

ECONOMIC CRASH IS FORESEEN BY GRANGE LEADER

Only One Per Cent of Soldiers
Who Left Farms Returned,
He Claims; Labor Is Scarce.

By David Lawrence

Washington, Feb. 3. — An economic crash is coming as an inevitable result of the high cost of living, increased demand for more wages and less hours of labor, scarcity of farm labor and diminished production of foodstuffs.

City folks need to be more concerned than farmers.

There is no "unrest" among the agricultural citizenry of the United States, as the word was used in analyzing the 46,000 answers given last week to the questionnaire of the postoffice department, but there is widespread dissatisfaction and growing distress over the vicious circle in which the economics of these reconstruction days is traveling.

WORKER NOT BLAMED

Unrest has been applied so often to the discontent of Bolsheviks and would-be destroyers of organized government that the word is resented by the spokesmen of farm organizations who insist that "dissatisfaction with present conditions" would have been a more accurate phrase and that if "unrest"

comes it will be in the city as a consequence of rural causes.

Thus does Professor T. C. Atkeson, Washington representative of the national grange and recently a member of President Wilson's first industrial peace conference, analyze the present clash of city and rural interests, and his explanation is all the more interesting because he believes congress can present no cure, and because he doesn't blame city workmen for refusing to sell his services for less than he thinks he can get.

MEN QUIT FARMING

He reveals incidentally a big fact, namely, that the United States has not assimilated its returned army and that hardly 1 per cent of the boys who used to work on the farms before the war have gone back to the country.

How serious that is can readily be imagined when it is realized that fully half of the membership of the American Expeditionary forces, to say nothing of the men who went to camps in America, came from the farms.

"The questionnaire of the postoffice department," said Professor Atkeson, who for 19 years was dean of the Agricultural College of West Virginia, "shows plainly how city people have been misled as to country conditions. I dislike the word 'unrest.' The farmers are simply distressed at their growing inability to cultivate the land. They can't do what they want to do. The labor market is rapidly making it impossible for them to feed the country. Somebody is going to go hungry. Unrest may come as a consequence in the city."

FOOD CHEAPEST OF ALL

"The inability to obtain farm labor is the most serious thing. Before the war the farmer trained his children and hired help in the country. Now, with the attractive wages in the city, the farmer boys who were in the army don't want to come back to the country, and I don't blame them or anybody else for staying in the city if higher wages are obtainable there. But city people must realize that as farm labor gets scarce, the country must begin offering higher

wages and thus costs of production must rise.

"Add to that the great cost of distribution and you see why the cost of living is going up. Why, reckoned relatively, food is the cheapest thing of all. Our city friends ought to realize that there are about seven million farmers selling individually. They can't profit. They are helpless because they have to take what is offered them. They have no organization to fix prices and there are no signs of one. They deal individually."

CITY HAS ADVANTAGE

"Now, I know that nobody ever sold what he has to sell, either skill or labor or commodities, for less than he thought he could get. We all do it. We should recognize it as a fundamental fact."

"Well, the normal source of farm labor—namely, the sons of farmers—is almost gone. The farmer boys who went into the army got a taste of the world and city life. They have rubbed up against city companions and are lured by high wages and what appears to them a more attractive life. I am told that of 55,000 questionnaires sent out to men in connection with the demobilization of troops, about one per cent appear to have gone back to the farms."

"Also, farm laborers don't want to stay in the country if the city offers them better opportunities. Nominally, a farm laborer gets for his day's work the equivalent of a bushel of wheat. The other day I had some carpenter work done at my house in the city and what I paid for 10 hours of work would have bought a barrel of flour or four and a half bushels of wheat. A man is a fool for staying in the country if he can get that much more in the city."

DUE FOR REVELATION

"But some day those high wage fellows are going to wake up and find there isn't enough food to go around at any price. It is something like conditions after the Civil war when we paid \$8 a keg for cut nails for about four years and then suddenly the price dropped to about 30 cents a keg. "We had been selling wheat at \$3 a bushel, then it came down to 60 cents

a bushel. Certain people got hurt in the crash."

"There is little use of talking about the high cost of living when you consider the high cost of city labor. The cost of distribution, moreover, is all out of proportion to the cost of food production. What we need is increased production everywhere, in the city as well as the farm."

"Instead of agitating for shorter hours and more pay it would be much better if everybody in the cities and factories worked harder for the present high scale of wages."

CROWD INTO CITIES

In the same connection Judge O. G. Smith of Nebraska, president of the National Farmers' congress, told his colleagues at their gathering here that the actual condition of winter wheat today showed only 87 per cent normal and a falling off of about 33 per cent in production. The leaders of the farm organizations—and they all have national headquarters here—insist also that people are crowding every bit of housing space in the city, while in the outlying districts and suburbs there are plenty of vacant houses.

As for the talk about profiteering among farmers, Professor Atkeson pointed to the statement just issued by the department of agriculture, which says:

"The average net income of 324 farms in the richest portions of Iowa, with no allowance whatever for interest on the investment in land and equipment, was \$3480. If 5 per cent be allowed for interest on the investment, at the value of land before the so-called 'boom,' there is left an average of only \$1124 to pay for the labor of the farmer himself and for the risk to the business."

PREDICTS BIG SMASH

"On the basis of average values of land in August, 1919, there would be left an average of only \$151 to pay the interest on the value of the land and equipment."

The fact is that the prices of food rose and the rise in land values followed. The rise in food production have moved up in approximately the same proportion as general prices and in response to the some world wide causes—

war scarcities and currency inflation. If prices of farm products were to any degree lower than they are, they would be entirely out of line with the prices of other products.

