

**LETTER FROM WASHINGTON**  
Harris Ellsworth, M. C.  
4th District, Oregon

In our heavily wooded country there is a method of fighting forest fires which is sometimes used in desperation. It is called "back-firing." Fires are not only fanned by the wind but generate their own wind which speeds them along. The back-fire technique is to go into the green timber a quarter of a mile or so ahead of the running fire and set a series of small fires across the path. When the big blaze reaches the line of small fires its momentum may be broken and the fire brought under control. If the back-fire plan fails to work and the fire sweeps on, no harm is done since it would have gone ahead anyway.

So the Administration has set up a "back-fire" against the sweep of public opinion against its foreign

and domestic policies—against the public resentment over the firing of General MacArthur. The back-fire consists of something they call the "China Lobby." There might be such an organization. If so it is supposed, according to administration spokesmen, to have used sinister or other influence in behalf of Nationalist China. If there is such an outfit I have never heard of it except from administration sources, and it surely has been a complete flop in its activities judging from the present pitiful condition of the Nationalist government.

Referring to the so-called China Lobby the following was stated by one of the back-fire builders: "It is alleged that from 1946 to 1949 Government, spent in the neighborhood of \$654,000,000 to influence American public opinion."

Now just think of how absurd that statement is. The sum six hundred and fifty million dollars equals many times the total amount

expended by all the news agencies in America which operate on a complete nation-wide basis. I mean several times more than the combined cost of operating the United Press, Associated Press, International News, Transradio Press, etc.

Well, enough on the subject of back-fires but it is my guess that when you hear or read about something called the China Lobby, that's what it is, a back-fire—set for the purpose of slowing down the big blaze of public opinion which is about to consume the administration people.

The House is about to begin consideration of the new tax bill. It will come to the floor under what we call a closed rule. That means no amendments can be made on the floor. It will merely be debated and then the vote will be for it or against it—as is, just as the committee brings it to the floor. I do not like that procedure but must admit that when the end product is considered the people will get a better tax bill if we take the one worked out by the committee of experts instead of trying to write it on the floor with amendments.

The appropriations bill carrying funds for work on rivers and harbors was passed by the House. Although the total requested by the Bureau of the Budget was cut more than twenty percent, the funds allowed for work on the two big dams in the Willamette Valley flood control project—Detroit and Lookout Point—totalled \$15,000,000 each, which will allow work on both those important dams to proceed toward completion for the earliest flood protection of much needed power in the Willamette Valley.

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**Economic Highlights—**

According to an announcement recently issued over Radio Moscow, Russia's fourth and last five-year plan has been completed well ahead of schedule. Her productive capacity has been boosted more than 70 per cent as compared with 1940. Very great progress has been made in the field of basic war commodities, including steel, coal and oil.

This, Newsweek reported, firmly established Russia "as the world's second industrial power after the U.S." However, going by the best available evidence, she is a poor second. Newsweek printed a graph showing U.S. production vs. that of the U.S.S.R. for a number of key items. In 1950 Russia produced just under 28,000,000 tons of steel—we produced nearly 97,000,000. Russian coal output was 238,500,000 tons—ours was 556,000,000. Russia produced less than 42,000,000 tons of oil—we accounted for 298,000,000. Finally Russian electric power output was about 85,000,000 kilowatt hours, while ours was 388,000,000 kwh.

As some authorities have pointed out, our actual superiority in production is not quite so marked as the bare statistics indicate, for the reason that the Kremlin can use a much greater percentage of its goods and services for military purposes than can we. Her people largely live on a subsistence level, and by government fiat their living standards can be lowered instantly. If the Politburo so desires, everything can be devoted to guns and nothing

at all to butter. To quote Newsweek once more in this connection, "Soviet industrial expansion had been achieved at the expense of consumer goods. In some cases the output fell below prewar. For example, only 192,000,000 pairs of shoes (target 240,000,000) were turned out last year, compared with 230,000,000 in 1940."

However, even after making full allowance for such factors as these, we still have a tremendous edge over the Soviet Union in the production machine which is the telling factor in any extended war. If the productive power of Western Europe is added, the edge becomes much greater still. When it comes to getting out goods and services of any kind, the United States and her potential allies are enormously stronger than the U.S.S.R. and her satellites.

Those who have a knowledge of the supposed facts are unanimously certain that our superiority is comparably great in still another vitally important field of production—the A-bomb. And, it is said, our stockpiles of this weapon are far larger than Russia's.

It is for these reasons, many believe, that Russia has so far stopped her aggressions short of all-out war. Her men of the Kremlin are not fools, nor are they suicidally inclined. It can be powerfully argued that if Russia does strike, it will be because her masters believe that the next war can be brought to a relatively quick conclusion, with communism

victorious. Otherwise, the argument runs, Russian strategy for an indefinite future time will be to attempt to keep this country busy spending manpower and resources in a series of "little wars," on the Korean model.

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