

The Oregon Statesman

"No Favor Sways Us; No Fear Shall Awe"
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OPA Extension

The most important issue before congress at this time is the question of the extension of OPA. The house banking committee voted Friday to prolong its life by one year, but made revisions in the present act under which OPA operates. For example price controls are required to be relinquished when supply in various lines of production comes into balance with demand, the maximum average price policy (MAP of the clothiers) is banned and historic margins of retailers are protected by law. The second change strikes at the OPA directive designed to increase output of low-cost clothing and the second to protect automobile, radio and other dealers from being forced to absorb certain authorized increases in manufacturers' prices.

Left to the people as a whole the OPA would probably be continued by a substantial majority. Left, to the business and farming community it would be abolished. The consumer group feels the pinch of price increases but feels some restraining hand must still be used to prevent further price inflation. The business community, fed up on OPA regulations, and in many cases eager for breaking OPA's price-dike, would either throw price control out the window or force changes in its administration. The upshot will be that the life of OPA will be prolonged, congress being unwilling to take responsibility for killing it off.

The Statesman favors extension of OPA, though it lacks confidence in its ability to do the job well, and is fearful of price revolt in the nature of added black market operations or of production slowdowns because of the imbalance of OPA pricing policies. We are not all impressed with OPA's praise of itself as it looks at itself in the mirror. Granting the deficiencies of OPA, it remains true that removal of all controls now would be a grave risk to the economy, from exorbitant price increases. The skyrocketing of real estate prices is an index of what might occur without control.

Nor is this paper impressed with the attempts of congress to alter OPA's policies. If OPA is too stiff-necked, congress is too pliant to pressure. The reasoning back of OPA's narrowing the margin on retailers of cars and appliances was sound, namely that volume would make narrower margins possible without sacrifice of fair earnings.

We shall be heartily glad when price controls are thrown off. They will become increasingly irritating as the time from the fighting lengthens. One year is surely the maximum for extending OPA's life; in fact six months might see enough of a change to warrant its demise. Maybe if we draw on reserves of patience we can survive OPA's control for one more year. That surely is the maximum to be endured.

Hail to Highway

Almost simultaneously with announcement that a first call for bids on the new North Santiam highway would be made in May The Statesman publishes on another page in today's issue a map of the route of the relocated highway and a profile of the section which will hug the present high side of the canyon to get above the high dam across the river and the resulting pool. News of a bid call with its inference of an early letting of contract (prices permitting) is indeed welcome. For about two decades residents of the country tributary to the North Santiam route have plead for its construction. The section above Detroit to the junction with the South Santiam was completed about ten years ago; the county roads below Gates were passable the year round; but the 20-mile section between Gates and Detroit remained a scenic wonder and a driver's agony. The narrow, tortuous trail hung in places over the canyon and at others made hairpin turns with "visibility zero." As a result accidents were numerous, many of them fatal, and the highway gathered ill repute.

Given this new, wide road the North Santiam highway will become a prime favorite for travel between the central valley and central Oregon. How fast the construction will be pressed is not announced, but because of the eagerness to get the dam built we anticipate that the road work will be pushed. Maybe by sometime in 1948 the section will be completed. That will be a day for real celebration, when the road is opened for traffic. Meantime the county should urge on the highway commission attention to the reconstruction or relocation of the road from Mill City to Salem, to bring this portion up to modern standards.

An Unwritten Story

Finally captured after being hunted down in the mountains of Jugo-Slavia, Gen. Draja Mihailovic is to go on trial for treason. This one-time war minister in the cabinet of King Peter, leader of the Chetniks who by report carried on the struggle against the Germans after the fall of Belgrade, is charged with collaboration with the nazis. But American airmen downed in Jugo-Slavia have asked to testify in behalf of the general whose forces rescued them and escorted them to safety. Our own department of state has asked permission for them to appear as witnesses.

Here must be a real story, one not yet written. After Jugo-Slavia was overrun by the Germans the hardy Serbs under Mihailovic withdrew into the mountains, and were reported to be continuing the fight against the invaders. Time went on, and word came out of Jugo-Slavia that a new force, the Partisans under a general called Tito, was emerging. This force claimed that the Chetniks were collaborators, that they, the Partisans, were the

true enemies of the nazis. Civil strife broke out between the two factions. The Jugo-Slav government-in-exile supported its war minister, Mihailovic.

