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FOOD SUPPLIES AND PRICES

Investigation of food prices in this country, to be undertaken by the Department of Agriculture and the Federal Trade Commission at the direction of President Wilson, may offer no panacea for the high cost of living. The result of the inquiry, so far as prices are concerned, is likely to be similar to the findings of economists and commissions in private life who have studied the situation. The Government investigators will discover a series of factors, partly dependent upon conditions of production, partly upon the vastly more complicated problems this country offers as compared with Europe, and partly dependent upon archaic and faulty methods of city distribution.

But the inquiry will have a vast significance, not only in respect to prices, but in respect to the sources of our food supply. It may be significant that the investigation is ordered at this time when war may bring us face to face with the necessity of better organization of our food resources. The lumbering and cumbersome food production and distribution system of Great Britain has been vastly affected by this war, and some of the war time innovations, it is now freely predicted, have come to stay. Even before the war Germany, as is generally known, and France, as is not so widely recognized, had undertaken a reorganization of food distribution along more scientific lines.

Up to the present this country has suffered many of the handicaps and inconveniences of a nation at war without being involved in the world struggle. It looks as if the upheaval has now been brought closely enough home to the United States for us to gain something of the stiffening of national discipline, and the tightening up of our economic machinery, without, it is our profound hope, going to war ourselves.

AUTOMOBILES, CONSTABLES, AND RECIPROCITY

The gist of the Smoot amendment to the District appropriation bill is that citizens of a State will be exempted from paying a District automobile license tax, when that State reciprocates by granting the same privilege to the citizens of the District. Incidentally, an annual tax of three, five or ten dollars, according to horsepower, is to be paid by District automobilists, beginning January 1, 1918. And the Maryland legislature meets in January, 1918, with power to amend the statutes now made and provided for the discomfiture of Washingtonians and the delight of Maryland constables.

Hitherto, there has been some justification for the Maryland claim that the District, with no annual tax, has had nothing to trade with. In the matter of automobile licenses, Maryland has regarded Washington as a city within her own borders, whose citizens are subject to taxation for the use of Maryland roads.

The fact is ignored that Maryland automobilists delight to visit the city of Washington and to ride upon our asphalt and macadam, also built from the proceeds of taxation. The District has been discriminated against by Maryland laws. It is argued that the present reciprocity of mutual taxation may be changed to one of mutual exemption, as soon as a sufficient number of Maryland automobilists, with influence in the legislature, are fined, in Washington, a la Maryland.

Undoubtedly the situation has been aggravated by the notorious antics of the Maryland constable. On this point the debate in the Senate resembled an experience meeting. Senator Lodge admitted that Maryland hospitality did not compare with the Massachusetts brand. Senator Reed related the experience of a citizen of Missouri who was most painfully shown the penalty of coupling a District tag with his Missouri tag. Senator Smoot drew a picture of constables lurking around the purlieus of the Chevy Chase Club as thick as spiders in a dewy meadow. And Senator Wadsworth brought down the house with a sentence that found its echo in many a martyr's soul, when he said: "A Maryland constable has $5 of mine now." It is to be hoped that with this exploitation of himself in the Senate of the United States, the Maryland constable will subside for a while.

Senator John Walter Smith, the genial chairman of the District committee, was forced to champion the claims of Maryland as against the rights of the citizens of Washington. It happens that this idea of automobile reciprocity is a pet of Representative Page of North Carolina, one of the House conferees on the District bill.

It is predicted that Mr. Page will accept the Senate amendment as eagerly as Senator Smith will insist upon it reluctantly. It looks as though Maryland would have to recognize the Statehood of the District when it comes to automobiles.

AN AUDACIOUS SUGGESTION

The report that Germany now seeks to have this country arbitrate its national honor for the sake of averting a declaration of war with Germany bears all the earmarks of pro-German or ultra-pacifist propaganda. No authority has been given for the report, the source of the information is not divulged. Denial that any communication has been addressed to this country on the subject is made at the White House, at the State Department, and at the Swiss legation, through which such proposals would come.

One Washington correspondent asserts that three persons were cognizant of plans for placing the "story" and that it was "inspired." He states that Count von Bernstorff, William J. Bryan, and a United States Senator know most about the basis of the rumor. Whether this be true or not it is apparent that it comes from some sources interested in renewing the discussion between this country and Germany, and in opening the way for further quibbling over our rights on the high seas.

