

# The American

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Editor and Proprietor



## EDITORIALS

### STATE REGULATORY AUTHORITY AT STAKE

The proposed Public Utility Act of 1935, on which Senate committee hearings are now being held, is supposedly designed to eliminate holding companies.

The public has heard much from the politicians of real or fancied abuses of various holding companies.

What has not been emphasized is the potential effect of the bill on operating companies—on any utility company, large or small, which is in any way connected with a holding company, or one which engages in interstate commerce, or one having any physical connection whatsoever with another company engaging in interstate commerce.

Ever since the utility industry began, it has been regarded as a local business. For that reason, regulation was left to the jurisdiction of each state, and was never vested in a commission which could act for the country as a whole. The public's needs are obviously very different in South Carolina, for example, than in New York. The cost of producing and distributing power varies widely from state to state. A utility program which is necessary and adequate for one state, might not fit the needs of a neighboring commonwealth.

Under state commission regulation, utility service has been made extremely responsive to the needs of each individual state. There has never been a dearth of power—always a surplus. Service has constantly improved, and rates have steadily declined. It can be statistically proven that the American people, operating costs and taxes considered, receive the best and cheapest utility service in the world.

If the proposed Act is passed, operating utility companies generating 99 per cent of the nation's power will come under the jurisdiction of a federal commission. Management will be a figurehead—and the state commissions will have little cause for continued existence. If they make a decision that might conflict with the blanket policy laid down at Washington, that decision will be automatically negated. So strict and sweeping are the provisions of the bill that a utility could not engage legal or engineering counsel, expand facilities or buy supplies, without permission of the Washington commission.

In brief then, the bill proposes to nationalize management of operating companies—under a political bureau. It would do that at the expense of the present owners of the properties, who would no longer have a voice in ministering their own affairs—and at the expense of each state, which would no longer be able to regulate utilities in the best interest of its own citizens and consumers.

The bill seeks public support under the guise of correcting abuses. Those abuses, if they exist, should be corrected—but should that end be achieved by giving a politically-appointed commission absolute dictatorship over one of our most essential and progressive industries; an industry in which millions of citizens have invested billions of dollars, and which is already subject to stringent regulation by each state?

### FATAL ERRORS

Traffic accidents were more numerous and more severe in 1934 than any previous year.

Eight of the worst driving mistakes responsible for last year's tragic record are listed by the National Bureau of Casualty and Surety Underwriters as follows:

- (1) Driving too fast for conditions, a cause named specifically in 22 per cent of all accidents resulting in fatalities charged to drivers alone, and a distinct and sometimes controlling factor in accidents attributed to many other causes.
- (2) Driving on the wrong side of road.
- (3) Violating right-of-way rules.
- (4) Cutting in.
- (5) Passing on curve or hill.
- (6) Failing to signal or signaling improperly.
- (7) Driving off roadway.
- (8) Reckless driving.

Pedestrians made fatal errors too. Four of the worst were:

- (1) Crossing between intersections, a mistake that accounted for more than 25 per cent of all pedestrian fatalities.
- (2) Crossing against the signal light at intersections.
- (3) Playing in the street, an error made chiefly by children, resulting in 16 per cent of all pedestrian deaths.
- (4) Coming from behind parked car.

Motorists and pedestrians! Avoid these fatal errors in 1935—and you will be doing your part to reduce the traffic toll.

### IS GOVERNMENT OWNERSHIP THE SOLUTION?

Two diverse factors have centered attention on the question of government ownership of the railroad industry.

One is the frank opinion of Federal Coordinator of Transportation Eastman that the government should eventually take over the lines.

The other lies in the possibility that the government may acquire a large amount of railroad mileage, if loans made to weak systems by government agencies are not repaid.

This question, like all others, will eventually be solved by the public, and every citizen should do a good bit of thinking about it. Entirely aside from any problem of principle, practical considerations given rise to extreme doubts as to the standards of service that would result from government operation.

During the war, government, in the name of emergency, took over the lines. Service suffered at once. Great delay took place in the moving of freight, and thousands of tons of perishable goods were thus destroyed. The attitude of the government officials in charge was usually bad service on a "Take it or leave it we don't care which" basis. It is true that the war produced unprecedented conditions—but that is not enough of an alibi to excuse the chaos into which our basic media of transport was plunged under federal management. Nor does it excuse the tremendous deficits which were created—at the expense of all the taxpayers.

American railroad service, under private ownership, is the best in the world. Rates are low, and service is unexcelled. The lines have made consistent technical progress in advancing safety, speeding up trains, eliminating car shortages, and so on, in spite of many profitless years. If government ownership is tried as the 'solution' to our railroad problem, the entire public will feel the adverse effects—and the taxpayer will find out how expensive political operation of a great industry can be.

### THE CROOKED LAWYER

No profession should hold to higher levels of honor, integrity and plain honesty than should the law. The right to practice in the courts of justice carries with it a vast and inescapable obligation to the public. Most lawyers live up to the essential standards—a few do not. And these few, as Courtney Ryley Cooper points out in an interview with Attorney-General Cummings, appearing in a recent issue of the Saturday Evening Post, are as much the enemies of the public as the gangster they defend.

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mies of the public as the gangster they defend.

