

Washington Digest

Payroll Deductions Seen As Direct Inflation Cure

'Seven Keys to Economic Security' Won't Carry War-Cost Load Unless American Public Takes Voluntary Precautions.

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The war may cost Mr. John Q. Taxpayer an extra seventy-five billion dollars—\$75,000,000,000 (written that way it looks more like what it really is.) If it does, it will mean that this country will go through a depression that will make the black '30s look like a June day.

That is the warning sounded by the Office of War Information. All we have to do to realize this is to look back to the period of the last war, when the cost of living rose 63 per cent between 1914 and Armistice day, 1918—and kept right on going up for nearly two years. Those were the days of 67-cent butter and 92-cents-a-dozen eggs. Then came the crash. Hundreds of thousands of farmers lost their lands. Five million workers lost their jobs.

The cost of the war was partly to blame, of course. When other prices went up, the war-cost increased by 13½ billions. On that basis, it is estimated that if prices run away now, it will mean a 75-billion dollar rise in the war debt. This time, of course, the government has tried to put on the brakes, but the brakes are already smoking. The seven "keys to economic security"—the checks on the cost of living are all right, but they won't hold the load unless the public takes certain voluntary precautions. If it doesn't, stricter regulation must come. Some are bound to come anyhow.

Let's look at those seven keys and see if they are really locking the door against inflation.

The first is "tax heavily"—keep personal and corporate profits at a reasonable rate. Well, you have to define "reasonable." Profits, wages and salaries are high. The current tax law, although it is better than expected by many persons, does not do the job, according to fiscal experts in Washington.

The next "key" is the price ceilings.

According to Price Administrator Henderson, the cost of price-controlled foods fell seven-tenths of 1 per cent in the two months after May, 1942, while uncontrolled foods went up 7.3 per cent. Now all prices are "stabilized," but last month in order to assure maximum food production, the ceiling on farm wages was raised and a bloc in congress began agitating for a rise in the ceiling on farm prices. Certain civilian manufactured goods are caught between the ceiling and the cost of raw materials and may burst the bounds, too.

Wage Standardization

The next brake on inflation is stabilization of wages. That was achieved by the freezing of wages, but allowances had to be made for the people not getting a living wage. Then the labor shortage in war industries made it necessary to call upon women to fill the gap, and women had to get the same pay for the same work, which seems fair enough. That put more money into pocketbooks—and, of course, put more people on payrolls.

Another stabilization move was rationing certain commodities. That, of course, is effective as far as it goes, but it covers a limited field.

Then there were the voluntary measures—which haven't worked so well and which provide the real outlet for the possible boost in all costs in spite of the artificial checks. Citizens were urged to buy war bonds, to save their money instead of buying things they didn't need, to pay off their old debts and refrain from making new ones.

So far voluntary methods have not been successful. There is a limit to which a democratic country can go in regulating the lives of the people. It was hard enough to get the nationwide gasoline rationing through, but finally it was accepted. Perhaps when the public "understands" it will be willing to save instead of spend, but financial experts in and out of the government predict that compulsory savings is the next key on the list.

Recently I talked with a hard-headed official. He does not direct the fiscal policy of the government, but he is indirectly concerned with national finance. He picked up a chart on his desk. "This is not



WHO'S NEWS This Week

By Lemuel F. Parton

Consolidated Features.—WNU Release.

NEW YORK. — With the gold standard sidetracked by a strong-arm economy all over the world, Nellie Tayloe Ross, director

of the mint, was becoming the forgotten woman. In the

Niebelungen legend, old Phafnir could sit on his Rhein gold and there wasn't much more for Mrs. Ross to do with our frozen \$23,000,000,000 horde at Fort Knox and West Point. But there are signs of a thaw, and gold may be moving again in considerable quantities. Lieut. Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower took a considerable supply of \$20 gold pieces to Africa.

