deprives our armed forces of vital materials. So Mrs. "Evie" Robert, socialite who chauffeurs Government people, substituted an old-fashioned oat-burner to take Senator Radcliffe of Maryland to Congress.



**TYPICAL WASHINGTON NEWLYWEDS  
ARE THE MILLERS:**



**THEY MET IN A CROWDED BOARDING HOUSE, WERE LUCKY ENOUGH TO  
FIND THIS ATTIC WHICH WILL BE THEIR HOME AT LEAST UNTIL  
THE WAR ENDS**

bench sit mere youngsters like Robert Jackson and William Douglas who have seen horses only in the films—when the nags were chaperoned by Tom Mix.

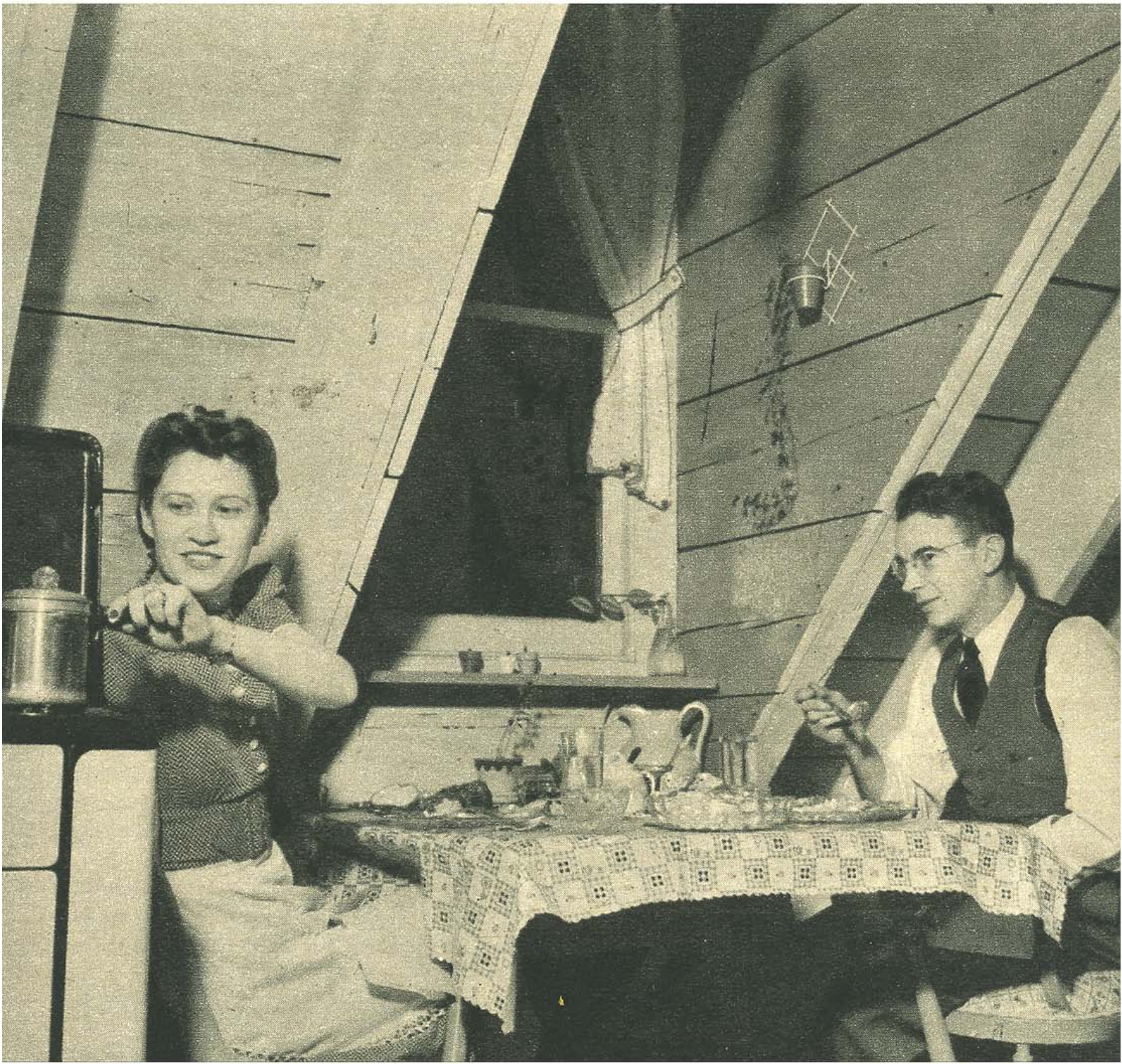
Countless thousands of workers are pouring into Washington by train and plane, by bus and jalopy. They are herded into old rooming houses, temporary shacks, basements and attics. More than a third of the Nation's capital is "ill-housed, ill-clothed and ill-fed"—but boy is meeting girl all over the place, and almost twice as many marriage licenses were issued in December, 1941, as in December, 1940. Typical couple who demonstrate, at least to their own satisfaction, that love conquers all, propinquity is the thief of time and familiarity breeds is C. Herbert Miller of Three Rivers, Mich., and Naomi Ferris of Champagne, Ill., who met in a Washington boarding house and soon were honeymooning in an attic apartment—thereby halving their expenses and doubling their responsibilities. Washington mathematics gets 'em all!

