

Washington Digest

America May Face Loss Of Farm Export Market

Wickard Finds Less Production No Solution; Army Undertakes to Build 'Morale' Among New Recruits.

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WASHINGTON.—Few people realized how much dynamite there was in that speech on agricultural preparedness which Secretary of Agriculture Wickard delivered at his old alma mater, Purdue university, the other day.

While he didn't come right out and say so in so many words, the secretary sounded the knell of hope for a foreign market for farm surpluses. That speech marked the beginning of a new farm policy in the United States based on what is believed by officials here to be a permanent and not a temporary loss of export trade.

"The facts are," said the secretary, "that the trend of American farm exports has been downward since the turn of the century. Now I don't mean to say that the decline has been constant. You know better than that. It has been by fits and starts. Exports shot up for 15 years. Exports fell off like a stone dropped from a tower after the Smoot-Hawley Tariff act of 1930."

In that paragraph is the secretary's hypothesis from which he draws his conclusions.

SURPLUS STATISTICS

According to the best statistics available here "there are two bales of cotton on hand in the world today for every bale that will probably be used in the current marketing year" and "there are at least 2,000,000,000 bushels of wheat in the world today for which no market exists" and "a similar situation exists in the lard and tobacco markets."

The secretary says that the answer to this problem of farm surpluses cannot be solved with the two words "reduce production" because we "can't reduce the number of people who live on cotton farms, or wheat farms, or tobacco farms, in the same proportions which we can reduce the acreages of these commodities."

Those are the secretary's words but folks with a good pair of glasses have been busy reading between the lines and this is what they say he means:

"When the war is over our exports of farm products, even if they increase for a while, are going to decrease in the long run and we've got to take steps right now to make adjustments in the country."

"Adjustments" is the secretary's own word for it.

OTHER 'PAINFUL' POINTS

More reading between the lines reveals a number of interesting, if somewhat painful, points:

One: Not only must the amount of farm products be cut down, but the number of people on farms has to be cut down (i. e. other means of income found for them).

Two: Not only must the unsuccessful farmer adjust himself to this situation by raising stuff that he can eat himself or by getting some other work, but the successful farmer will have to make some adjustments.

For instance, he will have to expect a certain amount of inter-regional competition. Concretely that means that the cotton farmer will be raising more of his own meat, poultry, and corn. Some of this will spill over and compete with the corn-belt and dairy farmer.

It also means that in self-defense the successful farmer will have to co-operate in supporting economic and political effort toward raising the income of the unsuccessful farmer and the whole low-income group.

This will mean that the big farm organizations which hitherto have used most of their influence in Washington to get better prices for farm products will have to use some of their influence to raise these low incomes, so there will be a bigger home market for the farmers' products. At least, that's the way Washington officials look at the farm situation today.

Army Is Busy Building 'Morale'

Napoleon said an army moves on its stomach. He was right and it cannot be an empty stomach either. That's why in Uncle Sam's new army a cook is a cook and not just somebody who says he is because

he thinks it's easier to be a doughboy than a doughboy.

But a full stomach is not all it takes to make a fighting man. It takes morale, and this time the government has done two things to build that highly necessary factor. It has begun early, before there is a war. It has taken over the whole job to itself instead of farming it out, as it did in the last war, to civilian organizations like the Y.M.C.A.

And it's a big job, under the office of the adjutant general. The division in the long west wing of the Munitions building in Washington has 50 clerks and 15 officers just to take care of the Washington end. In the various camps and posts are the many morale services all under this division—the Army Motion Picture Service, the Camp Publications, Post Exchanges, Service Clubs, Guest Houses, and even entertainment for soldiers in towns near the training areas.

In the last war it was learned what a valuable factor dramatics played in camp life and they will be encouraged. The Moving Picture Service will offer regular commercial films, but it will also show educational films, and much military instruction will be given by means of the moving picture. Top flight moving picture executives are serving on a committee assisting in the production of these pictures.

Athletics, of course, are a part of morale and are considered important also both from the standpoint of physical training and the building of an aggressive spirit which the modern soldier must possess.

As Major General Bell said in the last war, "A singing army is a fighting army," and singing will be a part of the show. The army has its own song book and mass singing will be encouraged.

The Post Exchange, which is sort of an army general store, is a business in itself. To get an idea of how much of a business a Post Exchange can be, the one at Chantrelle field, Rantoul, Ill., took in nearly \$100,000 in one month last fall.

