AUTOMOBILE SECTION

Good Roads Essential to Future of Auto Industry

AUTO NEWS AND COMMENTS

GOOD ROADS UP TO GOVERNMENT

With long trains of army trucks and an ever-increasing flow of commercial automobiles attesting the important part which the motor truck played in beating Germany, is it not time for the National Government to take more decided steps than it has to encourage improvement of the highways?

With railroad facilities, particularly in the war-industrial zone in which Philadelphia is located, inadequate as they, were to meet the demands of both war and civilian commerce, the part which the motor truck must play in keeping the essential industries going cannot be overestimated.

No one who has watched a motor truck lunging slowly and fearfully along a billowy or gutted road can doubt that poor roads may impair the efficiency of the truck 50 per cent or more.

If it has been considered worth while to declare the manufacture of trucks for military and vital civilian needs an essential, it would be foolish not to carry the effort to its logical conclusion. The waste of truck efficiency through poor roads is little short of tragic.

Here and there, where Government traffic is particularly heavy, there is to be noted a more or less gratifying improvement of road conditions. But the improvement is not general. It should be.

The tax on individual communities for keeping their sections of the highways in good shape would be comparatively light, and certainly there is enough patriotism in every community in this country to make the necessary sacrifice and effort if the seriousness of the situation were properly laid before them, backed by tactful Government encouragement. In addition, highway repair work should be strictly maintained as an essential, and the full facilities of the Government's labor control should be constantly available to the executives in charge of such work.

The Times Auto Emergency Service
IS AT YOUR DISPOSAL
If you are in need of a haul home, gasolene or help of any kind
Call Main 5-2-6-0
(Put this memo in your note book)
Ask for auto emergency—state your troubles and give the phone number you are using and you will be immediately connected with the nearest reliable service station to your location.
THERE IS NO CHARGE FOR THIS SERVICE

Buick
Automobiles
EMERSON & ORME
1620-26 M St. N. W. Franklin 3860
District of Columbia Distributers.

U. S. OWES AUTO MEN $300,000,000

Grave conditions in the automobile industry of the country are declared to exist in many reports reaching Washington in letters to members of Congress and through statements made to Senators and House members by manufacturers themselves or persons cognizant of the facts.

Michigan, as the head and center of the automobile industry, is the State from which the most serious complaints are proceeding. It is roughly estimated that Michigan automobile manufacturers have $300,000,000 tied up in war contracts with the Government on which they cannot at present realize.

True Elsewhere.

What is true as to Michigan is true of various other localities, and what applies to the automobile industry there applies to a considerable extent to plants of many kinds which undertook to make war material.

In large part, the difficulty arises from the fact that about 7,000 contracts for war materials were made informally, and under a ruling of the Comptroller of the Treasury these are not binding. They will have to be legalized by Congress before the contracting concerns can realize on them. However, the informal contracts are not the only source of difficulty. Complaints are reaching here in large numbers of the slowness of the War Department in making payments under contracts the validity of which is recognized.

$1,600,000,000 Involved.

Taking the country as a whole, the amount involved in the informal war contracts is estimated at $1,600,000,000, although differing estimates are placed on the total. The House has passed a bill to legalize informal war contracts. The bill is hanging fire in the Senate because of differences of opinion as to just how the details should be adjusted. The informal contracts were in many instances simply telephone orders to concerns from army officers or officials or other Government officials to manufacturers to go ahead. Had the armistice not come, there would have been no difficulty about them.

Members of the Michigan delegation in Congress said today their State had been among the hardest hit. They said the automobile concerns had been seriously affected, though they were not the only ones. Plants of different kinds in the State are engaged in making war material. Now, when these plants want to convert their operations back to meet peace conditions, they find they have a lot of capital tied up in war contracts out of which, for the present, they can't get a cent.

Threatened With Ruin.

The result is that some are even threatened with having to close down and let their organizations go to pieces. Many of the plants have invested heavily in iron, steel, and other manufacturing supplies to meet war contracts.

With similar complaints coming from most of the leading manufacturing States, Congress is under great pressure to legalize the informal war contracts and the War Department is under like pressure to cut red tape. To a less extent the Navy Department is affected.

Senator Townsend of Michigan today declared that the delays in disposing of contracts and in making payments in pursuance of contracts were hitting his State hard.

"The automobile industry of my State is seriously affected," said Senator Townsend. "But other plants which are engaged in making war material are feeling it too. I have no accurate totals, but I believe it safe to say several hundred million dollars is involved. Right at the time when plants want to go back to manufacturing to meet peace demands, they find themselves hampered by the fact they cannot get what is coming to them on their war contracts.