The Partisans were openly leftists and seemed to be forging ahead. Then Churchill, anxious to avert any communist front on the Adriatic, sent his son to Tito's headquarters, and threw the weight of his influence and a volume of British supplies to Tito's side. Americans did likewise. The Partisans prevailed. In May, 1944, the government-in-exile dismissed Mihailovic as its war minister and Tito's mastery was acknowledged. The star of the one-time Chetnik chieftain waned, and now sets in the unkind glow of a trial for treason. Dr. Ivan Subasic, present foreign minister of Jugo-Slavia, and the prime minister who made the deal to chuck Peter and Mihailovic and accept Tito, said last year that the government had evidence to convict its own former war minister and that he would be shot. That probably will be his fate; but the outside world still wonders if his treason consisted in collaboration with the Germans or in resistance to the Partisans. Some American army personnel are unwilling to have him condemned without testifying in his behalf. Before the arrested leader faces the firing squad someone should get his story of the past eventful six years.

The St. Helens Sentinel-Mist calls it "brunette" bread. Gentlemen still prefer blonde.

Behind the News

By PAUL MALLON

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WASHINGTON, April 6.—Mr. Truman and his reconvert John Snyder have been bragging that the "production of civilian goods and services" has reached the peak of all time. They want to prove by some unexplained generalized figures on income and dollar volume that production has been more than restored and reconversion accomplished.

"Taint so. There are tricks in it, to wit:

A foremost weekly index of actual production from a non-governmental source places our output for the week ending March 23 at 131 compared with 143 a year ago and about 127 for 1941. Miscellaneous car loadings are less than a year ago, as are steel, electric power and lumber production, but "other car loadings" and paper-board production are above a year ago.

Messrs. Truman and Snyder did not tabulate actual volume of production, but only dollar volumes and income, and they made no allowances for price increases. Furthermore, they said only that "civilian" production was at all time peak. There is no way of telling how much of the above-cited production is still army, navy and marine, but a portion must be. So the discrepancy is somewhat greater than the figures indicate.

Producers Say Situation Bad

Producers themselves tell me the situation is bad. Ford publicly closed his plant for a week the very day the president spoke, because he could not keep enough steel on hand to warrant continuing operations. Every producer has that same trouble in one way or another. Manufacturers cannot get little things. An air conditioning maker finds his particular kind of steel for certain parts difficult to obtain because the steel companies will not manufacture much of it, saying they lose \$15 a ton on it because of the OPA ceiling. The steel companies are producing other more profitable lines. Then the air conditioning man finds for a time he cannot get motors, finds a shortage of bearings due to strikes, cannot get production of a special copper bolt which is essential. His production line operates off again, on again, off again—and the doctors are operating on the manufacturer.

As far as "civilian services" are concerned, there are not any restored around here. Cleaners require 3 to 6 weeks to clean a suit. Skirtmakers and many other lines inform their customers flatly: "We are not taking any more orders." They will not even consider delivery months hence. Parts for auto repairs are unavailable throughout the United States in some vital cases.

Five Months for Pitted Suit

A tailor took an order for a suit the first of last November and gave the first fitting at the end of March—five months later. He will not promise the suit by summer. Some outfitters are already stopping orders for summer suits—imagine it, next summer's suits. Meat supplies in Washington are getting bad again, only inferior grades of a few lines having been available the past few weeks.

There are no autos, coal, refrigerators, nylons, and only a few radios. A considerable (say 10 to 15 per cent) improvement in sales-stocks can be noted in many lines, and a bare beginning toward restoration is noticeable. The experience of the average citizen in these parts will strictly deny, however, any claim that production has been restored in "civilian services."

Now there has been a great acceleration in dollar volume of production in such lines as liquor (but not good liquor), department store sales and some particular food products, and these no doubt caused Mr. Snyder's figures to swell to the conclusions he induced the president to make from them.

