

SEEN and HEARD around the NATIONAL CAPITAL By Carter Field FAMOUS WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT



Washington.—There is more unanimity in private conversations among both Democrats and Republicans, New Dealers and reactionaries—that the silver policy of the United States government is wilder than on any other controversial subject, probably.

There is not so much public criticism of it, for various reasons, mostly concerning the electoral votes of certain strategic western states.

But the truth is that no one explains it satisfactorily, probably because it is rather difficult for anyone to explain something he does not understand, and the only two persons credited with understanding the silver policy are President Roosevelt and Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau. Neither of them does any talking, if one expects the occasional retort of Morgenthau that he is "still buying silver" and is "carrying out the mandates of the silver law."

The most intelligent theory as to the actions of the administration runs something like this:

First, it was forced on the administration. Had it not been accepted, the probability is that congress would have rushed through some other inflation measure. It is not impossible that congress might have forced the use of printing press money to finance governmental needs, and pay the national debt, as many advocated.

Second, having accepted the silver law, the idea of a tremendous profit to the treasury developed in the minds of Roosevelt and Morgenthau. They had just made a profit in gold for the treasury of some thing like two billion, eight hundred million dollars. Incidentally six hundred million is still in the treasury, and two billion was converted into the famous mysterious equalization fund, about which, like the silver policy, nobody knows anything except Roosevelt and Morgenthau, and they won't tell.

Profit Looked Good

So the idea of making a profit on silver of about two billion, to be made by buying and commanding silver cheap, and reselling it later—as gold was resold—at a much higher price, was very appealing.

Up to this point, as a matter of fact, there is no doubt about the precise accuracy of what happened. Now comes the more nebulous part.

Having conceived the idea of a big profit, obviously the more cheaply silver can be bought, the greater the profit would be. So every now and then Morgenthau would act as though the silver buying policy had been abandoned. This always resulted in the price of silver falling, and from the standpoint of accumulating a lot of silver at a low price, everything was splendid. With the exception that the government has nearly always, since the policy started, paid more for newly mined silver produced in this country than the world price.

But as a result of his clever stratagems to convince the world silver holders that the price was not going to advance, the world gradually came to the conclusion that the whole silver price boosting objective of this government had vanished. So the world, believing the price of silver would fall as soon as the silver experiments of the United States were concluded, began to dump silver.

With the result that if the United States tomorrow abandoned its whole silver policy (which it positively will not) the result would be a rather heavy loss to the treasury on its silver operations to date.

Whereas, if Morgenthau had complied with the spirit of the silver law, and kept up a brave front of forcing the price of silver up, the world would not be dumping silver now, but holding it for the alleged objective mentioned in the silver law—\$1.29 an ounce.

Substitute for NRA

President Roosevelt is still convinced that there must be a substitute for NRA. Further, he is still convinced that an essential part of the advance program is to convince the American people that business cannot work out a satisfactory substitute—that it must be imposed by the government.

This is the status despite the obvious fiasco of Maj. George L. Berry's conference, which was far from being satisfactory to the President, in that the major did not succeed in anything like the desired extent in simulating an impression of fairness.

No one inside the administration criticizes Major Berry's motives, nor his advance plan. There is a good deal of undercover criticism, however, of his lack of tact in handling the situation that developed.

Critics admit that they do not blame Berry for his frame of mind when the big meet was called to order. They know all about the preliminary meetings of groups of business men, the obvious desire of a great many industries to sabotage

the whole movement, and the fact that many had actually come with more intention of stirring up trouble than of aiding in any conciliatory agreement or co-ordination of the various viewpoints.

So when several of the business representatives started the fireworks, they typified for Berry the spearhead of the whole force he was fighting against, and he lashed out.

It would have been much better, critics point out, had Berry restrained his feelings, and after reminding the conference that nothing was on the agenda for this meeting but his outlining speech, then announced the meeting adjourned, but invited those who wished to talk to organize their own meeting and go ahead.

This would have left the business representatives who wanted to obstruct free to talk their heads off, but no particular harm to any administration objective would have been done.

Fared Speeches

Berry's own objection to this course was that speeches would be made at such a meeting, which might have "stolen the headlines" in the next day's papers. His critics admit this, but insist that the net result of the speeches would have been to show more conclusively than anything else could possibly have done the difficulty business representatives would have had in getting together.

Two courses are now open to the administration, and decision as to which will be followed will be made by Mr. Roosevelt himself.

One thing is absolutely essential to either course. The face of Major Berry must be saved.

