

THE FRONTIER

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WHAT THE CO-OPS HAVE DONE

In considering the farmers' difficulties, one wonders how much worse they might have been, so far as prices and marketing conditions are concerned, had the institution of the co-operatives never been conceived.

The cooperatives have faced, with courage and aggressiveness, many problems, many issues. Through them farmers have struggled to keep together in a time of discontent and uncertainty, and to keep their energies bent toward the desired end. They have fought for permanent markets and better prices at a time when markets and prices for all kinds of products, farm or factory, were crumbling. They have sought to build a sound organization for the future while meeting the exigencies of the present.

The cooperatives have not done all they hoped to do. But whatever justified hope the farmer has for a more prosperous tomorrow may be laid to them. They really have laid the groundwork. They are developing the power that is essential if the producer is to meet the buyer on a fair and equal basis. And it is an inescapable fact that, for the most part, the market has been best for those farm products which are handled thru long established, loyally supported co-operatives. Prices haven't been at a point where the producer could show a profit—but they have been a good deal higher than they would otherwise have been.

Yes, the cooperative movement is making headway, in the face of odds. It is succeeding. And if the farmers of the country stick with it, work for and with it, it will eventually achieve the degree of success it deserves.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

By Frank P. Litschert

Just how far the present Congress, and especially the Senate, which is not bound by iron clad rules as is the House, intends to go in conferring dictatorial powers on the President, will probably be disclosed in the not-distant future. Such powers were given to Mr. Roosevelt in the matter of budget balancing and reorganization of the government, because it was generally realized by Republicans and Democrats alike that a crisis had arisen and the job could be only done by the chief executive. President Hoover had sought the right to reorganize the government but was blocked by a Democratic Congress.

But now we are told there is to be another request for a grant of authority to the President by Congress, and especially by the Senate. It was announced the other day by the State Department that congressional authority would be sought by the President before he started out on the more or less long and winding road of negotiating trade treaties. The reason for this was said to be that European nations do not like the idea of making negotiations with the executive arm of our government when they know that the agreement is apt to be upset because the Senate fails to ratify it. In this respect it was pointed out that after President Wilson had gone to France and taken part in the negotiation of the Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations, the Senate refused to ratify the document and afterward negotiated a separate treaty with the defeated powers. The European powers, it is said felt that they had "bought a pig in a poke" because the Senate refused to ratify what President Wilson had agreed to.

It is true that European politicians were very critical of this action of the Senate for many years afterward, and that they do not yet like our method of negotiating international agreements, through the President with the advice and consent of the Senate as provided for by the Constitution. But it must be remembered that at the time of the Versailles negotiations, the powers of Europe had ample notice that the Senate, as representative of the American people was not in accord with Mr. Wilson's ideas of putting our country into the League of Nations. So they really had no cause for complaint. The fact is that the European nations conduct their treaties through representatives accredited to the government in power and the people are never consulted about the merits or defects

of the treaties. Europe is unable therefore to understand our constitutional provision for the ratification by the Senate, an independent arm of the government, responsible, not to the President, or the Secretary of State, but to the American people.

The argument that the President is always handicapped in treaty making because the Senate is apt to upset the pace will not hold water. There is never any misapprehension, when the negotiation of an international pact is in progress, as to how the American Senate stands on the project. The senators of all political parties at such critical times do not hesitate to express their opinion either at the White House or on the floor of the Senate. If the President takes the wishes of the Senate, as representatives of the people of the various states, into consideration—and there is no reason to believe that Mr. Roosevelt would not do so—then there need be no hesitation or embarrassment about foreign negotiations as traditionally conducted.

The Senate has always been jealous of its treaty control power and there is no reason to believe that it will now surrender any constitutional rights. There will be no crisis like the banking situation to be dealt with when these international negotiations are taken up, and there will be plenty of time for discussion and consultation with Congress. At any rate, this ultra-modern tendency of clothing the chief executive with dictatorial powers will receive a real test when the proposal outlined above comes up in the Senate, if it ever does come up.

LET EUROPE SETTLE IT

Columbus, Ohio, Dispatch: Nearly every measure which will prevent an outbreak of hostilities between major powers is preferable to allowing matters to drift so that conflict becomes inevitable. The use of arms embargoes, however is hardly a preventive, and at best only a temporary palliative. Often they involve nations that might not otherwise become entangled and their usage in the past, even in the recent past, does not recommend their effectiveness in stopping international disputes.

The alarming spread recently of rumors of danger in the historical sore spots of Europe have frightened civilians as well as diplomats. On several frontiers problems have arisen that for the first time since the close of the World War require immediate settlement. The alternative seems to be armed encounter. They are not the type of spectre that is laid to rest by mere threats of the arms embargo tripe. They demand fundamental treatment of the kind that insofar as is possible will permanently eradicate them.