It matters little whether the story is put forward as a "feeler" by German sympathizers or by the remnants of the "peace at any price" contingent, or whether Germany seriously is trying to impede further action by an appeal to these fast dwindling elements in the United States.

Fortunately this country has become so deeply aroused, has been made to think so clearly, has had its slumbering patriotism so thoroughly aroused, that such a proposal will not for a moment befuddle the issue in the mind of any thinking American. Germany is playing her last card in the "military necessity" by which she flouts all international law and all principles of humanity. Military experts agree she is fighting with her back to the wall. She had to strike quick if her superior organization was to be rendered effective against the greater staying power of the allied nations, just as she believed she had to strike quick at the beginning of the war and ruthlessly sacrificed Belgium to do it.

If she wins her last hand, in the submarine blockade, she must have figured that she could afford to sacrifice the slender ties that still obtained in her diplomatic relations with this country. If she loses and this country enters the war with the allies the struggle of attrition would be made shorter if this country were to give financial and military assistance to the allies. That is why Germany does not mind severing diplomatic relations with us, but is inclined to play safe when it comes to courting a declaration of war.

Misguided and spineless must be the Americans who would now seek to compromise American honor. This Government not only has committed itself to defend its rights against German ruthlessness by breaking off diplomatic relations, but it has appealed to neutrals the world over to do the same thing.

From high Government officials the proposal has been met with the scorn it deserves. It is announced that this Government is going right ahead with preparations for a war in case Germany commits any overt act. Having committed the nation to a definite course, having heard the unanimous response of a nation's gratitude for such a stand, having declared to the world where we stand, no member of this Administration is likely to fly in the face of these facts to heed either wild and unfounded rumors put forth by Count von Bernstorff, or an impudent proposal of Germany that we write further notes about a studied, deliberate, carefully planned insult.

The California belligerents are still denouncing the Devil and all his Works.

It never rains, etc., and it never gets extremely cold, it seems, but there is a coal shortage.

The daylight saving movement awaits the constructive indorsement of the poker players.

If the new Austrian ambassador was to be so soon done for, what was he e'er begun for?

Germany seems to have solved the high cost of print paper difficulty by suppressing most of its newspapers.

It must be confessed that thus far we have not availed ourselves of the privilege of one American ship a week.

The old-fashioned spelling bee ought to be revived, if only to standardize the spelling of such words as "ukulele."

"We are now in a twilight zone between peace and war," announces the "New Republic." But we have awakened from a prolonged "twilight sleep" on the subject.

German and Austrian teachers at Columbia University want to be reassured about their continued tenure of positions. The country wants to be reassured about the loyalty of a large number of Germans and Austrians, professorial and otherwise.

Here and There In the News

It happened in New York many years ago when Elliott Shepherd was living. He was the owner of the Mail and Express and at the time president of the old New York Associated Press, and, in spite of what his father-in-law is reported to have said about him, he was a very genial gentleman. He was not much of a journalist, and the only way he found of making his paper "different" was to print a verse from the Bible at the head of his editorial columns every day. As the texts never seemed to fit exactly anything that was going on anywhere, it was not known at the time and has never been told how they were selected.

Fighting for News.

At the time the New York Associated Press was regarded as the greatest news gathering agency in the world. It practically had the field to itself and had no rival that counted for very much in the business, and really did not seem to care a great deal for its clients or what were called its "members" remote from the metropolitan district. Every newspaper in the Southern States that represented anything worth while got its news from this great organization. Whenever the service was not satisfactory these "members" would kick and in order that their kicking might be effective they formed themselves into an association for mutual protection and on the occasion in mind, the arrogance of the managers in New York having exceeded the bounds of their patience, they repaired to New York in a body relying upon their strength in numbers, if not upon the justice of their cause, to obtain redress for their injuries.

Well-Known Names.

The president of the Southern Association was Evan P. Howell, of the Atlanta Constitution, and with him as a sort of steering committee there were John H. Estill, of the Savannah News; Patrick Walsh, of the Augusta Chronicle; Adolph S. Ochs, of the Chattanooga Times; Charles B. Cowardin, of the Richmond Times-Dispatch; Frank O'Brien, of the Birmingham Age-Herald; T. T. Stockton, of the Jacksonville Times-Union, and a number of others of like spirit determined to get their rights or know the reason why.