Never in history has a sound gold coin lost its sheen or its allure, and since expediency is now uppermost in our world diplomacy, as it is always in wartime, it won't hurt Uncle Sam to be known as the old gent with \$23,000,000,000 in his buckskin wallet. Just now, with staff and scrip, he fares far in hungry lands where gold pieces clink and click more convincingly than a thesis on managed economy. And, traditionally, he is apt to say, "This is on me."

Mrs. Ross won't decree new gold coinage or deploy strategic gold pieces to help win the war, and there is no suggestion that we will buy our way through.

Suffrage is now 24 years old and Mrs. Ross, first woman governor of an American state when she was elected to succeed her deceased husband in Wyoming in 1925, was out in front with Mabel Willebrandt, Ruth Bryan Owen, Frances Perkins, Grace Abbott and other capable women who, presumably were to lead a growing phalanx of women into high public office.

Women now have more than one-third of the votes, and their public offices have not come along in that proportion, but Mrs. Ross has stayed on as director of the mint since April, 1933. War has complicated her problems in many ways. War wages boom juke boxes and the way juke boxes wolf nickels is nobody's business.

Mrs. Ross, born in St. Joseph, Mo., in 1877, of Tennessee and Kentucky stock, met her future husband, William Bradford Ross, in Paris, Tenn. He went to Wyoming for his health, opened a law office and went to Omaha and married Miss Tayloe. Their twin boys, George and Ambrose, are grown, and George was a Rhodes scholar.

Mrs. Ross has said she never had any interest or training in politics until she was elected governor, but found that experience as a housewife had been a pretty fair preparation for keeping things in order. By all accounts, she has done a most satisfactory job in running the mint. Each year she alertly supervises the "opening of the pyx." Pyx is Greek for strong box, in this instance a two-by-four oak case in which are deposited 2,000 coins, representative of the year's coinage. In this ancient custom, Mrs. Ross passes on each coin for weight and fineness. That sounds housewifely.

THE job of building our political fences in the Middle East falls to George Wadsworth, career diplomat, one-time schoolmate and lifetime friend of Col. William J. Donovan.

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A Bit on the Humorous Side

Prime Condition
"You haven't looked so well for years, old man!"
"Ah, it's the exercise I get, tossing about in bed at night worrying about the business."

Curious Lad
Golfer—Dear, dear. I'm certainly not playing the game I used to play!
Caddie (disgustedly) — What game was that?

The way some secretaries type the boss' letters is a triumph of mind over matter.

Caught Him
"MacPhersin's a cheat, and I'm not goin' to play golf with him again."
"How's that?"
"Well, how could he have lost his ball a yard from the green when it was in my pocket?"

In Duplicate
Barber—Well, my little man, how do you wish to have your hair cut?
Little Man—I'd like it cut just like my daddy's, and please don't forget to leave that little round hole on the top where his head comes through.

Asking for Trouble
The door of the ladies' hairdressing shop opened and in came a meek-looking little man.
One of the assistants approached him.
"What can I have the pleasure—"
she cooed.
"Er—could you spare me a blonde hair for my shoulder?" he stammered.
"I want to make my wife jealous."

Fell for Her
"Fortune knocks at least once at every man's door."
"That may be. But it was her daughter, Miss Fortune, who called on me."

Orson Welles Introduces Many of Him to a Few

Orson Welles, of "Citizen Kane" fame, once gave a small town lecture. There were but few listeners and no chairman present. So he up and introduced himself in the following fashion:
"I am a director of plays," he said. "I am a producer of plays. I am an actor on the legitimate stage. I am a writer of motion pictures. I am a producer of motion pictures. I write, direct, and act for the radio. I am a magician. I also paint and sketch. I am a publisher. I am a violinist and a pianist. Isn't it a shame that there are so many of me and so few of you?"

Uncle Phil Says:

We Offer the 23rd Psalm

Our language, used by an artist, can produce something as grand as anything heard at a symphony concert. An example: Lincoln's Gettysburg address.

