State Operation of Railroads In Britain Has Pleased Public; Control After War Predicted

Service Is So Much Superior That Many Say the British Public Will Never Consent to Return to Old Conditions, Despite Higher Present Passenger Fares

By P. W. Wilson

[Special Correspondent of the London Daily News.]

In view of the President's speech on the railroad problem, it may interest your readers if I tell at first hand how the government of Great Britain, whence I sailed a fortnight ago, dealt with the same matter. When war broke out it soon became clear that the transport of troops and munitions would involve the Treasury in a huge liability to the companies, and it was therefore arranged that all the systems should be operated by one committee of managers and that the shareholders should receive during the period of control the average dividend which had been declared for the previous three years. This control was afterwards extended to the deep level tubes and more ancient electrified underground railroads of London, and a few weeks ago Sir Albert Stanley, of the Board of Trade, worked out a scheme for unifying control of surface cars on the streets of all our cities, some of them owned by companies and others by municipalities.

The advantage of this scheme is that it secures entire freedom of management for the state, without the risk of immediate and formal purchase.

Purchase Not Practical in War

Railroads in the United Kingdom are capitalized approximately at six billion dollars, and if so large an amount of government paper were added during the war to other government loans there might be a tendency to sell which would embarrass our sinking fund provision. The companies, therefore, remain in being, but on terms which after the war will enable the state, by a simple arithmetical process, to exchange their securities for the equivalent in Treasury stock.

This stock would then rank with the rest of our national debt. The shareholders have had no reason to complain, for they are getting their pre-war dividends, and the only grievance arises in the case of certain companies that, like the Great Central, have long routes, recently opened up, the value of which will only develop as years go on.

Having obtained control, the state authorized drastic changes in management. Competing express trains were eliminated. Even long distance travellers have had to stand for hours in corridors. High speeds were relaxed. Not only was the building of locomotives largely suspended, but hundreds of engines were exported to France and even Egypt, to make good wastages suffered by our ally and to work the extended railroads to connect up with Palestine.

Passenger Fares Raised

Somehow or other, passenger travelling at home had to be cut down, and the method adopted was to raise fares. Our standard rate is two cents a mile third class, with four cents a mile first class. But before the war these nominal or parliamentary rates were a maximum only. Season ticket holders enjoyed a liberal discount. All over the country we had cheaper week-end tickets and thousands of excursion trains at holiday seasons to race meetings, to football and cricket matches and to pleasure resorts. Not only have all these concessions been cancelled, but the ordinary two cents a mile fare has been raised to three cents for all save the shortest distances. Only 100 pounds of baggage may now be carried by travellers, unless they are about to embark on the ocean, and even then they have to pay excess on weight above 100 pounds. Also on most, if not all, routes luncheon and dining cars have been abolished, while freight—unless specially allowed precedence by some government department—has to take a somewhat slim chance.

With the whole country humming for war production, those hardships do not seriously restrict traffic, and undoubtedly the companies are reaping high revenues, the benefit of which, under the arrangements above desribed, goes to the state. But it is not quite true that the state has made a good bargain at the expense of the shareholders. There is another side to the story, and that is labor. Let us look at it.

The Wage Question

Before the war the net revenue of British railroads available for dividends of all kinds was, in round figures, £50,000,000. The companies paid very low wages. About 100,000 out of these 600,000 employes received under £1 a week, and while many of these were porters, who made good on tips, the record was not wholly creditable to our industrial reputation. The practice of the companies was to recruit their workers in the villages, where agricultural labor earned only, say, 16 to 18 shillings a week, and this reservoir of cheap man-power depressed wage rates throughout the entire transport system. When war broke out labor rose to a premium and wage increases have been granted which, up to a few weeks ago, must have involved the companies—that is, the state, which guarantees the companies—in an annual charge of £25,000,000, or half the available fund for dividends. These increases are partly in the shape of war bonuses, but it is easier to concede a war bonus than to bring it to an end. And the boon to labor, however costly, may be regarded as permanent. And it is only a beginning. Further wage concessions, involving several millions, are now certain.

The effect must be either more expensive travel for the public after the war or a state subsidy for railroad capital. Moreover, when the time comes for reconstructing a damaged civilization immense masses of railroad stock must be renewed. All manner of repairs have been postponed. Hundreds on hundreds of miles of track have been shipped off to France and elsewhere. All this will have to be put right.

