

The President's Food Proclamation

A Washington dispatch, dated Jan. 26, says: President Wilson today issued a proclamation calling upon the people to make their greatest effort toward conservation of food for the allied forces.

He says the reduced productivity of Europe, the partial failure of crops and the destruction of shipping have placed practically the entire burden of subsistence on the shoulders of this country.

His proclamation reads:

"Many causes have contributed to create the necessity for a more intensive effort on the part of our people to save food in order that we may supply our associates in the war with the sustenance vitally necessary to them in these days of privation and stress. The reduced productivity of Europe because of the large diversion of manpower to the war, the partial failure of harvests and the elimination of the more distant markets for foodstuffs through the destruction of shipping, places the burden of their subsistence very largely on our shoulders.

"The food administration has formulated suggestions which, if followed, will enable us to meet this great responsibility, without any real inconvenience on our part.

"In order that we may reduce our consumption of wheat and wheat products by 30 per cent—a reduction imperatively necessary to provide the supply for over-seas—wholesalers, jobbers and retailers should purchase and resell to their customers only 70 per cent of the amount used in 1917. All manufacturers of alimentary pastes, biscuits, crackers, pastry and breakfast cereals should reduce their purchases and consumption of wheat and wheat flour to 70 per cent of their 1917 requirements, and all bakers of bread and rolls to 80 per cent of their current requirements. Consumers should reduce their purchases of wheat products for home preparation to at most 70 per cent of those last year, or when buying bread, should purchase mixed cereal breads from the bakers.

"To provide sufficient cereal foods, homes, public eating places, dealers and manufacturers should substitute potatoes, vegetables, corn, barley, oats and rice products, and the mixed cereal bread and other products of the bakers which contain an admixture of other cereals.

"In order that consumption may be restricted to this extent, Mondays and Wednesdays should be observed as wheatless days each week, and one meal each day should be observed as a wheatless meal.

"In both homes and public eating places, in order to reduce the consumption of beef, pork and sheep products; Tuesday should be observed as meatless day in each week, one meatless meal should be observed in each day, while, in addition, Saturday in each week should be further observed as a day upon which there should be no consumption of pork products.

"A continual economy in the use of sugar will be necessary unless later in the year.

"It is imperative that all waste and unnecessary consumption of all sorts of foodstuffs should be rigidly eliminated.

"The maintenance of the strength and health of our own people is vitally necessary at this time and there should be no dangerous restriction of the food supply; but the elimination of every sort of waste and the substitution of other commodities of which we have more abundant supplies for those which we need to save, will in no way impair the strength of our people and will enable us to meet one of the most pressing obligations of the war.

"I, therefore, in the national interest, take the liberty of calling upon every loyal American to take fully to heart the suggestions which are being circulated by the food administration and of begging that they be followed. I am confident that the great body of our women who have labored so loyally in co-operation with the food administration for the success of food conservation will strengthen their efforts and will take it as a part of their burden in this period of national service, to see that the above suggestions are observed throughout the land."

REDUCES PASSES; BANS LOBBYIST

A Washington special to the New York Times, dated Jan. 27, says: Lobbyists and other agents employed by railroads to affect legislation or elections are to be dropped from the payrolls of the transportation lines under government control; passes, except as provided for by congressional action, abolished, and expenditures for the legal staffs of the carriers reduced to a minimum as a result of a sweeping order issued tonight by William G. McAdoo, director general of railroads. Here is the order:

To the officers and directors of railroad companies:

During the period of possession, operation, and government control of railroads it is necessary that officers, directors, and agents of railroad companies be very careful in the handling of moneys and in dealing with transportation matters. Without attempting at this time to give general directions, there are a few matters involving the expenditure of moneys for purposes having no direct relation to transportation which should receive immediate attention as well as the issuance of free transportation.

It is therefore ordered that the carriers' operating revenues shall not be expended:

1. For the payment of agents or other persons who are employed in any way to affect legislation.
2. For the employment of attorneys who are not actually engaged in the performance of necessary legal work for the company.
3. For the payment of the expenses of persons or agencies constituting associations of carriers unless such association is approved in advance by the director general.
4. For any political purpose or to directly or indirectly influence the election of any person or an election affecting any public measure.

Issuance of Free Passes.—No passes or free transportation shall be issued by any carrier under federal control or any official of such carrier unless the issuance of such free transportation is expressly authorized by the act of congress entitled, "An act to regulate commerce, approved Feb. 4, 1887, and amendments thereto," and any such passes or free transportation heretofore issued not in conformity with said act must be recalled.

This order applies to all carriers under federal control, whether interstate or intrastate.

W. G. McADOO,

Director General of Railroads.

BRYAN ON RAILWAY OWNERSHIP

The Clarion-Ledger prints in today's issue a brief letter from W. J. Bryan, on the subject of dual ownership of railroads, followed by one of his editorials, under the heading, "Dual Plan vs. Federal Ownership."

Mr. Bryan takes the position that "the action of the President has put this question where it will be an issue as soon as the war is over." He takes time to congratulate Mississippi as being the first state of the union to ratify the prohibition amendment to the federal constitution.

In his editorial Mr. Bryan brings forward a suggestion that he has advocated for years—that after the war the United States should own the big trunk lines while the states should own the local lines.

He names three advantages that the dual plan would have over the federal ownership plan:

It would cost an enormous sum to purchase all the railroads of the United States; the dual plan would limit the investment to the amount necessary to buy a system of trunk lines.

The dual plan would accommodate itself to public sentiment in the various states; would permit government ownership of local lines in states desiring it, while states not ready for government ownership could leave local lines in the hands of private corporations.

The ownership and operation of local lines by the several states, Mr. Bryan gives as his third advantage—would give an opportunity for greater initiative, and for a comparison of ideas which would be helpful in perfecting railroad operation.

When Mr. Bryan first gave the public his views in favor of government ownership of railroads, the Clarion-Ledger thought his propaganda too radical and disagreed with him, but it does seem that the government is treading closely upon the Bryan idea, which is likely to prevail in the long run.

Bryan has always been twenty-five years ahead of his party and the country.—Jackson, Miss., Clarion-Ledger.

BOOSTING THE COMMONER

Friends mutually interested with Mr. Bryan in the success of progressive democratic principles, and who believe that a wider circulation of The Commoner will help in the great campaign of education necessary for the ultimate success of these principles, have sent clubs of subscribers as indicated:

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France and England have both raised the wages of their soldiers in the last few months. Fritz's pay envelope remains the same as before. Thus we see that even in the army good work receives its recompense and indifferent labor faces the certainty of speedily being taken off the job.

The old saying that it is easy to find fault still holds good, but it needs a little amendment defining clearly the necessity confronting the critic of stepping lively to avoid the boomerang on its return journey.

The principal objections of the critics seemed to be based on the proposition that after Baker had been furnished the dough by congress he ought to have got his batch of war bread out a little more quickly.

The sons and daughters of the European revolutions, if we may judge from what the dispatches say, is destined to be the great controlling political body on that continent in the next generation.