

GREAT FALLS DAILY TRIBUNE

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EDITORIAL PAGE

UNCLE SAM'S BARGAIN SALE

The Associated Press tells us that the United States war department has concluded to sell direct to the consumer about \$125,000,000 worth of canned meats and vegetables that they had accumulated for war purposes and do not need now. They are going to sell these goods at cost plus the parcel post price of delivery and they can be obtained through local postmasters who will take the orders we are told. Inasmuch as these goods were purchased in great quantities by the government when prices were lower than they are now and are to be sold at cost one might naturally jump to the conclusion that a bargain sale is on and hasten to get his order in with his local postmaster.

But don't be in a hurry. There is a joker in the advertisement so far as readers of The Tribune are concerned. It lies in the parcel post clause. If these goods are at present stored at the Atlantic seaboard, as we presume is the case, the parcel post rate to Great Falls would be twelve cents a pound, and if you add that to the price of the canned goods they might not turn out such a bargain after all. Besides Postmaster Cluston of Great Falls has had no notification of the bargain sale from the government so far. It is probable that in a week or two he may hear something about it, and by the time he gets your order forwarded and into the hands of the war department very likely the bargain groceries will all be sold to persons living in the east near the source of storage who will not have the handicap of large parcel post charges and who will find them genuine bargains. In fact the local postoffice here has been receiving notices for posting advertising sales of war provisions such as salt pork at public auction and inviting bids for the same, and in some instances these advertisements asking for bids arrive here several days after the sale is advertised to take place.

Therefore it is well not to get excited over these cut price sales of groceries by Uncle Sam. They may be all right for the people living in the east near the place where they are stored, and may save them some money, but the chance of Montana consumers benefiting from them is very remote indeed.

THE BULGARIAN PEACE TERMS

The German empire has accepted the peace terms offered by the allies at Paris. Austria has been handed hers and must accept or reject them in a few days. Hungary has been passed up for the present at least because the allies will not negotiate with the present government, and the peace conference is now busy drawing up the peace terms to be offered to Bulgaria, while reserving Turkey to the last. There has not been much public discussion of the peace terms which will be offered to Bulgaria, but we hope they will be severe. The Bulgarians surely deserve stern treatment. They were the last to enter the war and the first to quit, and they cast their lot in with their life long enemies and against their friends and their racial relatives. Bulgaria owed its national existence to Russia and England, and that within the lifetime of its oldest citizens. Russia went to war to save them from the tyranny and oppression of their Turkish masters. William E. Gladstone roused all Great Britain by his eloquent denunciation of the Bulgarian atrocities committed by the Turks against them. They borrowed what money they could in England and France on the representation that they favored the allies in the present war and used the money for preparations to make war against them. For a bribe in territory around Adrianople from the Turks and German gold and promises of loot in territory belonging to neighboring Balkan nations they threw in the weight of their arms at a critical moment against Serbia and the allies, attacking them from the rear. They waged war against Serbia and Greece with worse than German brutality, stealing private property and murdering whole villages of non-combatants with savage ferocity. And when the tide of victory veered a little and it looked as though their allies had lost the fight, they were the first to desert these allies and make an unconditional surrender in the hope of saving their hide. In Sofia they have the cheek now to express hopes that they will be awarded additional territory at the expense of Rumania and Greece, who after much hesitation sided with the allies. Rumania was betrayed by traitors at the court of a weak monarch and overwhelmed by German armies. Greece was betrayed by a weak pro-German monarch but by revolution got rid of him and joined the allies. It is not likely that either of these countries will be cut up to reward Bulgaria by the allied peace conference. It would be more suitable if Bulgaria lost territory to them.

Very soon we will know what the peace terms offered to Bulgaria are. They should provide for restoration of the loot they carried out of Serbia and Greece. Unfortunately the Bulgarians have little to lose. They are poor and always have been. They are war wasted because they have been fighting for a generation either against the Turks, or the neighboring Balkan

states, and their young men are mostly dead or crippled. Their natural resources also are small. There is no tallow to be obtained by skinning a louse says an ancient and vulgar proverb, and lice are plentiful in Bulgaria while sheep and cattle are scarce. But after all the trouble with Bulgarian indemnities is much the same as it is with the other central powers. It is easy to levy an indemnity against her but collecting it is another thing and far more difficult and doubtful. With the passage of days and weeks the realization of that fact grows on the allies. They cannot give what they have not got.