One course would be to allow Major Berry to take all the letters he has had from business men of various shades of opinion, work them out, and finally produce a report recommending specific legislation for a substitute NRA.

Despite widespread objections to the whole idea of NRA on the part of many business men—especially since prices have begun to rise—plenty of justification could be produced in these letters in Major Berry's possession for such a course.

It is true that some of the letter writers have since changed their minds. A great many business men wanted some form of NRA restored while prices were still low. They wanted some form of government protection against chiselers. Now that prices are rising, the danger to their own selfish interests is not so frightening. So they would like to get rid of government interference and supervision, now that they no longer need, as they see it, its protection.

Hoover Vs. Borah

Will Herbert Hoover's strength at the Republican national convention be sufficient to stop William E. Borah's nomination if the Idaho Lion gets going good?

That question is being asked in many political circles, both Democratic and Republican, since the recent radio blast of the veteran lone wolf of the American house of lords.

As a matter of fact, up until that speech, you could not find a Republican in Washington who really believed Senator Borah had a chance for the nomination. This was true despite the paucity of available timber for the G. O. P. nomination, and despite the fact that Borah has been running first in nearly every poll taken, beginning with that of Robert H. Lucas many months ago.

Borah was simply set aside for two reasons. One was his age. He will be seventy-one on June 23, next, just after the convention adjourns. The other was the strong group of individuals high in Republican ranks who object vigorously to his nomination.

Herbert Hoover is in a way the head and front of this group, but it is very large, and important. The opposition of those composing it is based on two things. Borah's political and economic philosophy, and what they call his "undependability."

A very prominent magazine editor has told many Republican leaders of his own negotiations with Borah for a long series of articles. The fees for the articles were to be huge. There was no limitation on what he could say—no attempt to dictate policies. Borah, the editor says, was frankly attracted by the money and the opportunity to reach such a large audience so easily. But he reluctantly declined the offer.

His explanation is the whole point. One article might be all right. Two might be right. But over such a period of time as was involved he was likely to change his views so radically that the later articles might contradict the earlier!

It is this, rather than Borah's political philosophy, which today causes most of the opposition on the part of Republican leaders to Borah.

Stratosphere Flight



Explorer II Rising from the Stratosphere.

Prepared by National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.—WNU Service.

THE Explorer II, balloon of the National Geographic Society, army air corps stratosphere flight, which rose to a record altitude of more than 73,000 feet on Armistice day, was the largest free balloon ever built. Commanded by Capt. Albert W. Stevens, who also was the scientific observer, and piloted by Capt. Orvil Anderson, both of the army air corps, the balloon soared more than two miles farther into the upper air than the previous official altitude record (61,237 feet), made by Lieut. Commander T. G. W. Settle of the navy and Maj. Chester Fordney of the marine corps, on November 20, 1933. The unofficial balloon altitude record prior to the flight of the Explorer II was 72,200 feet, made by Russian balloonists.

If a tent were made from the bag of the Explorer II 20,000 men could find standing room beneath it, with space to spare. It will cover about two and two-thirds acres of ground, or 115,845 square feet. It has a capacity of 3,700,000 cubic feet of gas. This is 23 per cent larger than the capacity of the Explorer I, used on the 1934 National Geographic Society air corps stratosphere flight and at that time the record-breaker for size.

If fully inflated on a football field the Explorer would cover more than the total width of the gridiron and about two-thirds of its length. A building more than eleven stories high and of equal width and depth could be placed easily inside it.

The big bag is made of cotton fabric, treated repeatedly with rubber until it is gas-tight. The gondola, and its four-and-one-half-ton load of men, instruments and ballast, was suspended from a catenary band or girdle cemented to the lower part of the balloon.

Moor'd With Seven Miles of Rope.

Seven miles of rope, enough to reach from the earth to the stratosphere, were used to moor the giant bag during its inflation and until the time of the take off.

The balloon was inflated with helium gas, which could not burn or explode. Instead of the hydrogen gas used in the Explorer I, only about 200,000 cubic feet of helium, about 7 per cent of the balloon's capacity, was let into the bag at the start. As the balloon rose it expanded until at a height of about 12 miles it filled out the entire balloon into the shape of a perfect sphere.

After the balloon became spherical and the helium continued to expand there was no danger of the bag bursting because the excess gas escaped through four appendages in the bottom. These are tubular openings like inverted chimneys, 17 feet long and 7½ feet in diameter.