Socialism is not perhaps a very popular word, but if it means state-ownership, then in Britain they are getting it. Railroads, docks, street cars and 90 per cent. of shipping are virtually commandeered at cost. Add to this the postoffice, the telegraphs, the telephones and the mines, and we are getting very near the ideals preached by apostles like Philip Snowden.

Some Socialist Ideas Sacrificed

But some at least of the aims of the Socialists have been actually sacrificed by state control. Wages may be higher but hours are very long. For millions of people—children going back and forth to school at holiday time, workmen on munitions who are located at a distance from their families, commercial travelers and so on—the fare question is distinctly unpleasant. And the substitution of women for men at booking offices, and as ticket collectors and train conductors is not precisely what the labor unions would have asked for. At the same time we shall never go back to private management. For years that system had been the subject of growing criticism. There were literally millions of rates for freight. Wagons were often owned by private firms, and this necessitated their running for millions of miles a year empty. For so small a country as ours there was obviously no room, except for one railroad system. Yet no such monopoly could come about, except under state limitation of profits.

Goods were often carried by long routes where a short route would have been cheaper. And foreign goods, discharged at ports, were often given preferential rates over domestic products. All this pointed to unification, and what the war has done is merely to hasten an inevitable development.

Wastage of Coal In Loading Cars Laid to Garfield

Attorney, at Senate Inquiry, Says Ton and a Half Is Often Lost in Transit

[Staff Correspondence]

WASHINGTON, Jan. 5.—Fuel Administrator Garfield was accused today of permitting wastage of coal through overloading railroad cars. The attack was made by Stanley B. Houck, attorney for the Northwestern Traffic Service Bureau, before the Senate Committee on Manufactures.

Mr. Houck complained bitterly of being unable to get Dr. Garfield to act on a complaint about waste. He declared that, through some mysterious order purporting to have come from the government, coal cars were overloaded at Illinois mines. In some instances, he asserted, as much as a ton and a half was lost between the points of origin and destination.

"A check on shipments to my clients in the Twin Cities," Mr. Houck said, "showed that from 4½ to 5 per cent was lost in transit. The dealers must stand this loss, which averaged about 27 cents a ton."

Members of the committee appeared to be much interested in the charge that Dr. Garfield had failed to stop this waste. Houck said he had begun complaining in September, and that he still was protesting.

"The fact isn't disputed," he continued. "The fuel administration people tell me they will put a stop to it, but they don't do it."

Mr. Houck also complained of lack of tribunals where justice could be obtained, and also of inability to find out the powers of state and county fuel administrators.

"If you have wrongs give us some specific instances," Senator Jones, of New Mexico, interrupted.

"Two of my clients were arrested," Houck replied, "for selling coal at the price they paid for it, plus their jobber's commission."

The telegram telling of the arrest was exhibited and Senator Reed, of Missouri, asked questions which elicited the information from Mr. Houck that, through dock dealers and retailers, who, previous to the President's proclamation, had contracted for coal at a price higher than that fixed by the President, were permitted to sell at a figure based on the cost, but that jobbers were not.

"Somebody ought to be arrested instead of your client," Reed interjected.

Garfield Gives Way To McAdoo on Priority

[Staff Correspondence]

WASHINGTON, Jan. 5.—Fuel Administrator Garfield to-day took the oath of allegiance of Director General of Railroads McAdoo. Dr. Garfield promised to mend his ways and in the future refrain entirely from issuing priority orders.

Up to this time, when Judge Lovett's priority orders have not pleased the chief of the fuel administration, he has put forth priority orders of his own. In response to numerous queries regarding the continued effectiveness of priority orders issued by the fuel administration, Dr. Garfield stated today:

"By direction of Director General McAdoo, all priority orders heretofore issued with respect to transportation have been suspended, and no further priorities may be claimed thereunder. Future orders for priorities will be issued in emergencies under Mr. McAdoo's direction, as occasion may require."

New Mail Truck Service

WASHINGTON, Jan. 5.—Within three months the Postoffice Department's motor truck parcel post service will be extended, it was announced tonight, to routes totalling between 3,000 and 4,000 miles.

One chain will extend from Portland, Maine, to New Orleans; one will cover a large stretch of territory in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and West Virginia, and others will serve several California cities.

Four Icebound Ships Are Safe

QUEBEC, Jan. 5.—Four American steamships which were caught in the ice fields off Cape Chatte several days ago are as yet undamaged. Four other American vessels have been ordered to winter here, because of the dangers of shipwreck in the ice.