"Cannot Yet Speak of Production"

But if you figure a 25 to 50 per cent increase in such items (I have noticed in my purchases price increases as high as 400 per cent) even the visible results of greater production in restricted lines do not loom formidably when compared with the job of sizing the production bottleneck up to demand. As measured with demand, we cannot yet begin to speak of "production."

But if civilian goods and services are at an all time peak and going higher in the next few months to satisfy demands, then, Mr. Truman will not need his OPA regulations much beyond June 30, the date at which they are scheduled to expire. If the shortages continue, and no fulfilling relaxation of them is yet discernible here, OPA will be needed for many a month and perhaps another year or more. As Mr. Truman simultaneously demanded OPA, I judge just between us that he does not anticipate the volume of production we need, anytime soon.



Spring—and UNO—in the Bronx

The Literary Guidepost

By W. G. ROGERS

CONFESSIONS OF A EUROPEAN INTELLECTUAL, by FRANK SCHÖNBERRGER (Maxwell Erling).

Former editor of Auslandspost, Jugend and Simplissimus, which was founded just 50 years ago, this author gives a most credible account of the Germany from which he fled in 1933 after a brave battle against the nazis.

He is the inspired essayist, who takes up an idea as the hiker takes an unmarked path, never sure where it will lead but always arriving at a place worth going to. He progresses something like this: 1, belief in abstract thinking; 2, loss of belief, after a meal which upsets him; 3, idea that "a really complete autobiography should also include a short survey of all the daily menus." Or like this: 1, lonely office at Auslandspost; 2, crowded editorial sessions in this country; 3, the suggestion that even in a democracy three or four or more men can't do one man's job when that job is to execute decisions.

Commenting on the "strange German dualism which separated the religious and intellectual sphere from that of political and social reality," he reports "most of the really intelligent people were not interested in politics." He is not above poking fun at the idea that Hitler could be stopped by poking fun at Hitler—which was what Simplissimus cartoons did superbly.

Those of us who keep asking why the Germans themselves did not succeed in preventing Hitler's rise are reminded, fairly enough, that they did as much toward that end as the democratic countries did in the early years to check Hitler's Germany.

Schoenberger tells some revealing stories about disciplined German citizens who risked their lives by exposing themselves to bullets in order to obey a sort of "keep off the grass" sign, or nearly starved in the midst of ample government foods for lack of a written order permitting them to eat those supplies.

Unable to speak English two years ago, Schoenberger writes it with an understanding of connotations and a sense for phrasing which many American authors ought to envy, and to emulate.

Scientific endeavor progresses only as science discovers and utilizes the exacting laws of the natural order. Human living progresses only as mankind discovers and utilizes the exacting laws of the moral order. As Charles Fletcher Cole once put it: "The Golden Rule works like gravitation."

We need to remember that justice, righteousness, equality, decency, brotherhood and love are basic principles so woven into the fabric of life that if we break one thread we mar the whole pattern.

IT SEEMS TO ME

(Continued from page 1)

misshapen illustrations of the even more grotesque narrative were never repelled me, for I never managed to get the book read through. Fairy tales I could endure though they seemed more like girls' reading matter. At least the fancy of the fairy tales was gracefully drawn, while Alice's Wonderland was improbable, unromantic and unappealing. I preferred the red-tail, after a meal which upsets him; 3, idea that "a really complete autobiography should also include a short survey of all the daily menus." Or like this: 1, lonely office at Auslandspost; 2, crowded editorial sessions in this country; 3, the suggestion that even in a democracy three or four or more men can't do one man's job when that job is to execute decisions.

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Practical Religion

—by Rev. John L. Knight, Jr.,
Counselor on Religious Life,
Willamette University.

In this modern scientific era when we are extremely conscious of natural law, religion needs to re-emphasize moral law. That is, we should be reminded that the moral order of the universe is just as real and as sure as the natural order.

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all, but one for adults. For children it is just a nonsense book, the crazier its story the more it is appreciated by the agile mind of budding childhood. It really takes the adult however to enjoy its subtle humor, and Carroll's artistry on the literary lath.