The viewpoint of the government appears to conform to that of the spokesmen of the farmers' organizations.

"Well, what is the answer, what are we going to do about it?" was the question I asked Professor Atkeson. "There isn't anything to do," he said. "Things must take their natural course—people in the cities will not be convinced any other way. There'll be a big smash and prices will fall, then people will leave the farms and there will be more labor to cultivate the land and produce food."

Mrs. Dempsey Denies Use of Words That Are Credited to Her

San Francisco, Feb. 2.—(U. P.)—Jack Dempsey and Jack Kearns, his manager, arrived here today, armed with what they said were proofs that Mrs. Maxine Dempsey is prepared to repudiate her charge that the heavyweight champion evaded the draft.

The two Jacks came to meet the federal authorities and insist upon a rigid federal investigation, they said. "This affair has gone so far that we insist that it be thoroughly threshed out," said Kearns.

The Fiske people have informed me that they have investigated at Salt Lake, where Mrs. Dempsey now is, and that she has told them she has been misquoted," said Kearns. "She told them further that she was brought under the influence of liquor and that words had been put into her mouth."

Government Clears Neat Sum in Sales Of Sealskins, Furs

St. Louis, Feb. 3.—(U. P.)—The government made approximately \$500,000 more than it had anticipated in the sale of sealskins at the opening session of the international fur exchange sale Monday, according to Dr. H. M. Smith, United States commissioner of fisheries.

The sealskins offered by the government netted \$1,282,000 while the amount anticipated was between \$700,000 and \$800,000, the commissioner said.

Russian babies, valued at nearly \$2,000,000, are included among the lots of skins which will be offered before the sale is ended. Other lots include silver fox skins, sea otter pelts and lynx.

Services Held for Mrs. T. A. Mason, Bickleton Pioneer

Bickleton, Wash., Feb. 3.—Funeral services for Mrs. Tabitha A. Mason, 79 years of age, a pioneer of this section, were held here Thursday. She died at Yakima, Wash., January 27, after an illness of four years.

Mrs. Mason came to Klickitat county in 1854, settling on what is known as the old Mason place. In addition to her seven sons, she "mothered" every homeless boy. She also took the place of a mother for a granddaughter. She leaves seven sons, 16 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. The sons are: John F. of Prosser, William W. of Bickleton, Samuel H. Charles A. and Benjamin L. of Yakima, Wash.; Emmett W. of Moro and Victor W. of Helix, Or.

Philatelic Society Member Corners the Postage Stamp Mart

Seattle, Feb. 2.—(U. P.)—After years of ceaseless energy and the outlay of much money, Clyde D. Brill of Tacoma, member of the Washington State Philatelic society, has cornered nearly every copy in America of the first postage stamp—much sought after by collectors the world over.

The stamp is known as the "penny black" of England and was issued by parliament in 1840. Prior to that time postage stamps were unknown. Brill announced at the eighth annual banquet of the Philatelic society Saturday night that he had "bought the market" and obtained 1600 copies of the stamp.

Myrtle Point Man Sleeps for 6 Weeks

Marshfield, Feb. 3.—Dr. William House of Portland arrived here Monday to consult with Dr. L. G. Johnson on a case of sleeping sickness. John Lewilan of Myrtle Point has been affected with the disease for six weeks. He is at the hospital in North Bend and has been asleep for practically all that time.

President Sprule of the Southern Pacific, who made an inspection tour here with other officials, announced that the old Coos Bay Limited may be put back on the run between Portland and Coos Bay and that there also may be put on a night train at least three times a week.

Trade With Germany Steadily Increases

Washington, Feb. 3.—(U. P.)—That the United States is beginning to trade with Germany on a large scale is indicated in figures made public today by the department of commerce, which show that during December this country exported \$17,297,077 worth of merchandise to Germany. The imports received, from Germany during that month totalled \$2,486,323 against \$102,842 in December of 1918.

Coinage of Silver Increases at Mints

Washington, Feb. 3.—(U. P.)—Coinage of silver at all mints during January amounted to \$2,891,300. It was stated today at the treasury department. The coinage of half dollars amounted to \$510,000; the coinage of quarters \$1,221,000; the coinage of dimes \$1,260,300. The value of the 5-cent pieces coined was \$537,000 and of the pennies \$105,900.

Cabinet Men Take Office
Washington, Feb. 3.—(U. P.)—In the presence of all the high treasury department officials and bureau heads, David Houston Monday was sworn in as secretary of the treasury. Edward T. Meredith of Des Moines was sworn in as secretary of agriculture.

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"It's a Bird"

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If you have a fountain pen that won't travel except on "low" leave it at our

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Our pen doctor can repair it so it will skim right along on "high." And his charges are pleasantly moderate.

We'll agree that a

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show us the person—man or woman—who won't be **HUGELY** delighted to receive one of our eye-pleasing delfly worded Woodard-Clarke kind.

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These dainty effective toilet preparations are so moderately priced.

Nikk Marr Face Dressing 50c and \$1.00
Nikk Marr Veil Balm 50c and \$1.00
Nikk Marr Peerless Velvet Cream 50c and \$1.00

Maxine Elliot Butter-milk Soap, 10c; three cakes 25c
Kirk's Peroxide Soap, three cakes 25c
Molena's Cucumber Cream 50c
Molena's Face Lotion 25c

Egyptian Lotion, \$1.00
Peerless Almond Cream for 50c, 50c, 85c
Peppermint Tooth Paste for 50c
Colgate's Dental Ribbon for 25c

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