They did not get anything and never found out why. But they were well received, and had a good time, and were for the most part charmed with the bearing of Colonel Shepherd toward these eminent men who had journeyed long distances to meet him and his associates for the consideration of matters of great moment affecting the glory and welfare of their common country. Nothing could have been better said, and Colonel Shepherd was so much delighted with the Southern brethren that he could not live happily another day if they should decline his invitation to dine with him at his home on Fifth avenue—one of the Vanderbilt brownstone mansions on that fashionable thoroughfare.

They accepted the invitation, of course, as a body bent upon achieving their mission, although two or three of their number declined to be present because of certain religious prejudices against Colonel Shepherd, who was a stanch Presbyterian and had spoken irreverently of the order to which they thought they belonged.

It was a great event in the lives, especially of the gentlemen from Georgia—the gentlemen from Charleston and Chattanooga felt entirely at ease—the magnificence of the house, the richness of its hangings and works of art, the retinue of men in livery, the service of gold at the table, the daintiness of the dinner and the winning manners of the host. He had invited about thirty newspaper men, about equally divided between the North and South, and it was surprising before the evening ended how much alike they were in both sentiment and taste.

The Story of "Uncle Burrell."

With the cigars and coffee Colonel Shepherd said that he would not ask any of his guests to make a speech, but he would call on every one for a story. Captain Howell, one of the hardest fighters in the Confederate service, related one of his war experiences very much to the delight of the company and he was followed by one of his associates with a story about an old colored man in Chester county, S. C., who had given his life for his master.

His name was "Uncle Burrell," and his wife's name was "Aunt Dido," and they lived together on the old place, taking care of their master, whom they had watched as he grew up from the cradle to mature manhood, watched over him as carefully as had he been of their own blood and race and from whom in all their long lives they had never had a word of reproof.

Sherman's "March to the Sea" shifted from Savannah to Columbia, and thence through South Carolina to Greensboro, where Johnston surrendered his army. After leaving Columbia a straggling column left the main line of march and went to a farm house not far from the old Revolutionary battlefield of Blackstock's, in Chester county. That was where "Uncle Burrell" and "Aunt Dido" lived. They had heard the soldiers were coming, and urged their master to ride away before they came, and urged him so earnestly that, mounting his old black mare, he disappeared into the adjacent forest. When the soldiers arrived, they demanded that "Uncle Burrell" tell them where his master was, and, with a courage and devotion little short of divine, "Uncle Burrell" replied: "I won't tell you where my master is; I'll die before I betray him."

"Greater Love Hath No Man."

Then placing a rope about his neck they strung him to a tree and, lowering him to the ground, they again demanded: "Where is your master?"

Once more "Uncle Burrell" answered: "I won't tell you where my master is. I'll die before I betray him."

For the second time the helpless victim was strung up, and, being lowered with his life well-nigh spent, was asked: "Where is your master?"

And with his life ebbing fast again and for the last time "Uncle Burrell" answered: "I won't tell you where my master is; I'll die before I betray him."

And there and then "Uncle Burrell" died and as he passed over to the other side all the trumpets sounded for him. "Greater love hath no man than this."

THE COMMENTATOR.

CALIFORNIA VICTIMS LEGAL AMERICANS

O'Donnell Children Killed By Submarine Were Citizens, Professor Holds.

CITES LAW AND DECISIONS

Children of Alien Parents Recognized By State Department In Several Cases.

NEW YORK, Feb. 11.—Considerable discussion has arisen over the citizenship of the two O'Donnell children of Philadelphia, who were drowned when the Anchor Line steamship California was sunk.

Their parents were foreigners who had not been naturalized, but the bulk of decisions and opinions on the point, according to Dr. Ellery C. Stowell, professor of international law at Columbia University, is that the children were citizens of the United States and entitled to the full protection of the United States Government.

Dr. Stowell, who is quoted in the New York Times today, points out that the decision taken by the Government in the more recent and important cases seemed to make it clear that the children, born in this country, were citizens of the United States, regardless of the nationality of their parents. Dr. Stowell said:

No Doubt of Citizenship.

"In my opinion there is no doubt that children born in the United States of foreign parents are entitled to the protection of our Government unless, at the age of majority, they indicate an intention not to retain the citizenship which was theirs at birth. This intention would not under international law have to be made expressly, but minors, not children of diplomats, born in the United States, are not able to throw off American citizenship."