"The effects are what might be expected. I am flooded with complaints about the situation, but it seems almost impossible to remedy it immediately."

Senator Townsend is hopeful that the bill legalizing informal contracts will soon pass, though he points out that this will not entirely avail unless administrative action is hastened.

RANDLES RESIGNS GOVERNMENT POST

The resignation of George E. Randles as director of the maintenance division, Motor Transport Corps, has been accepted by the Government, and Mr. Randles returns to Cleveland, Ohio, and resumes his activities in the business world as vice president and general manager of the Foote-Burt Company, makers of special automobile machinery.

For a period of sixteen months, Mr. Randles has rendered extremely valuable services to the Government; and the signing of the armistice enables the relinquishment of his duties here.

THE RADIATOR

This column is devoted to the interest of the autoist. All questions as to care and upkeep, engine troubles, tours, etc., will be cheerfully and fully answered by an expert.

Questions must reach this office not later than Thursday to insure issue in current week. Address all communications care Automobile Editor Washington Times, giving initials of inquirer for index purposes.

If your car is in trouble on the road and you need a tow or assistance, avail yourself of The Times Auto Emergency Service, it is yours for the asking. See notice on this page.

That advanced rates on motor-car theft insurance may be expected is a possibility gleaned from the following excerpt from the Spectator, a publication which covers the insurance field:

Recommendations for the revision of methods of underwriting the theft hazard in automobile insurance are contained in the report of a subcommittee of the National Automobile Underwriters' conference, which will have the attention of the local conferences before the annual meeting of the executive committee of the national conference. While the report of the subcommittee is only tentative and is submitted for the consideration of the local conferences, it is probable that the recommendations contained therein will be adopted by the national conference. It is generally conceded that the only way in which the companies can hope to make any money from the insurance of the theft hazard is by calling upon the insured to pay a part of the loss or to charge a rate for complete coverage that is commensurate with the risk as evidenced by the experience of the past year.

This is a message not only to the man who realizes the proportions to which automobile theft is growing, but especially to the man who sits back in his sedan and imagines because his car has never been stolen or because he lives in a small town that his purse will not be affected by the long lists of purloined machines.

It is a message to every motorist to keep his eye on the courts!—American Motorist.

An automobile selling policy that is without a superior for candor and straightforwardness is typified by the sales slogan, "Ride in it—Drive it," which many will recognize as being used by those who sell Liberty motor cars.

W. E. Biggers, for more than four years advertising manager of the Hyatt Roller Bearing Company, and now advertising manager of the motor equipment division, united motors section, General Motors Corporation, which includes the advertising managership of the Hyatt Roller Bearing Company, the Klaxon Company, the Klaxon Steel Products Company, and the Harrison Radiator Corporation, is leaving February 1 to accept the position of assistant to the president of the Owosso Manufacturing Company, at Owosso, Mich.

Over 500 tickets have been sold for the Victory Dinner of the Society of Automotive Engineers to be given at the Hotel Astor, New York, on February 6. It is expected that the number of S. A. E. members in attendance, together with their guests, will amount to 2,000.

A new and bigger demand for motor cars is prophesied for the United States as the returning legions from the fighting front again take their place in the industrial and social life of the nation.

This prophecy is made by the local port dealer, and it is based, not on the wonderful exploits of automotive vehicles in the war zone, but on the change in habits of the personnel of the armies as a result of their military experiences.

"The habit of punctuality and of getting to a given place in the shortest time and with the most economy," says the dealer, "is one that will be firmly stamped upon the character of the returned soldiers. War is based upon timeliness of movement; upon speed and accuracy in carrying out any plan of action, and the boys who come back are going to apply this to their daily business and social life."

Queries and Answers
Conducted by A. C. Warnick, National Auto College.

Spark Plug—What is the trouble when I leave my car, which has been running perfectly, then go to start it and cannot get any spark at the plugs?

Answer—Look at the breaker points in break box mechanism and see that no dirt has bridged the points and that points are opening and closing properly.

By simply running the blade of a small penknife through you can often remedy such a trouble. However, this is not always the cause, but most frequently.

BUYING AUTOS IS STRICTLY BUSINESS

"I have recently been asked a number of times my opinion as to the New Year buying tendencies in local automobile circles," says W. L. Kissel, secretary and treasurer of the Kissel Motor Car Company. "The war proved the utility of this twentieth century carrier. Its ability to meet emergency tests in war time will give it the right of way in peace time.

"This proven efficiency and economy has made the purchase of automobiles a strictly business proposition, just as the purchase of any other time or labor-saving utility. The purchaser is buying transportation—so many miles of economical, reliable, and comfortable travel—a commodity he must have in order to keep up with the present times."