The visiting hordes of kibitzers and well-wishers who pour into Washington and complain of the confusion do not realize that they themselves are part of it. Meanwhile they bewilder and bedevil the overworked, underpaid, harassed and harried men and women who are trying practically overnight to build an army twice as big as Germany's, a navy twice as big as England's and an air force twice as big as all the air forces of the world put together. It is the small business man, who has spent a lifetime building up a slipshod organization to do a picayune business with a handful of employees, who complains most bitterly about the inefficiency of a Government that can't get a sixty billion dollar business going smoothly in a few months. Fortunately, there are plenty of able citizens on Federal payrolls in Washington; men and women of integrity and talent, honest, loyal, and

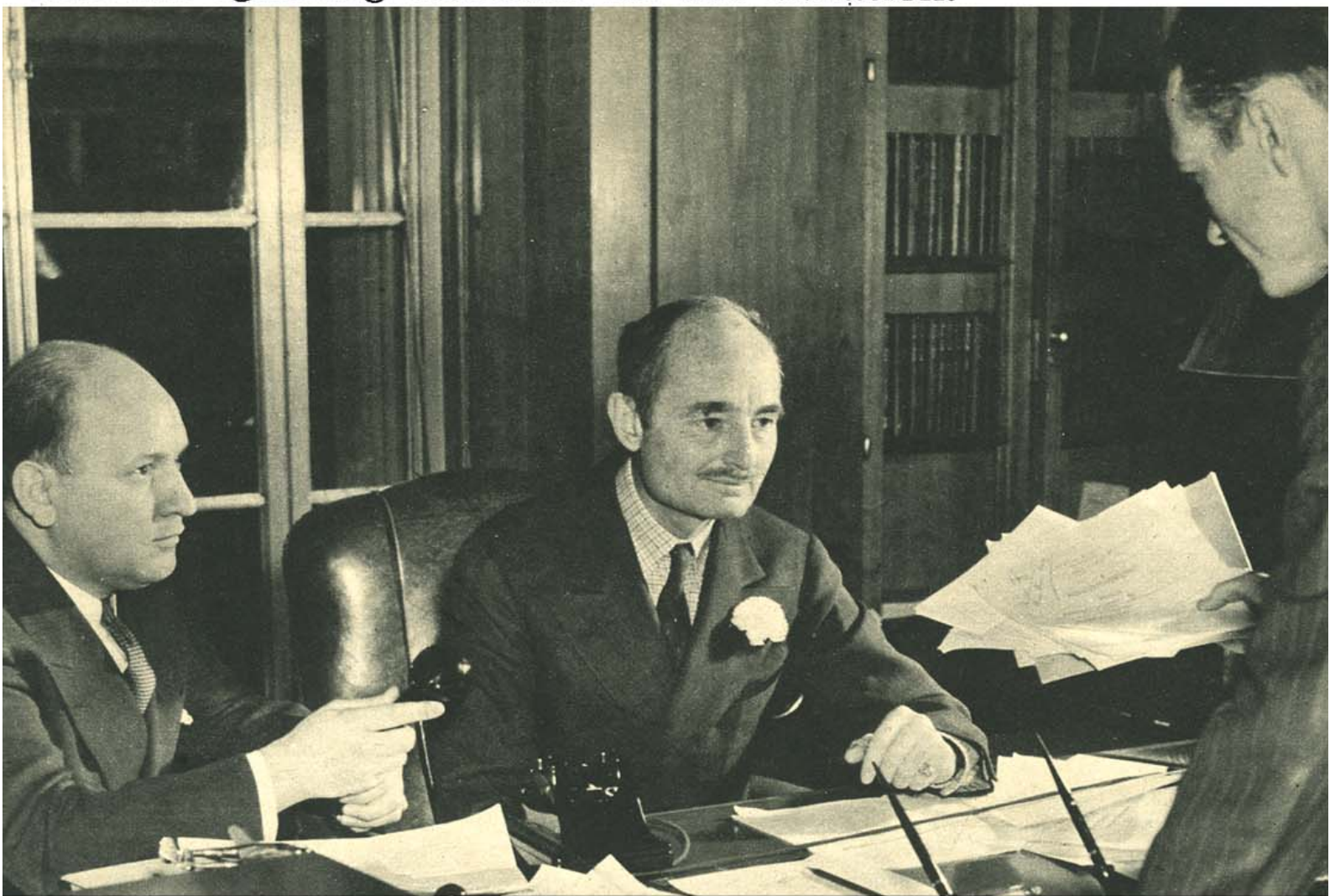


**WAR HITS THE CAPITAL: CONTINUED**

gluttons for work. Meeting them would make any citizen take heart—and be just a little patient.



**LIFE AND LOVE AT 1620 P STREET** has its hazards. When C. Herbert Miller, who works in the news reel section of the Office of Emergency Management, has breakfast with his wife he must be wary of banging his head on the beams of their attic. Mrs. Miller, a Government draftsman, has done wonders with their attic. In their way, they are sharing the sacrifices of thousands of Americans who are ignoring comforts for the duration.



**U. S. ATTORNEY GENERAL FRANCIS BIDDLE (CENTER) AND HIS EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT, UGO CARUSI (LEFT), HAVE HAD THEIR TASKS TREBLED BY THE WAR**

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**THE WITCH HUNTS OF THE LAST WAR**, when restaurant keepers who called Liberty Cabbage by its teutonic name of sauerkraut were hounded by super-patriots, will not occur again if Attorney General Biddle (above) can prevent them. It is his job to ferret out and convict all genuine enemies. Leon Henderson (below) tests his tires to see if they can last the war.



**WHAT MAKES THURMAN ARNOLD REALLY BUSY** is fighting not only this war but private wars of his own simultaneously. The Assistant Attorney General (below) has just started after loan sharks who take billions of dollars a year in interest rates of 30% to 240% a year. "People who borrow to pay income taxes must not be rooked," he says determinedly.

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