Already a number of camp publications have started. I looked over several of them at Morale Headquarters and some are exceedingly businesslike looking sheets. I noticed in the office was a file of the "Stars and Stripes," the famous newspaper of the American Expeditionary Force in France. Harold Ross, who edited it in Paris, is now the highly successful head of the New Yorker magazine; Alexander Woollcott, who was on the staff, is one of America's best-known writers and story tellers. It was my privilege to serve on that paper after the Armistice and I covered the Peace conference under the able direction of John Winterich, then a rear-ear private but now editor of the paper. He is now Major Winterich, attached to the office of the assistant secretary of war. Probably many famous journalists of coming generations will get their training on some of these newspapers run under the auspices of the New Morale Division.

Another highly publicized group of this new division are the hostesses. But their job has been largely misunderstood. Let me quote from Lieut. Col. Harry Terry, writing in the Commerce magazine:

"The term 'hostess' for these business women is a misnomer—they might more properly be called 'secretaries,' which in fact they are. They are the assistants of the Division Commander and carry out his wishes in conducting their various duties."

"Providing social entertainment, running dances and other entertainment for thousands of men is no night club job. It will require a high degree of organization ability and no mean attainment in social arts and graces. Operating a cafeteria to meet the requirements of both visitors and troops in such a manner as to build the morale of troops and convince the mothers, sisters and sweethearts that their men are being adequately cared for requires a high degree of technical knowledge and immense tact. Finally, to supervise all these activities as well as the buying of food and supplies will need a person of more than good looks and a pleasant smile."

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PROBLEM IN COTTON

One of the first steps taken in carrying out Secretary Wickard's policy is the supplemental cotton program under which farmers who reduce their acreage below the 1941 national acreage allotment will be compensated with stamps which are good for manufactured cotton goods.

This attacks the problem of the cotton surplus from both ends—cuts down production and uses up the stock by increasing the demand for the finished product.

Washington Merry-Go-Round

CONVOYS FOR SHIPS TO BRITAIN

WASHINGTON.—Advisers who have talked to the President during the last four months say that he has gone through a significant transition regarding aid to Britain, also regarding a more aggressive policy toward Japan.

Last August, for instance, Secretaries Stimson, Knox and Morgenthau, who have strong influence on international policy, wanted Roosevelt to bar all oil shipments to Japan. But the state department persuaded Roosevelt to the contrary.

Several months later, when the duke of Windsor flew to visit Roosevelt during his Caribbean cruise, the duke put up to him the desperate plight of British shipping and asked for American naval convoys to protect British ships across the Atlantic. To this the President gave an emphatic No.

It was at approximately the same time that the late Lord Lothian came back from England and submitted a list of the naval vessels Britain would need to maintain her lifeline of supplies from the U. S. A. The list included not only destroyers, but four cruisers of the Omaha class.

Lord Lothian did not actually ask for these ships. He merely listed the vessels which Britain desperately needed. But Roosevelt continued to shy away from the idea of conveying British ships with U. S. naval vessels.

Later certain White House advisers, including such powerful figures as Secretaries Knox and Stimson, pointed out that the British navy had lost a terrific toll of men, did not even have enough seamen to man the American over-age destroyers. What Britain needed was ships manned by the U. S. navy.

The British picture was also made depressing by the difficulty of finishing work on vessels in British shipyards. Two battleships of the King George class were launched last spring, but since then no ship of any importance has come off the ways. Reason is that the bombardment of Britain began in earnest last summer, and shipyards have been one of the main targets. Since the yards are exposed, they have suffered much more than factories. As a result, ships have been bombed, patched up, then bombed again.

Another development is that within the last 10 days in the Mediterranean, where the British have lost the equivalent of seven ships. The Southampton was sunk, the Illustrious was put out of commission, and five others damaged so badly that repairs will take two or three months. Repairs are difficult in the Mediterranean, because Malta is under constant bombardment and the naval base at Gibraltar is small. Meanwhile, German bombers, realizing that the strength of the British fleet in the Mediterranean is the key to victory, have taken over Italian bases and are raining destruction on the royal navy.

It was the succession of these developments which began to change Roosevelt's mind about U. S. naval convoys for British shipping.

Note—No commitments have been given the British, and no policy has been definitely decided for conveying British ships. But advisers believe the President will adopt such a policy if permitted by congress.

SCURRILOUS LITERATURE

Sensational feature of the forthcoming report of the senate campaign fund investigating committee will be an expose of scurrilous literature disseminated in last year's hectic presidential battle. A 500-page "scrapbook" of exhibits has been assembled by Harold Buckles, committee investigator, from all over the country.