CONGRESS AND IRRIGATION

The lower house of the legislature has passed a resolution calling on congress to appropriate fifty million dollars for the purpose of hastening the completion of irrigation projects in the west. The Montana legislature is strongly republican and both houses of congress are also republican. If anything can induce congress to spend more money in completing irrigation projects in Montana we should think this call from the Montana legislature would prove effective. As a matter of political expediency we should think that the republican leaders in congress would heed the demand. To turn a deaf ear to the plea of the farmers in the west will not have a tendency to help them in the next election in the western states. And about every action of the present congress is based on its effect on the 1920 election. Congress will either listen to the plea of the western farmer for the speeding up of irrigation enterprises or deny it because of the political expediency of their act, and not because of the merit of the claim. There would be no doubt in our mind that the appropriation would be granted were it not for the fact that the business men of the east expect to get a considerable reduction in war taxes and have been promised such reductions. The only way the republican majority sees to put fifty million dollars into the reclamation fund is to raise fifty million dollars more by means of federal taxes, and they fear resentment from the eastern voters if they do not keep their tax program down. To them it is a question of whether they will lose votes in the east or the west by their decision and what effect such change might have on congress and the election of a president. The action of the Montana legislature puts the question squarely up to the republican majority in congress who have control of the national finances, and we will soon know whether they intend to sacrifice the interests of the western farmer to please the business men of the east who want their taxes reduced or not. So far every attempt to get them to put more money in the reclamation fund has failed. Senator Myers offered an amendment some weeks ago to the sundry civil bill appropriating fifty million dollars for irrigation as a drouth relief measure and it was promptly voted down. Then he tried to get five millions appropriated and that also was voted down. These amendments were attached as riders to the bill, as we understand it, just as the daylight saving repeal was attached to the agricultural appropriation bill. Such riders are objectionable on principle, but they have been so common and congress has sanctioned so many of them that it is hardly likely that they would object to another in the case of an emergency if they were willing to pass a separate bill for a like purpose. However, we understand that bills have been prepared and introduced in congress with the purpose of adequately financing the reclamation projects in the west so that they can be speedily completed, and we will soon learn what congress will do about them. The resolution presented by Representatives Branford and Cooney in the lower house of the Montana legislature will serve to notify congress what Montana citizens think about their duty in the premises.

Washington, D. C., July 29.—In the city of Washington, which has firmly established itself as the community of them all in the United States in which the cost of living is highest—the community in which means, for example, sell regularly for twenty-five per cent more than they do in Baltimore, forty miles away—the people have at last taken the bit in their teeth and are organizing a co-operative buying agency, to be placed at the disposal of the whole community, which will purchase direct from the producer and deliver direct to the consumer, many of the staples of every day existence. So they have hit upon the idea of forming a community food-selling organization which will enable them to get food practically at cost. The proposed plan is to organize the community food transactions; to use the public schoolhouses as distributing centers and to make every housewife in the district a member of the organization without asking her to subscribe a nickel. This is the first instance in the history of the country where an entire city has undertaken to unite all the inhabitants into one large, co-operative agency. There are a number of small co-operative organizations in this city and elsewhere, but only those who have subscribed for stock can trade in them. Such is the plan of most co-operative agencies in Europe. The community food organization proposed for Washington will take in every family in the district. The whole scheme is nothing more than the enlargement of a plan that has proved successful on a small scale. For several years, John G. McGrath, an employe of the treasury department, has been acting the role of fairy prince to a large number of other federal workers, helping them to purchase at cost much of the food used on their tables. His plan was to go into the territory surrounding Washington and buy up food-stuffs from the farmers and then sell it to his friends and other people in the departments. He got nothing for his trouble, except the pleasure of operating the consumer was the cost of transportation. The demand for such food was always greater than the supply, as the prices generally ranged from ten to twenty-five per cent below what it would cost at the market. In carrying on this business, from which he derived no profit, Mr. McGrath made use of two public agencies—the parcel post and the schoolhouse. The cheap parcel post rate of one cent per pound within a radius of 150 miles made it possible for him to buy up large quantities of food and ship it into the district quickly and cheaply. In case of extra large shipments he would dispose of the food at a schoolhouse, otherwise the sale would be made at his home. These experimental food shipments included potatoes, dairy products, poultry and fruits. Mr. McGrath had an understanding with certain farmers that he would buy everything they could send him. So, in this way when he contracted with one producer for his output of eggs and another for his butter crop, there was not much detail bargaining to be done. Likewise was the wholesale problem solved through this one customer. The saving in dairy products and poultry to the people who could take advantage of the McGrath co-operative plan was very considerable. Last Christmas, Mr. McGrath contracted for 1,500 pounds of turkey for 30 cents per pound, and delivered it to his people at this figure, while the market price was from 50 to 60 cents.