The gas in the balloon was controlled by two valves of a type invented by Captain Stevens. Operated by compressed air somewhat as air brakes are operated, the valves were controlled from within the gondola. They could be used to let gas escape from the top of the balloon when it was desired to halt the ascent temporarily, or to hasten the descent toward earth.

The gondola of the Explorer II which housed the crew and precious scientific instruments is a big nine-foot bubble made of magnesium alloy, thin but strong. Though nearly as strong as steel, the metal used in the sphere is less than one-fourth as heavy. It is the world's lightest structural metal. Even aluminum is half again as heavy.

Such extreme lightness enabled the balloon to go thousands of feet higher in its ascent than would have been the case if the gondola were made of heavier metal.

New Lightweight Metal.

This lightweight champion of the metals is a comparatively new bit of modern chemical magic. It contains 95 per cent pure magnesium, one of the lightest of substances. The magnesium is obtained from deep-buried supplies of salt water, or brine, pumped from wells at Midland, Mich., by the Dow Chemical company.

Though it appears hard and shiny like any other metal when fashioned into the material for the gondola, magnesium ground or

shaved into bits also can burn with a brilliant light. It was used in photographers' flashlight powder before electric flashlamps were developed, and in flares dropped by aviators at night during the World war to illuminate the ground for bombing and photography.

Despite its light weight, the magnesium alloy needs a thickness of only three-sixteenths of an inch to give it sufficient strength for the stratosphere balloon gondola. It carried into the stratosphere on the flight a load of two men, more than a ton of scientific apparatus and thousands of pounds of ballast.

In tests it withstood strains five times as great as it was called upon to bear during the flight. During the flight it was subjected not only to the load but the strain of air pressure inside that was far greater than that outside.

Walls of the gondola are made of rolled plates of magnesium alloy welded together. The hatches are castings of the same material. The entire gondola, with its metal floor, hatch covers and a metal arm from which some instruments were suspended, weighed 635 pounds.

Sunny, Calm and Cold.

In the stratosphere, it has been discovered, continuous sunshine reigns, with no storms, clouds, raios or fogs. But—it is about 80 degrees below zero! Also in this paradoxical region of the upper air the sky is so blue that it is almost black and sounds are strangely faint and feeble.

No summer resort on earth can equal the sunshine and calm of stratosphere days. The sun shines from rising to setting every day, with a brilliance unknown on earth, for there is little air to dim its rays. Practically no water vapor exists in the stratosphere, so there can be no clouds to shut out the sun, and hence no rain or fog. The turbulent air currents nearer the earth also are missing, so storms are non-existent.

But even with this perfect weather overhead, the stratosphere is far from being an ideal vacation spot. It is as cold as the desolate polar regions of the earth. A temperature of nearly 80 degrees below zero Fahrenheit was recorded in 1934, both on the first National Geographic Society flight to the stratosphere and in the Antarctic on the second Byrd expedition. And again on November 11, 1935, the Explorer II found a similar temperature. The air is so thin in the stratosphere that a man would suffocate and die there unless artificially supplied with oxygen.

The stratosphere is one of the earth's newest frontiers, a region of cold air 20 miles or more thick, surrounding our globe as the skin surrounds an orange. It hangs above the earth at a height ranging from ten miles at the equator to seven miles in the latitude of the United States, while over the poles it may hang lower still.

Its bottom is the level at which the air above the earth stops growing colder. Every one knows that the air grows colder as one climbs higher on a mountain or in an airplane, and scientists, formerly believed the coldness steadily increased with altitude. But about 37 years ago it was found that the temperature ceased to drop at a height of seven to ten miles, and remained about the same as far up as could be measured with thermometers attached to small balloons.

Man Couldn't Live There.

The stratosphere always stays at approximately the same low temperature because the heat that its air absorbs is almost exactly balanced by the heat it radiates away. It is colder in winter than in summer, but strangely enough it is colder above the equator than nearer the poles.

A man suddenly taken to the stratosphere could no more live than he could in the depths of the sea. Not only is there much too little oxygen to keep him alive, but the tissues of his body would tend to expand because the pressure inside his body would be far greater than that outside. The crew of the Explorer II was sealed in a gondola and supplied with artificial air by an air-conditioning unit, just as is the crew of a submarine.

MERE MAN

By BARBARA BENEDICT
Associated Newspapers
WNU Service.

FRANCINE DERRY faced her mother. Grim determination, defiance and rebellion were written in her face.

"Mother, I'm going to tell him." "Tell him what, dear?" Mrs. Derry looked a little frightened, but she smiled sweetly, nevertheless.