Mrs. O'Donnell was a Scotchwoman; her husband was an Irishman. Mrs. O'Donnell had lived in this country for eighteen years, but her husband, as far as known, never took out naturalization papers. Her three children were born in Philadelphia. They were Cornelius, thirteen; James, nine, and Mary, seven.

Might Waive Interest.

A point raised in regard to the case is whether, even if the children appear to be Americans, under the laws of this country, the State Department could not waive its interest in them in favor of the British government, which holds them to be British subjects under English law, because the father was Irish and the mother Scotch.

The most recent case cited by Dr. Stowell committing the State Department to the position that persons born in this country of foreign parents are Americans, was that of Carl Gundlich, who was born in this country of German parents, who took him back to Germany at the age of eleven months. He applied to Charlemagne Tower, the American ambassador in Berlin, for an American passport in 1907. Ambassador Tower referred the question to the State Department in a letter in which he said:

Speaks No English.

"He speaks no English and has no interest in America, and the father has no property of any kind there. The application for the passport is based upon the fact that this young man was born in the United States."

The State Department replied to this effect:

"The young man is * * * undoubtedly a citizen of the United States under the terms of the Constitution and section 1992 of the Revised Statutes, which declares that all persons born in the United States are citizens thereof. * * *

"It does not appear that any conflict of private international law has as yet arisen in this case, and until reaching his maturity young Gundlich is not competent to elect another nationality than that of his birth. At present, therefore, he may be considered a citizen of the United States and as such he may be granted a passport."

Citizenship Report.

A report of the citizenship board, which was referred to in this reply, was made during the second session of the Fifty-ninth Congress and is as follows:

"Where the residence was temporary.—This question as to the citizenship of children born in the United States of alien parents who were in this country merely temporarily arose, and was elaborately examined in the case of Lynch v. Clark, 1,884, I Sandf. Ch., 583. It appeared in that case that not only were the parents here temporarily, but that within a year from the time of the child's birth they had been taken with them on their return to their native country—Great Britain. The court showed no hesitancy in declaring that the child so born was a citizen of the United States. In a later New York case, Munro v. Merchant, 1,858, 26 Barb., 383,400, when the question came again before the court, under circumstances that were almost identical, the court followed, but questioned, the Clark case."

Some Adverse Decisions.

Dr. Stowell cited several other rulings and authorities to support this contention. Conflicting decisions on this point are reported in Moore's Digest of International Law. A case occurring, in which the other side was maintained, is stated by Moore as follows:

"Ludwig Hausding was born in the United States, but during infancy was removed by his father, who was a Saxon subject, to Saxony, where he afterward remained. The father subsequently became a citizen of the United States by naturalization. In 1884 Ludwig applied to the American legation in Berlin for a passport, but the legation refused to grant it on the ground that he was born of Saxon subjects, who were only temporarily in the United States, and was never 'dwelling in the United States,' either at the time of or since his parents' naturalization, and was not naturalized by force of section 2172 Revised Statutes. With reference to this decision the Department of State said:

Only Ground for Claim.

"'Not being naturalized by force of the statute, Ludwig Hausding could only assert citizenship on the ground of birth in the United States; but this claim would, if presented, be untenable, for by section 1992, Revised Statutes, it is made a condition of citizenship by birth that the person be not subject to any foreign power * * * sections 1902 and 1993 of the Revised Statutes clearly show the extent of the existing legislation: That the fact of birth, under circumstances implying alien subjection, establishes of itself no right of citizenship; and that the citizenship of a person so born is to be acquired in some legitimate manner through the operation of statute.'"

The case of Richard Greisser, which is similar to that of Hausding, was decided in the same way in 1885, Greisser being held to be an alien. But the contrary was held by the State Department in 1901 in a determination requested by the imperial German embassy.

WHAT'S ON PROGRAM

Many Interesting Events of Importance Are Scheduled

Today.