The Opinions of Others
ANYBODY CAN, BUT NOBODY WILL.
(New York Telegram)
Most of us have had only vague ideas about Shantung, but anybody can learn all about it now by reading a few yards of the Congressional Record.
REMEMBERING WHO IS V. P.
(Pittsburgh Dispatch)
The American people will regret to learn of the president's illness, and unite in the hope that he will be speedily restored to health.
THEN GOODBYE TURKEY
(Omaha Bee)
Armenia insists that Uncle Sam take up his business of being guardian without delay. Might as well start at once.
IS BEING HOBSON'S CHOICE
(Chicago News)
Man wants but little here below, and, therefore, he may conclude to be contented with one half of one per cent.
ONLY GUARANTEES NOT TO RESIGN
(Indianapolis Star)
Burlison has cut the rate for airplanes mail to 2 cents and does not guarantee air service, which sounds natural.
CALL FOR GAS MASKS
(Washington Post)
The Chinese stinkpot method of offensive warfare is not so ineffective, after all. Shantung smells to heaven.
HO! HUM!
(Washington Star)
Warnings against alcoholic beverages no longer figure prominently among summer "don'ts."
MORE TRUTH THAN POETRY
(Columbia Record)
Senators sometimes make plumb fools of themselves without succeeding in fooling anybody else.

HASKIN LETTER
By FREDERIC J. HASKIN
CO-OPERATIVE BUYING IN THE NATIONAL CAPITAL

Washington, D. C., July 29.—In the city of Washington, which has firmly established itself as the community of them all in the United States in which the cost of living is highest—the community in which means, for example, sell regularly for twenty-five per cent more than they do in Baltimore, forty miles away—the people have at last taken the bit in their teeth and are organizing a co-operative buying agency, to be placed at the disposal of the whole community, which will purchase direct from the producer and deliver direct to the consumer, many of the staples of every day existence. So they have hit upon the idea of forming a community food-selling organization which will enable them to get food practically at cost. The proposed plan is to organize the community food transactions; to use the public schoolhouses as distributing centers and to make every housewife in the district a member of the organization without asking her to subscribe a nickel. This is the first instance in the history of the country where an entire city has undertaken to unite all the inhabitants into one large, co-operative agency. There are a number of small co-operative organizations in this city and elsewhere, but only those who have subscribed for stock can trade in them. Such is the plan of most co-operative agencies in Europe. The community food organization proposed for Washington will take in every family in the district. The whole scheme is nothing more than the enlargement of a plan that has proved successful on a small scale. For several years, John G. McGrath, an employe of the treasury department, has been acting the role of fairy prince to a large number of other federal workers, helping them to purchase at cost much of the food used on their tables. His plan was to go into the territory surrounding Washington and buy up food-stuffs from the farmers and then sell it to his friends and other people in the departments. He got nothing for his trouble, except the pleasure of operating the consumer was the cost of transportation. The demand for such food was always greater than the supply, as the prices generally ranged from ten to twenty-five per cent below what it would cost at the market. In carrying on this business, from which he derived no profit, Mr. McGrath made use of two public agencies—the parcel post and the schoolhouse. The cheap parcel post rate of one cent per pound within a radius of 150 miles made it possible for him to buy up large quantities of food and ship it into the district quickly and cheaply. In case of extra large shipments he would dispose of the food at a schoolhouse, otherwise the sale would be made at his home. These experimental food shipments included potatoes, dairy products, poultry and fruits. Mr. McGrath had an understanding with certain farmers that he would buy everything they could send him. So, in this way when he contracted with one producer for his output of eggs and another for his butter crop, there was not much detail bargaining to be done. Likewise was the wholesale problem solved through this one customer. The saving in dairy products and poultry to the people who could take advantage of the McGrath co-operative plan was very considerable. Last Christmas, Mr. McGrath contracted for 1,500 pounds of turkey for 30 cents per pound, and delivered it to his people at this figure, while the market price was from 50 to 60 cents.