Well-bred people are a delight, and often an object of envy.

We delight to indulgently smile over the peculiarities of the friends we love.

The only fun worth having is the kind that is still funny when you get up the next morning.

It's So Exciting, Too!

Since millions enjoy headlines more than any other part of the newspaper, why not try one that is mostly headlines?

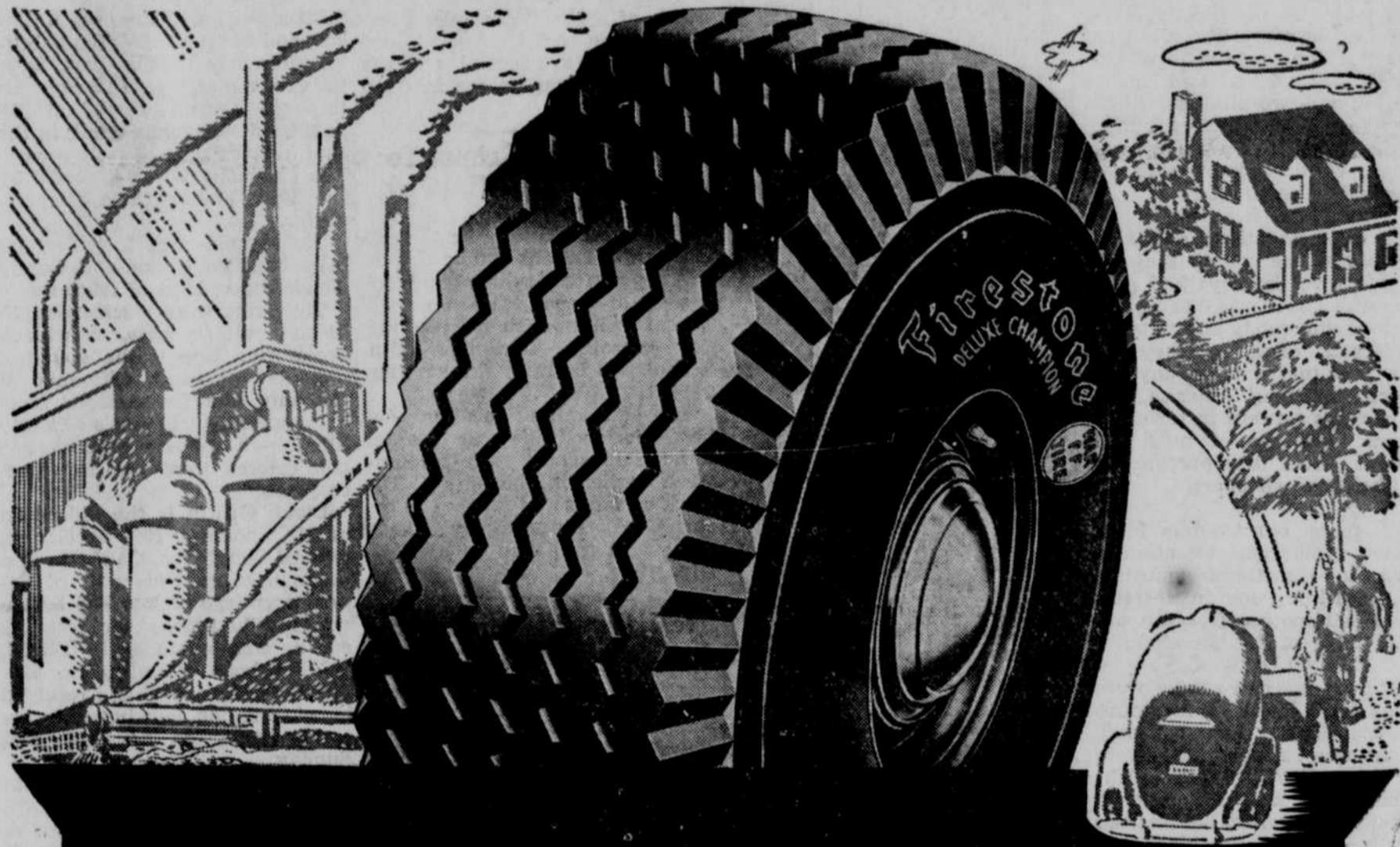
It is often easier for a woman to hold a strong man than her own tongue.