A. A. A. COMPILES REPORT OF ROADS

The American Automobile Association has compiled a report of road conditions on the leading highways leading from Washington to other Eastern and Southern cities. The report follows:

WASHINGTON TO NEW YORK, 240 miles—The present route is via Baltimore, Belair, Conowingo, Rising Sun, Oxford, Pa., Kennett Square, Hamorton, Menden Hall, Wilmington over the main pike through Chester and Darby into Philadelphia via Sixty-first and right over Chestnut. Continue out North Broad to the Circle then over the Lincoln Highway to Trenton, turning right on Broad street, then left over Greenwood avenue to Mercerville, then right via Robbinsville, Hightstown, Cranbury, New Brunswick to Metuchen, making detour to the right via Perth Amboy; then through Elizabeth over the Lincoln way across the Forty-second street ferry into New York city. This route includes all fine bitulithic macadam or concrete. In branching off from Hamorton via Wilmington and Chester into Philadelphia, the motorist avoids the very bad detour near Concordville, where road construction is in progress. Use A. A. A. strip maps, which give complete details.

WASHINGTON TO PITTSBURGH, 250 miles—Go via Rockville, Frederick, Hagerstown, where go west from the Square to North Jonathan, start then right to West Church via Cearfoss and Greencastle to Chambersburg; then westward over the Lincoln Highway, which is marked with red, white, and blue bands on poles through Bedford and Greensburg to Pittsburgh. There are many mountains to be crossed between Chambersburg and Greensburg, Pa., but the road is the very finest bitulithic macadam, and during the winter months snow plows will be constantly used in an effort to keep the route open. The best plan is for the motorist to make Bedford the first day, 155 miles, and then cover the remainder on the second, as the entire run through to Pittsburgh is too great a distance for driving constantly in a single day.

WASHINGTON TO MT. VERNON, 16 miles—The new concrete boulevard from Alexandria to the turn-off into Mt. Vernon is now open and in first class condition. The best route is via the Highway bridge, turning right at the Southern end over Military road past Hume School, making turn to the right just before reaching the circular springhouse which stands in the center of the road. This route brings one into Alexandria via the railroad station, turning sharp left to Alfred street, where turn right and continue across Hunting Creek bridge to a point five miles beyond, where a sign indicates "two miles to Mt. Vernon." Usually the trip can be made in forty minutes.

WASHINGTON TO RICHMOND, 133 miles—Follow the Mt. Vernon route through Alexandria, but instead of making the turn-off into Mt. Vernon, continue straight ahead via Accotink, Occoquan, Dumfries, Fredericksburg, Spottsylvania, Chilesburg, and Ashland to Richmond. On account of a few very poor dirt sections on this route, motorists should not attempt the same unless weather conditions are entirely favorable. If the season has been very dry or if the ground is well frozen, the clay spots can be negotiated with careful driving. Persons contemplating making the trip should call at A. A. A. headquarters in the Riggs building, and secure detailed strip maps and up-to-the-minute information.

HENDEE CO. TO GET EX-ARMY MEN JOBS

Recognizing that there are thousands of men who have become motorcycle experts through service in the army, and that many of these men will be open to opportunities to become repair men, salesmen, demonstrators, and selling representatives as soon as they are discharged, the Hendee Manufacturing Company, manufacturers of Indian motorcycles, has established a soldiers' service department, designed to aid these men in getting positions upon their return to civilian life.

All soldiers returning to civilian life minus a job but with army motorcycle experience are urged to communicate with the soldiers' service department, Hendee Manufacturing Company, immediately. Every effort will be made by the factory to place all applicants in the niche in the motorcycle field they seem best fitted to take up. Applicants should give full particulars in their first letter about themselves, what branch of the motorcycle business they are interested in, whether as repairman, salesman or as a dealer, where they have been stationed, and what form of motorcycle work they have been doing in the service.

Address all communications: Hendee Manufacturing Company, Soldiers' Service Department, Springfield, Mass.

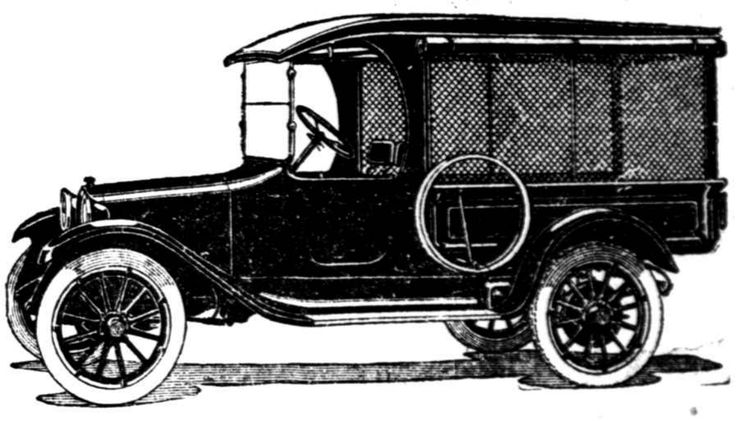
DO YOUR BIT TO GET GOOD ROADS

"If every motor car owner and prospect would do his little mite toward good roads, the benefits to himself and to the country at large would be so great as to practically prohibit an estimate of them," says a local dealer in Dort motor cars.