While partisans of both candidates resorted to this type of literature, more than 80 per cent of Buckles' collection is anti-Roosevelt. Also, of 466 typical exhibits, one-half are wholly anonymous or only vaguely identified.

The committee lists 135 such groups, of which 111 were pro-Willkie and 22 pro-Roosevelt. Only six of the 135 filed reports of their contributions and expenditures with the clerk of the house. This failure to report is a violation of the law and carries heavy penalties.

Dominant theme of the scurrilous literature is racial and religious prejudice. More than 60 per cent of the committee's exhibits harp on this, 10 per cent played up the war issue, and 15 per cent leveled foul personal attacks on the candidates.

Note—Committee investigators are of the private opinion that not less than \$10,000,000 was spent for this material.

MERRY-GO-ROUND

Sam Pryor, ball-bearing-tongued national committeeman from Connecticut, is pushing lame-duck Governor Baldwin as successor to National Chairman Joe Martin. Some time ago Pryor had his own ambitions for the job, but was stopped dead by a blunt warning from mid-western leaders.

Franklin Field is a famous football gridiron; also the name of a man who urges more Good Neighborliness through private aviation.

GENERAL HUGH S. JOHNSON Says:

Washington, D. C.

ROOSEVELT THE LEADER
No matter how much you may disagree with him, or how sincerely you feel that the course he has followed and is following is dangerous to the very principles he is trying to uphold, you have to concede, that our third-term President is a great credit to our country in a troubled world.

Nobody could help being proud of General Pershing among the Allied commanders of the World War. No foreign general approached him in soldierly appearance and bearing. None contributed more to Allied victory. It made you glad that you too were an American to see him in any contrast with soldiers of other nations. For every good quality of his is a characteristically American quality refined and brought to a peak of excellence. He looked American, talked American and acted American.

All this was especially apparent and must have been emphasized to the whole world throughout the day of his third inauguration. This column isn't going to go softy in its debate of what it thinks are Mr. Roosevelt's dangerous errors in these critical times, but there is surely no aspect of that in acknowledging a thrill of pride in the thought that I am a citizen of the same country of which he is President and that, in the face of a world so dangerous, this country has a leader of such commendable stature.

No matter what fate may have in store for Mr. Roosevelt—and for us—I think that for good or ill, he will also take his place in that company. As President of the United States I don't agree with him, but as a citizen of the United States I am proud of him just the same.

YOUR OWN GALLUP POLL

The lowering level of British dollar credits may be a reason for hastening some kind of provisions for granting credits or even gifts to England, so that her placing of orders here may not be delayed, thus delaying deliveries a year from now. But that is no reason for bum's-rushing the "lease-lend" monstrosity through congress without ample debate.

That bill is very much more than an aid-to-Britain bill. It is an abdication of congressional war powers to the President and authorizes him to engage in economic and partial military and naval war, for or in behalf of any nation anywhere in the world. That is not at all necessary for aid-to-Britain, which could be given to the full of whatever has been asked by her in a much simpler bill and without surrendering our constitutional form of government in favor of a one-man commander-in-chief of all our destinies. There is no popular demand for any such revolutionary action. There is popular demand for aid-to-Britain. Advantage has been taken of this to write a bill for a military dictatorship and then say: "This is aid-to-Britain—in the only way." That simply is not true. It is a cruel misleading of the public and a misuse of public opinion, as are many other aspects of this bill.

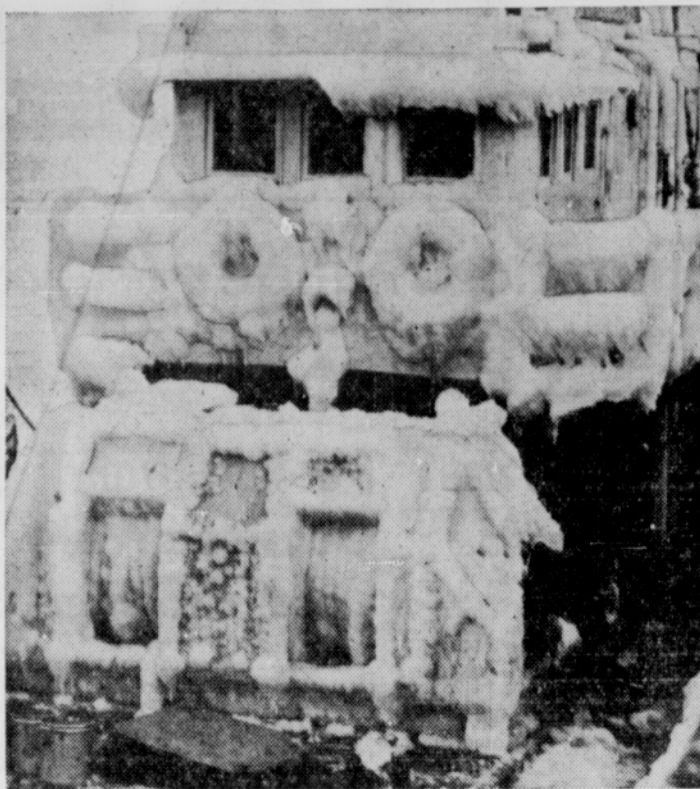
In this remark, our tendency to government by Gallup polls is somewhat responsible. During a recent five days in bed with flu, I had a chance to check up on my fan mail. It is full of sentiment for aid-to-Britain. It is overwhelmingly against our rushing into this war. As the points made in this column are beginning to be understood, it is increasingly against the bill. I believe if the bill is debated long enough to make clear what is going on here, it can never pass without amendments restricting it to the real popular purpose—aid-to-Britain.