Speech by Mrs. Jessie L. Lane to Woman's Wage Earners' Association, Columbia Academy, 794 T street northwest, 4 p. m.
Address on "The High Cost of Living and the Remedy," by T. Cushing Daniel, Perpetual Building Hall, Eleventh and E streets northwest, 8:30 p. m.
Address by the Rev. A. E. Barrows, at meeting for men, Terminal Y. M. C. A., 4 p. m.
Address, "Vicious Journalism," by Sidney G. Evans, before Liberal Religious Union of All Souls' Unitarian Church, 7 p. m.
Meeting of Young Frolickers' Club, Fairmont Apartments, 3 p. m.
Emergency meeting of Women's Peace Party, New Ebbitt, 3 p. m.
Open House, Y. W. C. A., 1:30 to 7:30 p. m.
Concert by United States Soldiers' Home Band Orchestra, Stanley Hall, 4:30 p. m.

Tomorrow.

Address, "The Federal Narcotic Law and Proposed Amendments Thereto," by John G. Capers, Society of Medical Jurisprudence, University Club, 8 p. m.
Meeting of District division, United Daughters of Confederacy, 1606 Twentieth street northwest, 11:30 a. m.
Meeting of army women, Ranscher's, 10:30 a. m.
Dedication of Miner Normal School, 8 p. m.
Midyear baccalaureate exercises, administration building, 2029 G street northwest, George Washington University, 8 p. m.
Address, "Lincoln's Birthday," by J. L. McBrien, school extension specialist, United States Bureau of Education, Gage School, 7:45 p. m.
Concert by United States Marine Band Orchestra, United States Marine Barracks, 2:30 p. m.
Joint meeting of New Hampshire Association and Marines' Association, Public Library, 8 p. m.
Lincoln Birthday celebration, by Capitol Hill Literary Society, Ingram Memorial Church, Massachusetts avenue and Tenth street northeast, 7:30 p. m.
Meeting of Northeast Washington Citizens' Association, Northeast Temple, 8 p. m.
"Get-together luncheon" of alumni of Leland Stanford University, New Ebbitt, 12:30 p. m.
Third annual banquet of District Epworth League of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Epworth League Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Wallis' Cafe, Twelfth and G streets northwest, at night.
Dedication exercises, Myrtilla Miner Normal School, 8 p. m.
Lecture, "The Lady of the Lighthouse," by Miss Winnifred Holt, under auspices of lecture committee, Theodorus Bailey Myers Mason House, Woman's section, Navy League, at home of Mrs. Edson Bradley, 8 p. m.
Dance by Louisiana natives of Washington, the New Ebbitt, 8 p. m.
Annual Junior Prom of Catholic University of America, in Graduate Hall, 8 p. m.
Lincoln Birthday exercises under auspices of G. A. R., Sons of Veterans, Spanish War Veterans, Women's Relief Corps, Ladies of the G. A. R., Daughters of Veterans, and Legion of Loyal Women, First Congregational Church, 8 p. m.
Meeting of Park View Citizens' Association, Park View School assembly hall, 7:30 p. m.
Address, "Civic Improvements," by Congressman Charles C. Carlin, at Park Lane-Aurora Heights' Citizens' Association, 7:30 p. m.
Meeting of Piney Branch Citizens' Association, Iowa Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church, 8 p. m.
Meeting of Vermont State Association, Washington Club, 8 p. m.
Masonic—New Jerusalem, No. 9, special; Dawson, No. 16, and Stansbury, No. 24; Mount Vernon Chapter, No. 2; Hiram, No. 10, and Anacostia, No. 12, Royal Arch, elections; Bethlehem Chapter, No. 8, Order of the Eastern Star, reception in honor of grand patron; Temple, No. 13, and Columbia, No. 15.
Odd Fellows—Beacon Lodge, No. 15; Langdon, No. 28, and Union, No. 11.
Rebekahs—Esther Lodge, No. 5.
National Union—Pressmen's Council, No. 738.
Knights of Pythias—Decatur Lodge, No. 9, and Calanthe, No. 11.
Red Men—Seventy-second session, great council, Masonic Temple, Ninth and F streets northwest; Red Wing Tribe.
"Glimpse of Dixie in Ante-bellum Days," Home Club of Interior Department, 14 Jackson place, 8 p. m.

Amusements.

Belasco—"Seven Chances," 8:15 p. m.
New National—"Eleven P. M.," 8 p. m.
Poli's—"Sis Hopkins," 8:15 p. m.
B. F. Keith's—Vaudeville, 2:15 and 8:15 p. m.
Gayety—Burlesque, 2:15 and 8:15 p. m.
Loew's Columbia—Photoplays, 10:30 a. m. to 11 p. m.
Strand—Photoplays, 11 a. m. to 11 p. m.
Garden—Photoplays, 11 a. m. to 11 p. m.