At even a faster rate. Economic adversity seems to promote co-operation. Today the movement has spread so phenomenally over the British Isles and the continent of Europe that the movement is said to have passed from a minority to a majority of the total population. Everything and anything has come to be included in the co-operative idea. Food, clothing, housing, fuel, insurance, transportation and entertainment are all provided by co-operative societies for their members. In Europe, great trusts have gone down before accepting aid in Switzerland it vanquished the beef trust, in Sweden, the sugar trust and the soap trust in England. In these countries it has accomplished for the worker greater victories than he has been able to attain through the ballot box. The worker has simply reached out to help himself, and there seems to be no limit to the extent to which he may go by making use of the co-operative scheme. One of the best results noted from the co-operative movement by those who have made a close study of it is the teaching of people to do things for themselves without asking for accepting aid from the state. It is teaching the workers to administer their own affairs. It has served to train men in organization. Some of Europe's foremost statesmen of today received their preliminary training in managing the affairs of co-operative wholesale societies. In this country, the co-operative plan is not practiced to any great extent, although there are a few sections of the country, particularly the northwest, where co-operative stores are being successfully conducted. The failure of the movement to gain ground in the United States is attributed chiefly to the fact that since the days of the Civil war this country has been a land of plenty and the housewives did not have to worry much about where and how they would obtain their food. The American housewife would rather pay a few pennies more for a commodity at the corner store than take the trouble to make the purchase a little less conveniently at a co-operative store. Washington has made this careless shopping easy by developing 2,000 little corner stores. The prices that are charged for foods through the country continue to increase month by month. The relief which was expected from wartime food prices has not arrived. In fact, foods are higher today than they were a year ago. To be sure there is such prosperity in the land that these prices are not generally felt in Washington, however, where profiteering has always been notorious, the government clerk has no opportunity to participate in the general prosperity, is generally getting the same \$1400 of pay that he got before the war and is supporting a family on it. He is trying to protect himself by co-operative buying.

There was business enough for two in the park that day when Popas wheeled up his popcorn dispensary and Demis, more mobile and capitalistic, approached with a similar vehicle, drawn by a brown mule. But the evil spirit of monopoly, so prevalent nowadays, whispered in the ear of Demis, Popas says. While the 14th infantry band blared, Demis silently unhitched Maude and stole toward his rival's wagon. "Heware the Greeks and the gifts they bring," Mr. Homer once wrote about a pre-league of nations war. But Popas was unsuspecting. It was a wooden horse that caused the fall of Troy. It was a brown mule named Maude that caused the fall of Popas. While Popas, in the front of his wagon, was pouring a generous allowance of butter in a bag of popcorn for a child customer, Demis backed Maude against Popas' wagon, Popas told the court. Then what should Demis do, Popas said, but tickle Maude in the ribs. A look of indignation and surprise

HONORED FOR WORK WITH FOUNDATION
William J. French.
William J. French of Washington has been awarded the cross of the Legion of Honor by France in recognition of his work in French hospitals and among the mothers and children of France while working for the Rockefeller Foundation at Paris.

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TRAVELETTE
By NIKSAH.
WESTMINSTER HALL.
Westminster Hall, where England would stage the trial of the ex-kaiser, has been the scene of crisis in the lives of royalty before today. English kings have been crowned and proclaimed there, and have celebrated their rise to kingship by costly banquets and merry-making in the same vaulted chamber where they made their royal vows. Here Guy Fawkes, of the gunpowder plot, Warren Hastings, Governor General of India, Charles I, and Anne Boleyn pleaded for their lives. Hastings' trial lasted eight years, while King Charles was sentenced to die after four days' proceedings. It was in Westminster Hall that Oliver Cromwell, gorgeously attired in the purple and ermine and razzia of a king, was installed in the democratic office of Lord Protector of the Commonwealth, and a little later, it was from the roof of Westminster Hall that Cromwell's head was displayed on a pole. In a little less than a thousand years of existence, the old hall has seen the big events of English history. Yet it adapts itself easily to less pretentious situations. For many years, in an age that had not thought to invent the hotel lobby, it served as a sort of Peacock Alley, where the fashionable and unemployed might pass the time of day. Westminster Hall is long and vaulted, very like a Gothic cathedral, arched oak beams support the roof, unadorned by central pillars, so that the effect of vastness is increased until the hall seems immense. The builder, William Rufus, is reported to have said that his hall was a mere bed chamber, to which one commentator adds that if it is a bed chamber in which a regiment of giants might be quartered.

A MULE WRECKS TWO FIRMS.
Greek Popcorn Venders Came to Grief and Police Court.
Greek met Greek when the rival popcorn wagons of John Demis, 1330 Forest avenue, and Steve Popas, 1430 Central street, rolled into Penn Valley Park recently and started to compete for the appetite of the multitude, says the Kansas City Star. There began the story of a vendetta which unfolded itself in the south side court. The narrators were Popas and his attorney, John T. Mathis, for Demis was not there to say whom they reported to have said that his hall was a mere bed chamber, to which one commentator adds that if it is a bed chamber in which a regiment of giants might be quartered.

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