Other people, I have found, did not relish "Alice" until they were grown. And in-looking up some material on the work I find in a printed transcription of a radio dialogue on CBS several years ago Mark Van Doren asking the novelist Katherine Ann Porter: "I was curious to know whether you, like other women of my acquaintance, were horrified by this book rather than made happy by it when you were a little girl." She responded, "I was; it was a horror story to me."

And Bertrand Russell, who admitted growing up on a first edition of "Alice," gave this comment:

"I don't regard it now as a perfectly satisfactory children's book. . . . In fact, I should like to label it 'For Adults Only.' I don't think it's a suitable book for the young."

It is always comforting to find one's opinions confirmed. I doubt not however that scores will testify otherwise and profess to retain happy memories of hours spent in childhood poring over the odd misadventures of "Alice in Wonderland." The wearing quality of the book as literature has been amply proven. Its characters, like the Mock Hatter, the March Hare, Mad Turtle and the Cheshire cat which left its grin behind, are woven into the warp of our literature. And for an indefinite time columnar pundits suffering from fallen literary arches will continue to quote from "Alice," using its rare humor and quaint speech to brighten their heavy-footed celebrations.

Hearing Set at Burns Regarding PUD Plan

Hearing on the preliminary petition for creation of the proposed Harney county peoples utility district has been set for April 13 at Burns, the state hydroelectric commission announced Saturday. The district would include three large parcels of land with the city of Burns included.

Lewis' Strategy Believed To Presage Unprecedented Demands for Higher Wages

WASHINGTON—Some bituminous coal operators, who have been mystified for weeks by John L. Lewis' tactics in his contract negotiations, now think they know what he is up to—a demand for wages that will be higher than any yet granted by a major industry.

The leader of the United Mine Workers, who have been on strike for a week, so far has refused to a prior commitment from the mine owners to set up a health and welfare fund and improve mine working conditions.

But once the strike has created an industrial crisis, the operators surmise, Lewis will withdraw, at least temporarily, his health and safety proposals and spring a demand for higher wages and shorter hours which would net the miners up to a 30 per cent increase. The operators already have offered to grant an increase of 18½ cents an hour, the raise given CIO workers in steel, autos and oil.

Navy Notes:

WASHINGTON—Don't look for any move soon to fill the vacant position of undersecretary of the navy. After getting its fingers burnt on the nomination of Ed Pauley, the administration has decided to let the matter cool for a bit.

WASHINGTON—The naval academy at Annapolis probably will never be turned into a post-graduate school, despite efforts of several members of the house naval affairs committee. The plan's proponents say distinctions between academy and non-academy men would be eliminated if all future naval officers were first educated in civilian universities.

Mealy Subjects:

PRAGUE—Artificial meat soon will be sold to Czechoslovakians. The ministry of information says it is made from a yeast, "Torulia Utilis."

CHICAGO—Civilian consumption of meat in the April-June quarter will decline from an annual rate of 150 pounds a person to 139 pounds, the American meat institute says, but will jump to 166 pounds in the October-December quarter.

Personals:

WASHINGTON—Mrs. Oveta Culp Hobby, former WAC director, will be offered another government post. . . . Harold Ickes used to abhor "bromides" in other people's columns. Now that he's a columnist too, newsmen are watching to see whether he avoids them? So far, he has. . .

Style Change:

NEW YORK—B. F. Goodrich Co. finds that most new cars are using tires with a 1½-inch inside diameter. For the past decade the majority used 16-inch tires.

MORE CAPITAL BRIEFS:

WASHINGTON—Don't expect the first of the commerce department's reports on the incentive system until early fall. . . . The federal communications commission says construction of new radio stations will not be too seriously delayed by the veterans' housing program. It believes many items needed to build them are not affected by the freeze on non-essential construction.

SETTLEMENT ANNOUNCED

PORTLAND, April 6 (Special)—The OPA announced today that price panels of local price control boards have reported settlements for alleged overcharges, including: Salem, H. L. Stiff Furniture company, \$50, rentals on refrigerators, \$360 on used piano.

GRIN AND BEAR IT By Lichty



"If he's from the housing administration, tell him we're building it for a veteran with 145 dependents!"

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