New York Gets Little Relief In Coal Crisis

Continued from page 1

fuel—which marked an absolutely new sphere of social service to be entered upon by the department—will continue to-day. The 386 tons of coal represents the work of approximately 4,000 policemen. The 3,082 families which benefited by the police distribution were not all needy in the sense of lacking funds to purchase fuel; some of them had the means with which to buy, but had tried in vain to spend their money at the empty coal yards.

Police Help the Poor

But they were the actual poor, for the greater part, who benefited most from the work of the police. The first police inspection district, the lower East Side, sent out the largest number of appeals for help—for the canvassers sought not only the names of those willing to give, but also those anxious to receive. In District 1, 1,156 families yesterday received coal that the police had induced luckier and generous citizens to part with.

The coal was distributed and collected in small quantities, sometimes only a mere shovelful at a time. The 1,156 needy families at the lower East Side received only 41 tons of coal all told—a little more than 70 pounds to a family, on the average.

In the Fifth District, the East Side, from Forty-second Street to the Harlem River, 1,113 families were relieved, and they obtained rather more than their neighbors to the south, for their portion was 71 tons, or nearly 128 pounds to each family.

As far as possible, the patrolmen kept to their own districts, so that all who gave coal knew that it went to those in their own neighborhood. As the policemen received offers they reported to their district captains, who received also the names of those in need, and distribution bases were established.

An appeal was sent out for carts and trucks for delivery purposes, and the response from stores and private citizens was so good that it was not necessary to use the Street Cleaning Department's vehicles.

Many people who were not "needy" in the ordinary sense of the word applied at the police stations for coal. In urgent cases their need was supplied gratis, but they were asked for donations to help those who had neither money nor coal. The police report that the response was good, some giving more than the actual value of the coal they received.

Big hotels, restaurants and apartment houses were among the most generous givers when the police called.

Coal Prescriptions Filled

Doctors on Staten Island whose patients were in danger through lack of fuel wrote prescriptions for coal and sent them to the police station, where Inspector Cahalane made haste to fill them. One needed to be no chemist to understand the prescriptions; they were in plain English, not Latin, and usually they bore the one word, "Coal."

Many of the physicians, called up on the telephone by Inspector Calahane, promised to give coal or money to purchase it. The using of doctors' prescriptions as coal tickets was prompted largely by the fact that the police had received reports of babies being born in cold rooms, where even furniture had been broken up and burned to keep alive the little ones.

The police of Staten Island found in their canvass that one hundred families were destitute, some being without warm clothes and without food, as well as coal. Several families had had no coal for four days.

The police reported that they found no coal in any of the Staten Island yards. The manufacturing plants, they said, had only enough to last a few days. The schools are without it, and some of the churches will not be able to open their doors to-day, the police found.

In Brooklyn the situation was similar. Hugh Caffrey, a watchman, who lives with his family on the premises of the Sackett Coal Company, Sackett Street and the Gowanus Canal, swept the empty yard with a broom yesterday afternoon to gather enough dust and chips of coal to heat his own home. The Sackett company suplies several of the Brooklyn hospitals, or at least it did when there was coal to be had; it could not even help the hospitals yesterday.

Coal Fund Grows

Mayor Hylan yesterday called a meeting of department heads in the City Hall to discuss ways and means for assisting the fuel administration in distribution. The city department heads offered to furnish the fuel authorities 500 laborers on the city payroll to break up frozen coal in cars and otherwise assist in distribution. A committee of the department heads is to be appointed to work with the fuel administrations, and enforce in particular the price margins for peddlers. It was announced that the Police and Fire commissioners and the Commissioner of Tenements will work out the problem of enforcing price regulations.

Mayor Hylan's Coal Committee's fund for the poor yesterday reached nearly $5,000, and it is expected that the sum of $50,000, which the committee set out to raise, will be collected in a few days. One of the first to contribute to the poor fund was State Fuel Administrator A. H. Wiggin, who donated $1,000. City Chamberlain Alfred J. Johnson announced that the following contributions had been received yesterday:

Daniel G. Reid, $1,000; A. H. Wiggin, $1,000; Anonymous, $1,000; A. L. Scheuer, $500; H. P. Goldschmidt, $500; Arthur Lipper, $200; Edward Rothschild, $200; Henry Zuckerman, $250.

Coal checks have already been printed by the City Chamberlain, and these will be distributed by Mrs. Joseph Selvin, jr., representing the United Roman Catholic Charities; Mrs. Henry Zuckerman, of the Jewish Charities and General Relief; Mrs. Howard Duffield, representing the Protestant Charities, and Major Jenny R. Ward, representing the Salvation Army. Coal dealers have been ordered to honor the coal cards before any other orders and dealers who refuse to accept the cards will be reported to the Police Department.