"I am sure," he goes on, "we all want good roads, but a good many don't seem to realize that to get any improvement like this necessitates action by the individual citizen. Citizens seem too busy to devote time to these things, and yet a few moments by a large number would do more than ceaseless effort by a minority.

"City motorists especially should take this to heart. For city motorists not only like to use the highways for their own touring, but they pay the food bills that are caused in part by lack of good roads on which to truck in the foodstuffs from the farms."

Mr. Autoist:
Know Your Own Car
Save annoyance, delay and dollars on your emergency repairs.
A Special Owners' Course
of 15 Lessons
will qualify you efficiently
Evening Classes for the Busy Man
National Auto College
Phone North 1819 9th & O STS. N. W.

Giant
FIRST TO BURN LOW GRADE FUELS
From Washington Star January 12, 1919
"Necessity is the Mother of Invention"
POOR GRADE "GAS" STIRS MOTORISTS
Dealers Admit Sales of Inferior Quality, But Have No Other.
ONE SUGGESTS REMEDY
Every day since the extreme cold weather set in one has heard innumerable complaints from automobile owners and drivers against the inferior quality of gasoline that is sold by many dealers in this city, and if, according to those in a position to know, the main cause for so many cars, irrespective of make, being stalled, towed or deserted entirely is due to the poor grade of gasoline being used, then it is unquestionably time for the proper authorities to take the matter in hand and remedy the evil.
While the country was at war motorists were only too glad to conform to every edict issued by the government that had to do with the quantity and quality of gasoline to be used, but now that hostilities have ceased and the embargo on gasoline lifted, it is not unreasonable to expect standard quality, especially when they are paying as high, if not higher, prices for it now than they did when the country was in the throes of conservation.
No Excuse for Lean Mixture.
Granted that the overseas demand for gasoline is still enormous, and that the gauge set for testing the specific gravity of the fuel has been lowered by the bureau of standards from 72 of two years ago to 47 today, there is still no excuse for the miserably lean mixture that is being shoved on the public by the manufacturers at present.
Many of the dealers, when interviewed on the subject, freely admitted that the grade of gasoline being sold by them today is of poor quality, but they would invariably ask: "What can be done about it?"
Giant
TRUCKS
THEY BURN LOW GRADE FUELS
Do you realize what that means to the truck buyer, with the price of gasoline going up and the quality going down?
Giant Trucks attain full power on low gravity gasoline or mixtures of kerosene or distillate with gasoline. Giant owners can reduce fuel costs as much as 50 per cent.
Giant Trucks have Timken Worm-drive, Continental motor—highest standardization throughout. Built in 1, 1½, 2 and 3½ ton models. Here is a real volume builder.
CONFIDENCE IN GIANT TRUCKS AND THE SERVICE BEHIND THEM
In claiming for GIANT TRUCKS nothing less than that they are the equal of any truck made (in the same class), and in claiming for our SERVICE that it is superior to that which any truck distributer has thus far offered—our salesmen have been requested when calling upon you to solicit your CONFIDENCE in GIANT TRUCKS and the SERVICE behind them.
After we have gained your CONFIDENCE we will sell you a GIANT TRUCK and the treatment that goes with it—and never will you be allowed to feel that your CONFIDENCE has been misplaced.
A poor truck with good service will outlast the best truck with poor service—
We offer you a mighty good truck with the best of service.
Ask for our list of truck users who bought GIANT TRUCKS because of their CONFIDENCE in us.
Exclusive Agents for D. C., Maryland and Virginia
FORST BROS., Inc.
General Offices and Salesrooms,
1315 NEW YORK AVENUE NORTHWEST
Phone Franklin 6231

DODGE BROTHERS
BUSINESS CAR
A business car built with the same conscientious thoroughness that characterizes all of Dodge Brothers' products.
It will do what it is intended to do in an efficient and economical manner.
It will pay you to visit us and examine this car.
The haulage cost is unusually low.
SEMMES MOTOR COMPANY
613 G St. N. W. Main 9790