Tuesday.

Masonic—Federal Lodge, No. 1; Acacia, No. 18, and Takoma, No. 29; Mt. Horeb Chapter, No. 7, and Potomac, No. 8, Royal Arch; DeMolay Commandery, No. 4, Knights Templar; Robert de Bruce Council, and Evangelist Chapter Rose Croix, Scottish Rite; Electa Chapter, No. 2; Bethlehem, No. 7; Friendship, No. 17, and Ascension, No. 26, Order of the Eastern Star.
Odd Fellows—Grand visitation, Golden Rule Lodge, No. 21; Amity, No. 27; Washington, No. 6; Fred D. Stuart, No. 7, encampment.
Knights of Pythias—Webster Lodge, No. 7; Excelsior, No. 14; Capital, No. 24, and Myrtle, No. 25.
Red Men—Continuation of great council session; Idaho Tribe, rehearsal.

Wednesday.

Masonic—Harmony Lodge, No. 17; Grand Lodge, school of instruction; annual meeting, grand chapter, Royal Arch; Washington Commandery, No. 1, Knights Templar; Naomi Chapter, No. 3, and Brookland, No. 11, Order of the Eastern Star; monthly meeting, St. John's Mite Association.
Odd Fellows—Eastern Lodge, No. 7; Harmony, No. 9; Federal City, No. 20.
Rebekahs—Mount Pleasant Lodge, No. 9.
National Union—Interior Council, No. 210.
Knights of Pythias—Mount Vernon Lodge, No. 5; Hermione, No. 12; Union, No. 22, and Columbia, No. 26; Washington Company, No. 1, Uniform Rank; Valentine social, Friendship Temple, No. 8, Pythian Sisters.
Red Men—Election of applicants, Osceola Tribe, No. 19; White Eagle Council, rehearsal.

Thursday.

Masonic—Naval Lodge, No. 4; Hiram, No. 10; LaFayette, No. 19; William R. Singleton, 30; Adoniram, Council, No. 2, Royal and Select Masters; Esther Chapter, No. 5, Order of the Eastern Star.
Odd Fellows—Columbia Lodge, No. 10; Covenant, No. 13.
Rebekahs—Friendship Lodge, No. 8.
National Union—National Council, No. 230; Mount Vernon Council, No. 491.
Knights of Pythias—Franklin Lodge, No. 2; monthly meeting Past Chief's Association.
Red Men—Logan Tribe, No. 5; Sioux, No. 18.

Friday.

Masonic—Columbia Lodge, No. 2; Lebanon, No. 7; Grand Chapter, school of instruction, Royal Arch; inspection Columbia Commandery, No. 2, Knights Templar; formal opening new quarters, Kallipolis Grotto drill corps; Martha Chapter, No. 4, and East Gate, No. 21, Order of the Eastern Star.
Odd Fellows—Central Lodge, No. 1; Metropolis, No. 16, and Phoenix, No. 28; Magnenuz, No. 4, encampment.
Rebekahs—Visitation of president and officers of Rebekah assembly to Miriam Lodge, No. 6.
Knights of Pythias—Syracusians, No. 10; Rathbone Temple, No. 8, Pythian Sisters.
Red Men—Seneca Tribe, No. 11; Mineola, No. 14, and Idaho Council.

Saturday.

Masonic—Benjamin B. French Lodge, No. 15, special.
Odd Fellows—Drill of Canton Washington, No. 1, Patriarchs Militant.
National Union—Joseph Henry Council, No. 267; Census Council, No. 1,024.
Red Men—Osage Tribe, No. 6.

TO ADDRESS KENTUCKIANS.

Robert W. Woolley, former director of the mint, is to speak before the Kentucky State Association at a meeting of that society at the Ebbitt Wednesday night. Musical selections are to be given.

NATION-WIDE FOOD PROBE UNDER WAY

Investigation Expected to Bare Vast Combination Affecting Ultimate Price.

WILSON ORDERS INQUIRY

Congressmen Welcome Quest for Remedy to Present High Cost of Living.