No Gallup polls have brought out these distinctions. The questions, especially recently, have been increasingly phrased in such a way as to lead to answers looking to our greater and greater unnecessary involvement in war. Yet every poll posing the stark question of involvement results in resounding "no's," in overwhelming majority.

Here is an experiment that every American bewildered by these sinister developments can make for himself. Conduct your own Gallup Poll. When you hear from Washington (as you will because that is part of the pro-war propaganda) that the people overwhelmingly want this bill or something vastly more than aid-to-Britain, set aside a part of every day, to ask not only friends, but strangers, whether they want to go further than aid-to-Britain?

I can't guarantee the result, but from my mail most of our people don't want to go a step further than the "preparation of an impregnable American defense and such help to beleaguered Britain as can be given without getting us into bloody war. Try it yourself. If you find the facts as my mail indicates, make yourself heard in Washington by exercising your constitutional right of informing your representatives in congress what their constituents think. These are critical days in the Battle of America. It is your battle for the future.

Trawler Rescues 5 in Ship Crash



The ice-covered rescue trawler, North Star, pictured upon arrival at the Boston fish pier after bringing to shore five rescued fishermen from the sunken schooner, Mary E. O'Hara, which went down outside Boston harbor, after a collision with an unknown craft. Eighteen fishermen lost their lives in the crash that took place just before daybreak.

Confers With FDR



John G. Winant, former Republican New Hampshire governor, pictured as he stepped off the plane in Washington reportedly to confer with President Roosevelt regarding his appointment as the next U. S. ambassador to England.

Two Killed in Crash of Airliner



This picture shows the wreckage of a Transcontinental and Western airliner, which crashed near Lambert field, St. Louis, Mo., while landing at dawn. The big sleeper plane crashed after striking a tree with a wing tip in a steep turn close to the ground. The crash brought death to two and injuries to 12 persons aboard.

Testifies



Col. Charles A. Lindbergh, as he testified before the house foreign affairs committee on the lease-lend bill. He suggested a "negotiated peace" in Europe.

London Firemen Douse Hitler's Fire Bombs



This photo, passed by British censor, shows a group of firemen wetting down burnt ruins after an inferno that raged all around St. Paul's cathedral, in London. In the distance the tower of St. Paul's can readily be seen. The fire was caused by incendiaries dropped by Hitler's "luft-waffe," and for awhile threatened a huge section of London.

Gets 'Fine Points'



Sir Hugh Dowding, right, Britain's "air ambassador" to the U. S., is shown the fine points of a new high-speed Martin bomber by J. T. Hartson, executive of the Glenn Martin company. Sir Hugh is making a survey of our aircraft factories.

Transferred at Demand of Germans



Leigh W. Hunt, second consular secretary, Mrs. Elizabeth Deegan of Asheville, N. C., and Cecil M. P. Cross, consul of Providence, R. I., all members of the U. S. embassy staff in Paris who were transferred at German official demand on charges of having aided a British officer. They returned to America aboard a clipper.

Resigns



O. K. Armstrong, magazine writer, who resigned from the "No Foreign War" committee because of differences with Chairman Verne Marshall, shown at a press conference in Washington.

SOIL EROSION

Soil erosion is costing the United States more than \$3,800,000,000 a year, according to H. H. Bennett, chief of the U. S. soil conservation service. Half our land has been damaged. But farmers are working on soil conservation on 250,000,000 acres today and Bennett says that in the next 10 years, it will be possible for conservation forces to balance land-waste forces in the country.