The problems are essentially of European nature, involving the ramifications brought about by the rapidly rising Fascist middle Europe. The questions at issue, therefore, should be settled by Europe. American opinion doubtless will be sought, but should be carefully given as, in the main, history does not show that it will be taken in the spirit offered and it might prove ill-advised in the end for the United States. If Europe is aligning itself into two hostile camps, as it has so frequently done in the past, there is no reason for the United States to decide yet which camp it will favor, and antagonize other nations of Europe by the embargo threat. The issues are not clear enough to justify such a course.

THE AMERICAN VILLAGE

Philadelphia Public Ledger: One phase of the rural trend of population which has been almost overlooked is considered in a monograph on rural social trends just published by former President Hoover's Committee on Social Trends. That phase is the steady growth of the rural villages.

Not all the population drift out of the cities has been to the farms. America has a larger sector of citizens who cannot be classed as city dwellers, nor yet as farmers. They are those who live in the small towns, the tradesmen, the professional workers, the common laborers. During the years from 1920 to 1930 when the strictly farming population was rapidly losing ground, the rural village population steadily gained. In 1920 there were approximately 20,000,000 Americans living in villages. In 1930 this number had risen to 23,600,000. Meanwhile, the farms had lost only 1,300,000. So more than half the gain in village population came from elsewhere than the surrounding farms.

Since 1930 the upward trend of farm population has more than made up the losses during the 1920s. But the migration has not all been to the farms. The villages have continued to grow. And today more than one-quarter of the nation's population lives neither on the farms nor in the cities, but in the villages, a point which cannot be ignored in any social planning nor even in any economic program for the future. The American villages and village life are major factors in any national problem.

ECONOMIC HIGHLIGHTS

There is a new attitude abroad in

the land. This began to be seen some months ago, and came to culmination with the bank holidays and their subsequent reopening. Where the average citizen was once frankly dubious as to the future of the country, he now believes that recovery is in the process of starting—that bottom actually has been reached, and that we are ready for the up-climb. Partisan politics has been forgotten. Practically unanimous support is being given the Roosevelt Administration by newspapers and individuals of all shades of political opinion.

The Administration's stand on gold hoarding is producing even better results than were anticipated. When the banks opened queues of people stood in lines at tellers' windows—not to withdraw money, but to deposit gold coin and certificates. Hundreds of millions of dollars of gold has been returned to circulation.

Under the present banking plan, no bank can issue gold or gold certificates without express permission from the Treasury Department. However, gold is coming out of hoarding so rapidly that it is even forecast this stipulation may be removed within a short time.

The President expects to have his \$500,000,000 economy drive actually in operation by the end of March. Savings are to be made as follows: \$280,000,000 from reduced veterans' compensations; \$120,000,000 in lowered salaries; \$100,000,000 thru governmental reorganization.

Economy is the first step toward a balanced budget. Other aids, in the President's belief, will be about \$125,000,000 in new revenue from beer, and \$150,000,000 from a renewal of the federal gasoline tax.

The number of men who will be put to work by legalized beer and the amount of taxes accruing to the government, are moot, much-debated subjects. Even taking the lowest figures, a considerable amount of employment and taxation will be provided. One question is, what influence will legal beer have on home brewing? It is certain that if beer were overtaxed, and a price of fifteen cents or so a glass made necessary, sales would be small. Under the Administration bill, it is forecast that beer will be sold at its old price of five cents a glass, fifteen cents a bottle—unless, of course, states and municipalities overtax it on their own account.

Salient features of President Roosevelt's unemployment program are: A \$500,000,000 unemployment relief appropriation to be used in internal improvements and the establishment of camps for the unemployed engaged on government work; expansion of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to permit loans at lower interest; reforestation of marginal lands in the Tennessee Valley and elsewhere, etc.

It was expected that prices—security, particularly—would rise at the end of the bank moratorium, because of renewed confidence and new money in circulation. Prices did—and, to the surprise of some, are apparently holding to their new levels, an extremely encouraging sign.

Commodity prices also showed a general disposition to rise. It is difficult to present a survey of business conditions in general, because of the brief time that has elapsed since the holidays, and the fact that a period must pass before improvement, even if started, is reflected in business statistics.

Late reports on major industries show:

Steel—Good resistance to banking crisis demonstrated. Operations have been downward, but not so intensely as was feared.

Automobile—Much optimism felt. It is believed that the growing public desire to convert money into goods will be a boom to the industry. Sales strong before moratorium—reports since too incomplete to be reliable.

Oil—Conditions still chaotic, due to excess of production over consumption, prices at low levels. Stronger measures of control over production in major producing areas anticipated.