25,000 Tons Received Here

Mr. Schley, in announcing that about 25,000 tons of anthracite had been received in New York City during the day, said that 14,330 tons had been loaded into barges at tidewater terminals and was being towed to the city. He called atention to the fact that the huge figures of unloading of coal cars at tidewater as given out by Deputy Director General of Railways A. H. Smith, while true, might be misleading to the average reader of a newspaper, inasmuch as only part of this supply was for New York City.

Mr. Schley said that Friday was the worst day in the fuel situation, but that conditions were still in very bad shape. He said that the Philadelphia & Reading had only 100 carloads of coal at Port Reading, while the normal supply there was 1,000 cars. The railroads, he declared, were beginning to feel the shortage of cars due to labor difficulties here. The empties have not been brought back to the mines as fast as they should.

Kill van Kull Blocked

Harry T. Peters, chairman of the fuel conservation committee, said that the Kill van Kull had become blocked again, this time with ice floes, which, he said, were almost as difficult to deal with as solid ice. Several tugs towing barges of coal were halted during the day by broken propeller blades. Mr. Peters reported that ninety-four cars had passed through the Pennsylvania tubes to Long Island early yesterday morning, and that shipments by this route would be continued.

Deputy Director General of Railways Smith reported that labor and ice conditions had improved greatly during the twenty-four hours, but great difficulties were yet in the way of harbor movements.

Mr. Smith said that 227,600 tons of coal were waiting to be dumped into barges at tidewater terminals, that 101,400 tons of coal were in transit and within twenty-four hours of tidewater terminals, while 1,363 carloads were within forty-eight hours of the terminals.

This coal is not all for New York, however, but must be distributed to New England cities, said to be suffering more keenly from fuel shortage than New York. Boston was yesterday reported to be almost without coal.

Ice Floes Block Harbor; Shortage of Bunker Coal Ties Up 150 Ocean Craft

Higher temperatures yesterday increased the tie-up of traffic in the lower bay. The ice floes from the North and East rivers moved down the harbor. Some piled against the jam which is holding scores of vessels fast on the South Brooklyn shore. Other floes moved down with the tide into the channel and Raritan Bay, adding to the difficulty of getting coal to the city or of getting garbage out of it.

More than 125 deck scows and barges, filled with ashes and refuse, are tied up at city dumping boards on Manhattan waiting for the ice to break up to allow them to be towed to sea. For a week no garbage has been taken to sea for dumping, and the recent fire in the municipal garbage plant on Staten Island complicates the situation.

Ice floes fourteen inches thick were reported yesterday in Newark Bay, while South Brooklyn's crust was from seven to eight inches in thickness and extended out a mile from shore. The channel used by transatlantic liners was opened yesterday for the first time since the beginning of the cold spell to tugs. It was feared, however, that with the ebb tide last midnight the channel would be blocked again by river ice, and plans were made to keep it open by sending tugs through all night.

With the ice drifting downstream the East and Hudson rivers were comparatively open to small boat traffic again. The Moran Towing and Transportation Company, one of the largest of the local concerns, was able to get six tugs in use for river transportation.

The ever growing fleet of liners and other ocean-going craft tied up here increased to a total of 150 yesterday. Lack of bunker coal has held up some of the vessels as long as a fortnight, their passengers being forced to remain here. The vessels must load enough fuel to carry them to Europe and back again.

Annual Auto Show At Palace Opened By the Governor

Whitman Praises Work Done by Industry Since War Was Declared

As befitting the serious times, there was more formality to the opening of the automobile show yesterday in the Grand Central Palace than has been the case in earlier days. Governor Whitman's talk was preceded by a blare of music that drew every one to a place from which the Governor could be heard.

Governor Whitman spoke in a praising way about the industry and the important work it is doing directly and indirectly in war time. In speaking of the show itself, he declared such great displays draw public attention very forcibly to the magnitude of the business and at the same time offer an opportunity of comparing various adjustments and rival forms of ingenuity.

Governor Whitman was introduced on the floor of the Palace by Alexander J. Hemphill, president of the Automobile Club of America.

The show itself is one of the most interesting of all the motor car exhibits that have been held. In almost every display space there is hanging a service flag to tell the numbers that have gone from the factories to serve. A ruling by the management limits the size of these flags to small dimensions, so that no one is able to overshadow his neighbor. Then, too, it is to be observed that not every company decided that in this serious epoch it would be as well to present for public view only sober appearing machines, done in dull colors.