One of the best things that Mrs. Derry did was to smile sweetly. "I'm going to tell Count Stefano that I don't love him, that the only reason I proposed to him was because you wanted me to."

"You're going to do no such thing." "Yes, mother, I am."

"But, my dear child, do you realize what you're saying? Tell Count Stefano that you don't love him! Indeed! Why—it would ruin everything! Oh, such ingratitude, such thoughtlessness! And after all my planning and scheming so that you could marry well. Money and a title! Think of it! And, apparently it means no more to you than a puff of wind. Francine, I forbid you to do such a foolhardy thing!"

"Forbidding, mother, won't stop me. I—I'm a little fed up with your always forbidding and demanding, forever trying to run my life. I'm sorry, mother, but this time I'm not going to permit you to stand in the way of my happiness."

"Your happiness? Francine, there is something behind this. You're—you're in love with some one else. That secretary! Count Stefano's secretary. Oh, my Lord! That—that person! Francine, I will not tolerate disobedience!"

Mrs. Derry cut her sentence short because the door slammed. She found herself alone, staring rather stupidly at the door through which her daughter had vanished.

After a moment she started forward, stopped, turned, seemed to the point of swooning but instead sank wearily into a chair, moaning.

Belowstairs, Francine was searching the hotel lobby. Her search resulted in failure, and she went outside onto the terrace. Presently her eyes fell on a young man in sports coat and flannels, sprawled comfortably in a lawn chair. She marched up to him, and spoke unhesitatingly and evenly.

"Count Stefano. I've decided I can't marry you. I'm sorry. I know it will be useless to explain that it's because I'm not in love with you. But—I'm an American, the sort of American who has to be in love with a man in order to marry him."

Count Stefano uncoiled his long legs and stood up. He smiled. "Francine, I'm ashamed to admit I didn't think you had it in you. Forgive me for my mistake. As you say in America, 'but'er there!'" And he held out his hand.

Francine swallowed hard. She stared in wide-eyed amazement.

"You—you mean you don't care?" "That isn't the point. The point is, I appreciate your being honest. I wouldn't want you to marry me if you didn't love me."

"Why, that's grand!" Francine smiled, a little weakly. "That's—grand! We can be—friends, then?" "Nothing would make me happier."

The corners of the count's mouth twitched.

"I'd like to be friends with both you—and your mother." For an instant the two stared into each other's eyes. After a moment impulsively, Francine laughed.

"Count Stefano—Steve—you and I had a date to play golf this afternoon. Shall we keep it?" "Keep it? My dear girl. I wouldn't let you break it for anything."

And so Count Stefano and Francine played golf as previously arranged.

vague, unaccountable feeling of regret that still persisted in asserting itself. It puzzled her, yet she could not escape it.

Thus two weeks passed. Francine and Count Stefano were seen much in each other's company, more, in fact, than heretofore.

Oddly, Mrs. Derry did not carry on in the manner in which Francine had been afraid she might.

The older woman was, on the contrary, quite charming and pleasant of manner, and gradually it dawned on the girl that her mother was unaware that she had broken her engagement with the count.

Thinking about it, Francine knew that her mother believed she had reconsidered her rash decision, and had herself decided not to speak of the matter again for fear of creating unnecessary unpleasantness.

This in itself was rather distressing, and Francine awoke to the fact that sooner or later something would have to be done.

Mrs. Derry would have to be told. The business, however, was settled in a somewhat unexpected though not wholly surprising manner.

She had gone sailing with Count Stefano and they were returning home in the mellow light of a perfect June evening.

Steve had the tiller and Francine was by his side.

Suddenly she looked up at him and said: "It's been grand knowing you, Steve. Tomorrow mother and I are going away."

"Away? Why, I had no idea you were leaving so soon." "Nor did we. I—we—decided last night we'd have to go sooner than we expected."

"I see. Well, I'll miss you, Fran. I'll always remember our friendship." "Will you, Steve?"

"I won't be able to help it." He laughed, a laugh which ended in a sigh.

"Sometimes I wish I weren't a count—nothing but a mere man. Then you wouldn't have had to tell me that you couldn't marry me."

"Why, Steve, that wasn't why—" She broke off, realizing that she had spoken without thinking.

He turned quickly. "Francine! . . . You didn't think for a minute that I didn't know why you had promised to marry me, did you?"

"Of course. I mean—why, Steve, you wouldn't have married me, knowing that that was my reason?" "Wouldn't I? I wish you'd given me the chance! I'd have married you any way at all."