Mr. Cooper cites almost incredible instances of lawyers who are retained by known criminals and are given large sums of money to use in any way they like—so long as acquittal is obtained for the underworld client. Such lawyers worry little about evidence or justice—they know that bribery is a more effective weapon. They train their clients like actors, so that when they appear on the witness stand they can make "staged" answers to any question. They obtain perjured alibis—and buy off prosecution witnesses. In Mr. Cooper's words, "It is all fakery, crookedness, chicanery."

Bar associations, the judiciary and honest individuals are working tirelessly to rid society of this type of lawyer. But, as the interview points out, all such worthy efforts are doomed to failure without aggressive public support. Many people are inclined to be amused by the unethical lawyer—they even go so far as to admire the "cleverness" with which he manages to circumvent the ends of justice. So long will proper—and the ethics of the legal profession will suffer accordingly.

The law is the very life-blood of society. Its honest administration is our main defense against medieval social darkness. The crooked lawyer menaces us all—and his good offices (at high price) on behalf of the most desperate criminals are carried on at the expense of the entire public.

### "LEST WE FORGET"

For some years after the armistice another war was generally declared "unthinkable." Why unthinkable? Simply because the horrors of the last one were so vivid in the memories of all. Now, however, a new generation of eager, adventurous youth has come to manhood, while with the preceding generation time has been laying a softening mist of glamour over the stark realities of human butchery.

It would appear obvious, then, that to keep war "unthinkable" the world should not be permitted to develop further delusions about war.

Canadian veterans, evidently with this thought in mind, have prepared an official motion picture of the World War compiled from the archives of the allied and enemy records. Although it depicts mainly Canada's part, and the major features only in a general way, the effect is as poignantly realistic as could be desired. Destruction and acute misery in all their sordid and ghastly details are portrayed as they occurred.

The picture closes with the words: "Was it a war to end war? Did it attain its desired end—or did it not? Seek the answer within your own hearts." How many people today would answer that the war achieved its purpose? And yet if the memory of the world's greatest blunder was still vividly alive in their hearts, how could they answer otherwise?

—Christian Science Monitor

### Cherry Tree Disease Control Explained

Bacterial gummosis, the most serious disease of the sweet cherry tree may be controlled by the application of the copper nitrate treatment at this time of season, states County Agent L. P. Wilcox.

The copper nitrate method of treatment as herein described was worked out by the Calif. Experiment Station and has been demonstrated to be effective under Southern Oregon conditions, and is therefore recommended to Jackson county cherry growers.

At this time of season gummosis cankers may be easily located because of their dark colored bark tissue, somewhat sunken and near gum area. Such cankers when found should be given the following treatment.

Make numerous longitudinal cuts with the grain of the wood, through the canker or diseased area. Such cuts to be deep enough to enter the sap wood beneath the bark tissue, and should extend some eight to ten inches above and below the diseased area. Space the cuts about one inch apart and make sufficient number so that healthy tissue is encountered on both sides of the canker. After preparing the canker in this manner,

mop the entire surface with a copper nitrate solution, being sure that the liquid penetrates well into the many cuts. A sponge may be used for this purpose with good results.

The copper nitrate solution to be used is made up as follows: Stir one ounce of copper carbonate into two quarts of water, then add one and one half ounces of concentrated nitric acid. When the solution becomes clear, add to one gallon of de-natured alcohol. The solution should be prepared in glass or enamel ware containers and kept in bottles tightly corked.

### Why This City Needs Newspaper

To the Editor:

Permit a comparative stranger to your community to express his pleasure in the spirit of enterprise and hopefulness that shines forth weekly from the pages of your excellent newspaper. I refer as a particular instance to the movement initiated by The American for a general beautification of the community by the planting of flower and gardens, the reconstruction or removal of fences and the trimming of trees and lawns, and the repair and painting of dwellings and other buildings wherever possible.

What a grand help it would be to our nation if every city and town should follow Central Point's example!

Now I ask you, if your editorial modesty will permit to allow me to indicate to the people of this community what an asset is possessed by Central Point in a newspaper of the public-spirited character of the American. Fortunate as this little city is in its location in the heart of one of the most beautiful valleys of Oregon, surrounded by fertile farms and orchards, endowed with a climate which conduces to long life and happiness, Central Point is doubly fortunate in having a newspaper which takes the lead in promoting civic culture and community welfare.

The business men of Central Point particularly are to be congratulated that their city has so able and willing a champion, as well as so splendid and well read a medium in which to

advance their own interests as merchants.

I believe that nothing could be happier, the interests of the community considered, than to see every business house in Central Point represented each week in the advertising column of The American. This would be genuine appreciation of the service rendered the community every week in the year by a neat and progressive newspaper.

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4. Because he and his good wife are giving their entire time and efforts to beautify and make the city a paradise of flowers.
5. Because the editor is a booster for his own little city.
6. Editor always sees the brilliant side of life and leaves the clouds in the back ground.
7. Because the plain print is always easy for old and young alike to read.
8. Because he is sponsoring the beautifying contest and in so doing putting over a real program.
9. Because the paper carries such neat and classy ads.
10. Because the Central Point American is a neat, clean and newsy paper well worth the price asked for it.

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