The machinery of a nation-wide probe into the high cost of foodstuffs, set in motion by President Wilson when he directed the Federal Trade Commission, assisted by the Department of Agriculture, to enter at once into an investigation, is expected to uncover a vast combination affecting the added cost of handling foods and also to demonstrate that food speculators are ignoring this country's demand for supplies in order to ship these supplies abroad at the war prices now prevailing in foreign countries.

Members of the House, which will be asked to appropriate money for the investigation, were elated at the President's action. Congressmen Emerson and Fitzgerald, both of whom early this session introduced bills designed to relieve the high cost of living, greeted the investigation as a victory.

Fitzgerald Wants Embargo.

Their comment was:

The President in a letter to the chairman of the commission directing the probe says that an adequate supply of food products is a matter of concern to the national at all times. He said "it is of peculiar importance at present."

The President pointed out that in some respects the supply has steadily expanded and has kept pace with the increasing population. Unfortunately, he said, this is not true of a number of important staple products, including certain cereals and particularly meats. Since 1900 there has been a decrease of twenty-nine pounds of meat per capita, according to the President.

However, he explained that much can be done and is being done to change this situation through improved methods of production and through the control or eradication of plant and animal diseases. The President said he believes that the problem of distribution is one of the biggest factors responsible for the steady advance in the cost of the necessities of life.

Better Distribution Needed.

The President said it is plain that there will be no sufficient incentive to enlarge production if there does not exist an unobstructed and economical system of distribution. He complained of unjustifiable fluctuations in prices as not only being demoralizing, but also inevitably deterring adequate production.

"It has been alleged before committees of the Congress and elsewhere," he added, "that the course of trade in important food products is not free, but is restricted and controlled by artificial and illegal means. It is of the highest public concern to ascertain the truth or falsity of these allegations. No business can be transacted effectively in an atmosphere of suspicion.

"If the allegations are well-grounded, it is necessary that the nature and extent of the evils and abuses be accurately determined, so that proper remedies, legislative or administrative, may be applied." To obtain this end, the President advised that the powers of such agencies should be made adequate, if in any respect they are now deficient.

The President said he was aware that the commission has additional authority in this field, through the power conferred upon it to prevent certain persons, partnerships, or corporations from using unfair methods of competition in commerce.

ARRANGING FOOD RESERVE

Conducting Mobilization of Rations in Middle West.

CHICAGO, Feb. 11.—A careful invoice of the nation's food supply is under way and preparations are quietly but efficiently being made for a gigantic mobilization of the reserve food supply of the country's bread basket—the great Middle West. This was learned tonight when it became known that Government agents have been keeping in close touch with packers, commission men, and wholesalers the past week.

Should war be declared and a large army and navy mobilized, Chicago would become the food center of the nation. Already many firms have begun preparing for any emergency. Armour and Company, packers, are ready at a moment's notice to press their industrial army of 55,000 men into service.

"You get the army. I don't care how big. We'll feed them," was the laconic comment of J. Ogden Armour, president of the biggest packing company in the world.

Strictest measures are being taken to stamp out any trouble among aliens. Under the direction of Hinton Clabaugh, special investigator of the Department of Justice, corps of special agents are keeping in close touch with suspicious characters and propagandists.

COAL SHORTAGE FEARED

Dealers Face Near-Famine Unless Warm Weather Comes.

Unless warmer weather reaches Washington within a few days the city may find itself suffering a serious coal shortage before the end of the week. Although there seems to be enough coal on hand to answer present demands, a sudden drop in temperature and a prolonged cold spell would result in a scarcity nearly approaching a famine, according to local dealers.

The shortage is largely due to the recent cold snaps. Dealers were compelled to draw on their reserve supply to fill the orders crowded on them. With fairly moderate weather this week, they expect to be able to supply all demands until spring.

None of the dealers were prepared to give prompt delivery yesterday, most of them asking until Monday afternoon to fill orders. Practically every truck in the city was busy delivering orders which have been on hand several days.

SCOTTISH RITE HOME FINEST BUILDING

Architects Award Medal to John R. Pope for Monumental Structure.

CAPITAL TEMPLE UNIQUE

Sixteenth Street Building Follows Greek Style and Cost $2,000,000.