Copper—Production in 1932 was 240,000 tons, consumption 300,000 tons. This is indicative of the position of the industry now. Production has been regulated to demand; principal problem is surplus stocks on hand which at end of last year totaled 650,000 tons.

Retail Trade—Sharp improvement occurred recently, and sentiment more hopeful than for some time past.

Prices for Farm Products have strengthened, in accord with the general trend.

A NEW FARM AID BILL

The so called administration farm aid bill has been forced through the house of representatives with little debate and no amendments. It now goes to the senate where it is not so certain that it will have easy sailing. The debate in the senate is expected to furnish one of the first faint signs that President Roosevelt's political honeymoon is coming to an end.

Just what the proposed farm aid bill will do when put into practice, nobody seems to know. Even some of its sponsors are not sure about it. President Roosevelt himself has characterized the bill as an experiment in the field of agricultural relief. The democratic chairman of the house agricultural committee refused to sponsor the bill and it had to be turned over to the next statesman in line on the committee.

As Oliver McKee, Jr., stated recently in the Boston Transcript, "seldom has a bill with fewer real supporters been laid before Congress yet with a better chance of going through that body than the Roosevelt farm bill. Frankly experimental, the measure will nevertheless commit the federal government to a policy that may prove expensive to the consumers and very difficult to abandon."

The purpose of the bill as described by Secretary Wallace is to increase the purchasing power of the farmers. The method is that of restoring the balance between production and consumption as quickly as possible. In terms of price, the goal is pre-war parity between the things the farmer sells, and the things the farmer buys. To reach that goal, the bill confers upon the Secretary of Agriculture for one year, the following powers:

First, through with the farmers, to obtain a voluntary reduction, producers will be compensated by means of rental or benefit payments.

Second, to enter into marketing agreements with producers, marketing agencies and processors of farm products.

Third, to license processors and distributing agencies that handle agricultural products in interstate or foreign commerce, if licensing proves necessary to achieve the aims of the bill.

Fourth, to use the Smith cotton option plan on the 1933 cotton crop.

Fifth, to impose taxes on the processing of the basic farm products. The amount of this tax, Wallace declares, cannot be greater than that required to bring the market price up to the pre-war price.

Just what the results of the bill will be if enacted into law as it passed the House, remains to be seen. Certainly a great many students of economics, inside Congress and out, view it as entirely impractical and one which will be burdensome to the consumers and expensive to the taxpayers. Some of the farm leaders themselves are not sure of its results.

If the Roosevelt leaders can by this

or some other magic pull the farmers of the country out of the depression they will deserve a vote of thanks from the entire nation. They are, however, taking a long chance. For if the bill is enacted into law and should cause an increase in the cost of living, as it seems bound to do, without any benefit to the farmers themselves, the political effects will be disastrous to the Democrats in the congressional elections next year.

Since the government embargo was placed on gold on March 4, 1933, the sum of five hundred and three million dollar has been turned into the federal reserve banks of the country.

SAFEGUARDS.

Indianapolis News: Some one in Cleveland is urging safeguards for the investor, while Chicago lawyers are interested in safeguards for promoters

A SCOTT BUDGETEER.

Cincinnati Times-Star: An Arizona Scotchman named Douglas will be the next director of the budget; that ought to mean something.

TOO BAD IT CAN'T BE DONE.

Detroit Free Press: If it is true that Congress costs the country \$125,000 a day when it is in session, we know a way it could help balance the budget.

NOTHING OUT OF THE WAY.

Indianapolis News: A Kansas senator complained that gunmen had been seen about his home, but after he has been in Washington long enough he will realize that they may have been only law-abiding bootleggers.

Visitor—I understand that you people raise a lot of young chicks in an incubator?

Poultryman—Oh, yes, lots of 'em. Visitor—But don't you think that is cruelty to animals? How would you like to call a wooden box mother? —Pathfinder.

CHURCH NOTES

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Sunday School 10:00 Mr. Sauers, Superintendent.

Morning Worship 11:00—"Fleeting Shadows."

Young People's C. E. 6:45.

Evening Service 7:30—"Investing Life."

We were glad to see the fine attendance last Sunday. If you were absent try to be with us next Sunday. We expect to have our male chorus to sing. There will be other musical numbers.

H. D. Johnson, Pastor.

SUNDAY SCHOOL NOTES

The Veteran general missionary of the American Sunday School Union, Rev. E. E. Dillon of York, Nebr., has been placed on the Retirement List by his society after a service extending over thirty years.

Mr. Harry E. Udd, missionary for the past five years at McCook, Nebr., has been appointed to succeed Rev. Dillon and will make his headquarters at Grand Island. We bespeak for Mr. Udd a warm reception when calling upon our many interested friends in Sunday School Work.

S. Hallgrimson, Missionary.

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