On the contrary, there are some strikingly colorful cars. In the Briscoe space is a touring model done up in red, white and blue. Stars are scattered all over the bonnet and stripes run from stem to stern. Not far away the Velie company has a bright red sport model, with brass exhaust pipes leading, in the earlier racing style, out of hood openings.

There is no lack of cheer in the neighborhood of the Franklin space. The upstate builders have made up a special lot of solid color exhibits. Marmon cars are bright color spots, too.

A novelty on the upper floor was the Milburn electric, built to look exactly like one of the new Packards, as far as body goes. There is no water in the "radiator." In fact, it is a sort of camouflage touring car, with appointments to make it look like a gasoline automobile.

Transportation lack hurt the show to an extent for opening day. In several spaces not a car was to be seen. However, before the afternoon session was entirely over some of these spaces were filled. In the yard back of the Palace were many trucks, waiting to unload the belated exhibition automobiles.

New York Steam Co. Gets Barge of Coal

Power and Heat Concern Hopes to Resume Schedule if Weather Moderates

The New York Steam Company, which supplies heat and power to 2,000 office and residence buildings in New York, managed to get one coal barge through the ice of Newtown Creek yesterday and maintained its service, although it was considerably below normal. If the weather continues to moderate officials of the company hope to catch up with their schedule to-day, when the demands of the 1,000 downtown buildings will be exceedingly small.

Only the "tail-ends" of the service districts suffered last night, according to Charles A. Gillham, manager of the company. Buildings in the Murray Hill section got the least steam, he said.

"Our storage yard in Newtown Creek is still ice-bound," he continued. "We have been able to get only one barge out to-day. But we obtained, through the fuel administration, enough fuel to keep going.

"We expect to get more Sunday, and with the downtown service merely nominal owing to the holiday, we will be able to bring the uptown residence and apartment house service to normal. After that it all depends upon the weather. Conditions will improve if the weather grows warmer. They will become as bad or grow worse if it grows colder."

Orders Give Right of Way to War Freight

An order giving a right of way to food and war materials to be shipped abroad in large quantities during the present month was issued yesterday by A. H. Smith, president of the New York Central Railroad, and assistant to William G. McAdoo, Director General of Railroads.

The order calls upon shippers, shipping agents, railroad and steamship companies to clear freight cars, piers and warehouses congested with domestic goods and freight awaiting export. Mr. Smith declared there were 20,000 carloads of foreign and 12,000 of domestic freight which would come under the order in the New York port district alone. The order follows:

"The accumulation of export and domestic freight on piers, in piersheds, in warehouses and in cars at New York railroad terminals has been and is interfering greatly with the forwarding of freight required overseas.

"It is imperative that these cars and the space in piers and warehouses be promptly released to permit of the expeditious handling of food and other freight that must be exported during January.

"Designees and steamship representatives are urged to give immediate disposal orders. Those having domestic freight are urged to remove it promptly."

Bar Association to Urge More Pay for Federal Court Judges

PHILADELPHIA, Jan. 5.—Higher salaries for Federal Court judges will be urged by the American Bar Association. At to-day's meeting of the executive committee of the body it was stated that all of the committee and a big majority of the eleven thousand members of the organization favored an advance; nevertheless, action on the question was deferred and the matter referred to a sub-committee of which Senator Sutherland, of Utah, is chairman.

While the Federal judges receive but $6,000 a year, it was stated that Supreme Court judges in New York draw $17,000 each, and the Common Pleas judges in this state are paid $11,000.

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FOR FURTHER DETAILS SEE TO-DAY'S TIMES.

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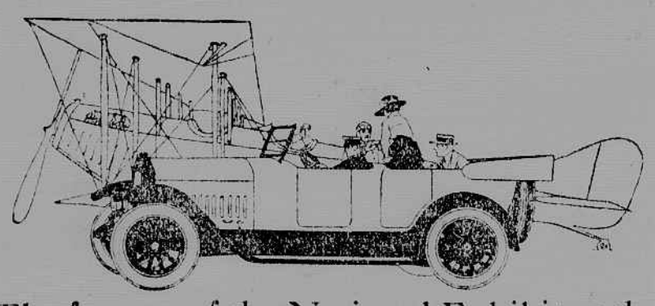

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A comprehensive variety of plain and fancy stripes in the season's newest colorings.

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$5.45
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