The Temple of Scottish Rite, situated on Sixteenth street, has been decreed by the Architectural League to be the finest building erected during the past year. John Russell Pope, the architect, has been awarded the medal of honor given by the league only when the workmanship warrants it. Not only has the jury, made up of men who won medals in the past, chosen this building as first in design, but it has designated it as the finest structure of its kind in the nation. The honor conferred upon Mr. Pope, therefore, is twofold.

In the Fine Arts building, in New York, there are now on public exhibition water color drawings, photographs, and samples of materials showing the perspectives, actuals and compositions of the various high class buildings erected during the past year. The architects placed their workmanship on exhibition in a keen but friendly competition. John Russell Pope's was chosen as the best and to him will be given, after the close of the exhibition on February 26, a beautiful gold medal of honor bearing an inscription telling of his work of art.

Cost Approximately $2,000,000.

The Temple of Scottish Rite is the property of thirty-third degree Masons, the highest order of the great Masonic body. It is built after the Greek style of architecture and constructed of heavy marble and solid bronze. No expense was spared. Its cost is approximately $2,000,000. Situated on nearly a whole block on Sixteenth street, between R and S streets, it is one of the most distinctive buildings in Washington, and is unique in that there is not another of like design anywhere in this country.

The building is about 150 feet high and finished on all four sides, the entrance having a few extra embellishments. The door in the forecourt is guarded by two big sphinxes. Once inside the richness of the great temple is soon revealed. A big bronze screen, in the form of a sunburst, said to be the largest in existence today and costing $300,000, at once attracts the gaze. The large entrance hall or atrium is sixty-four feet square and twenty-five feet high. On either side is a line of dark green granite columns. The floor is of marble and in the center of the hall is a large marble table. A handsome marble staircase leads to the main chamber, on the upper floor, and on either side are corridors leading to the suites of the grand commander and secretary general.

Altar of Black Marble.

The grand chamber is sixty-four feet square and ninety-five feet high to the top of the dome. A colonnade of thirty-three marble uprights, thirty-five fet high, emblematic of the thirty-three degrees of Scottish Rite Masonry, surrounds an altar of solid black and black and gold marble, which is on a platform, approached on all sides by black marble steps. Concealed in the dome is an organ, which can be played from the floor of the great chamber. The doorway leading to this chamber measures twenty-five feet and is of solid black marble retouched in gold. On each side of the chamber is a great window thirty feet square. In each of these are two columns of very dark green granite with bronze caps and bases. The floor of the chamber and the wainscoting, about eight feet high, are of marble, while the walls above are of limestone.

A marble staircase at the rear of the entrance hall leads to a great banquet hall on the floor beneath, which is also chiefly decorated with marble. The wall paintings throughout the temple are of the Pompeiian style, the forms and colors showing they were determined upon after a careful study in Avery Library and the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Used Once in Two Years.

The temple was erected for the use of the Scottish Rite Masons during their national conventions. According to these rites, it is said, it will not be used more than once in two years for the specific purpose for which it was built. The building, however, is open to the public. The grand commander at the present time is Charles E. Rosenbaum.

John Russell Pope, the architect who designed this structure, has won many competitions which called for a display of exceptional ability. While a student he captured the Schermerhorn traveling fellowship in 1894, which took him abroad. He won a fellowship of the American Academy of Rome, and while at the Beaux Arts won the Jean Leclair Institute of France prize in architecture. He won the competition for the monument of the Great Lakes, which is lying in abeyance, and was successful in the competition for the Lincoln Memorial at Hodgenville, Ky., which he designed in the form of a modified Doric temple. He has designed buildings for many prominent persons, including the house of the late Congressman R. S. Hitt of Washington, of ex-Ambassador Henry White, of J. R. McLean, to which was added later an unusual conservatory in Italian stucco style of architecture; of R. S. McCormick and ex-Vice President Levi P. Morton, besides designing houses for prominent Newport and Long Island people, including Stuart Duncan, Ogden L. Mills, Robert Bacon, and Mrs. William K. Vanderbilt.

The honor of being awarded the medal of honor by the Architectural League is really an additional honor, for recently Mr. Pope was made president of the American Academy in Rome, which institution he attended when a student.

POLICE TO WEAR FLAGS.

PITTSBURGH, Feb. 11. — Every member of the Pittsburgh police and fire departments today appeared with a small silk flag pinned on his coat as a result of a joint order issued by Superintendent of Police W. Noble Matthews and Fire Chief James F. Richards. The flags were purchased by the department of public safety.