There was a haunting, desperate look in his eyes, and Francine felt something clutch at her heart. She said:

"Then, take me as I am, darling, because the only reason I confessed to you was because I loved you too much to even be the least bit dishonest. I wanted to tell you, in case mother ever mentioned the matter. I wanted you to know—and I've been regretting telling you ever since, because it occurred to me that now I could never have you and—"

The sentence was never finished, because Steve had her in his arms. But there was no need for finishing it. It would have been a waste of words and there were more important things to talk about.

Monte Cristo Increases the Finances of France

Although Edmond Dantes, the dashing Count of Monte Cristo, never existed, this imaginary nobleman produces real money every year for the cash box of France. Since 1926 this yearly sum has been 40,500 francs, but beginning with 1935 the French treasury began to benefit to the extent of 112,100 francs a year out of the fame of Monte Cristo.

Wedding Dress

By JANE ALLEN
McClure Newspaper Syndicate
WNU Service.

DORA MADDEN, entering the cold interior of the Style Shop on that stifling August day, felt her frayed nerves soothed by the subtle atmosphere of luxury which pervaded Madame Andre's little establishment. Here she was surrounded by an almost bewildering array of beautiful fabrics and colors—she, Dora Madden, who had known so little of lovely things!

A salesgirl approached her. "Something for you, madam?" It was a crisp young voice, and the girl herself was crisp and capable. Dora's request, however, brought the thingly plucked eyebrows together in a tiny frown.

"A wedding dress," she repeated. Let me see . . .

Something in white, you know," Dora elucidated. Simple, but stylish. And not too expensive."

Swiftly, expertly, the other appraised her customer. Fairly good figure without much style. Pale eyes and hair. The prospect of white satin against such a sallow complexion caused her to shudder inwardly. If only the woman had chosen to be married in blue!

This way, please," she said smiling. Her high-heeled pumps preceded Dora's sensible shoes down the length of soft carpet to an open glass showcase filled with snowy satins and mousselines de soie.

In the fitting room Dora stood at last before the long tripe mirror in a dress which thrilled her with its beauty and simplicity. A dream of a dress in satin and lace, a cloudy veil caressing her head and falling about her shoulders in a shimmering cascade. Not such fine satin, some women might have said; to Dora the perfect wedding gown as she had always pictured it for herself.

She observed the skirt critically. It was a trifle long, perhaps, but such small alterations were simple. One hand strayed to the veil of soft illusion and she reflected wistfully that it would be ever so much prettier against dark hair—dark, softly waving hair. Her straight blonde bob appeared dull and lifeless under the bright glare of the lights.

Even so, the sight of her slim reflection brought a brief sensation of pleasure. Strange not to have known before that she had a good figure. A pity not to have afforded pretty, well made dresses. . . .

Dora bit her lip on a quick sigh, took a little turn about the room. "Ted will like it," she told herself. Important, was it not, that the bridegroom should be pleased with the bridal gown? Remembering Ted's face—with its deep blue eyes and boyish smile—blurred her consciousness.

How really terrible it was to love a man so much!

Turning to the salesgirl she said, "I think I'll decide on this one. It's very beautiful."

The other stepped up smiling, to help her change. "Yes, it's a most attractive model," she said briskly.

"I mustn't forget the orange blossoms," Dora was thinking as she recalled Lydia's letter.

A sweet girl, Lydia, and her favorite student from the very beginning. Just a carefree child of the mountains two years ago at sixteen; now so suddenly a slim, tall young woman with the smokiness of the hills in her lovely eyes.

Ted used to call her a "fine kid." To both of them Lydia had been a sort of protegee, a strong bond of common interest. She had crept so often into their conversations as they talked together over the dying embers of a dozen campfires or during long hikes through the woods. Lydia was talented, Lydia had promise—she must, somehow, be sent to college, receive real advantages.

But it was not always of the students that they had talked.

As Dora, garbed once more in her cheap brown silk, returned to the front of the shop, memories were taking her back to that golden afternoon in autumn when Ted had described to her those three years of teaching in the little school before her arrival; his long fight back to health in the hills following a serious breakdown; his growing love for the mountains which had finally decided him in the choice of a life-work.

"These people are real—this country is real," he had confided with characteristic enthusiasm. "It somehow gets hold of you after a while. I could never be satisfied anywhere else now."

And Dora had realized that day that she should be happy there forever, too, with him.

Mound Building Birds

The birds known as mound builders, in the East Indies, take no care of their young. Babies hatch by heat of the sun and start flying after a day or two.