Beauty is only skin deep, and often the look of wisdom, also.

Usually a narrow-minded man doesn't care if he is, and you can't shame him in that.

Our Telephones

In this country today, the 25 associated Bell telephone companies serve 7,128 communities having 18,841,000 telephones, while 6,350 independent companies serve 12,072 communities having 4,609,000 telephones, reports Collier's. In addition, there are more than 60,000 connecting rural lines owned by groups of farmers.



NOW CAR OWNERS CAN BUY THE NEW Firestone WAR TIRE

YES—It's true! If your present tires cannot be recapped, you are eligible to apply for a certificate to buy the new Firestone War Tire no matter whether you hold an "A," "B" or "C" gasoline ration book.

The new Firestone War Tire is now on sale at Firestone Dealers and Firestone Stores. Its construction has been tested and proved by more than two years of service. Naturally, you'd expect Firestone to build the best War Tire that can be built, because Firestone has always been a pioneer in developing new processes and creating new products made from rubber. And with its unequalled background of experience in building tires that successfully withstand the most gruelling tests of durability and safety, it is not surprising that Firestone is building a War Tire with such exclusive features as:

Safti-Lock, Gum-Dipped Cord Body — same construction that has made Firestone Tires so strong, so safe, so durable on the road as well as on the

Speedway. The body of the new Firestone War Tire is built to outwear several treads and can be recapped for thousands of miles of extra service.

Firestone Non-Skid Tread—famous for performance and protection against skidding.

Vitamic Rubber—made by adding a new wear-resisting rubber vitamin, called "Vitalin."

If your present tires can be recapped—be sure to have them recapped by the Firestone Factory Controlled Method. Firestone has the largest system of recapping shops in America, strategically located to give you better service. This nation-wide system is strictly supervised and uniform in workmanship. For longer mileage, bring your tires to us for recapping.

COME IN AND SEE IT! The new Firestone War Tire is now ready for the car owners of America. Your nearby Firestone Dealer or Firestone Store will be glad to help you make out an application for a tire rationing certificate.

PROTECT YOUR TIRE MILEAGE with Firestone LIFE PROTECTORS

For longer mileage and greater safety, equip every tire with a Firestone Life Protector. This amazing double-chambered tube keeps your tire inflated in event of a puncture or a blowout, so that you can stop safely without cutting or slashing the precious tire. Any certificate for a new tube entitles you to buy a Life Protector.

Firestone WAR TIRE		6.00-16
SIZE	LIST PRICE*	13 ²⁵
4.40/4.50-21	9.90	
4.75/5.00-19	9.95	
5.25/5.50-18	11.10	
5.25/5.50-17	12.20	
6.25/6.50-16	16.65	
7.00-15	17.80	
7.00-16	18.25	

*PLUS EXCISE TAX

At Firestone DEALERS and Firestone STORES

Listen in the Voice of Firestone with Richard Crooks, Margaret Spauls and the Firestone Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of Alfred Wallenstein, Monday evenings, over N. B. C.

BRIEFS . . . by Baukhage

In the High Plains section of the country—part of what some people called the "dust-bowl"—some 60,000 families are not only supporting themselves on their reclaimed land, but are growing food and feed crops that are vital to our fight for victory.

The army and the navy needs all the fine feathers and down the country can supply.

It takes 199 pounds of wool, or the fleeces from exactly 26 sheep, to outfit a soldier for the first year. Fortunately, the United Nations control over 90 per cent of the world supply of wool.

At Fort MacArthur, Calif., the camp paper reports they are saying: "All work and no play makes JAP a dead boy."