

EDITORIAL SECTION

THE GAZETTE-TIMES

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OFFICIAL PAPER FOR MORROW COUNTY.



Thursday, September 13, 1917.

MR. HOOVER MAKES A FRANK ADMISSION.

The Washington correspondent of The Spokesman-Review reports that significant fact that Mr. Hoover, who, by the way, had no hand in fixing the price of wheat, has frankly admitted that if the wheat growers of the Pacific northwest are required to sell at a lower price than prevails anywhere else, the consumers here have no hope of getting flour any cheaper than consumers in the east.

For whose benefit, then, is the price-fixing committee working? The clear intent of the law is two-fold—to encourage increased production, and to provide cheaper wheat and flour for the consuming public. But a schedule that gives the northwestern grower the lowest prices paid anywhere is not calculated to stimulate increased production in this important wheat-growing region; and a plan that will mean as high prices for flour here as in the eastern markets falls short of justice to the consumer.

By failing to name basic ports for the Pacific northwest, and basic prices for this region, the committee proposes that all wheat bought out here by the government shall be treated as

though it were going to Chicago. But much of it will never go there. Much of it will be used for home consumption. Much of it will be retained here for seed. And the surplus may eventually go to Europe by water from Pacific coast ports through the Panama canal.

In his letter to Senator Jones, Julius H. Barnes of the food administration grain corporation says they are trying to work out that very problem of providing ships to take the surplus wheat of this region from Pacific coast ports to Europe.

The freight rate on wheat from this region is 30 cents a bushel. The present plan proposes that 30 cents be deducted from the price paid for every bushel of wheat grown in the Pacific northwest. The farmer loses it. Mr. Hoover says the consumer will not get it. Where, then, will it go? Will it be absorbed by the millers, the middlemen, the wholesalers and the retailers?

These are proper and pertinent questions, and they should be pressed by our senators and congressmen. If the price-fixing committee has erred in judgment, the error should be rectified.—Spokesman-Review.

CAN WE LIVE IT DOWN?

Every time there is a copious rainfall in Morrow county a front page news item of the Portland Oregonian announces a cloudburst at Heppner. After a record breaking dry spell, this county received a good rain Monday which was accompanied by a hard wind. In Heppner the lights went out because a flag was blown over on the electric wires, causing a short circuit. Now witness the news sent in from our city to the Portland daily telling the world of the cloudburst hitting Morrow county. The streets of Lexington were flooded, says the report. Then the article concludes with the information that "no particular damage was done." It seems as tho Heppner cannot live down the bad effects of an old disaster. Surely this will be the case as long as we persist in sending our reports of every little rain that happens to fall our way. There are lots of things that could be said about Morrow county in a constructive way. Heppner is one of the substantial towns in Oregon and is making a steady growth that no one will deny. Darkened reports going out to keep ever alive the fact that we did, at one time, have a real cloudburst here, will not help one whit in speeding up progress in development, or add to the population any faster. When a genuine calamity happens, then lets tell it, but when a rain falls that does not soak up the streets enough o keep the dust settled for twenty-four hours, then lets keep it under our hats. We have been suffering from over exaggeration on this cloudburst business about long enough.

It now appears that the Northwest wheat growers will have to take a price for their wheat equal to the price at Chicago less the freight differential. Of course a few cents more will be knocked off in grading, so our farmers will be doing well when they get \$1.90. Much of the wheat raised here will be ground into flour by the local mills. Here the northwest miller should be at an advantage. He will be able to get his milling wheat cheaper than the middle western or eastern miller (for surely the government will be as consistent with flour as they have been with wheat) and Pacific coast millers therefore should get the same price for their flour. Buying for less and selling at the fixed market price will mean a bigger profit for them than their eastern milling friends.

SHAKE WELL BEFORE TAKING

There can be no gainsaying the fact that wealth, particularly wealth coming from war profits, should be taxed heavily to meet the burdens of the war. In fact the chief governmental revenues should be derived from this source and it is going to be so derived.

But it will not be wise for people to rely too much on the fervid and frenzied oratorical outbursts of some of our senators and representatives. There are a number of would-be presidential candidates in the list and the war revenue bill gives them a fine chance to shout from the house tops for campaign purposes. Some of these same men if the division were close and there was a chance that their professed ideas might be written into law might be found voting on the other side of the question.

Our senatorial patriots must be judged by their deeds rather than by their words. Where have they stood and what have they done in days gone by when they had a real chance to serve the people and show their independence of great wealth?—Pendleton E. O.

BILLIONS.

Our war expenditures, past and prospective, are truly stupendous. They are teaching us to think in billions, where we used to regard a million as a vast sum. But we are living in a billion-dollar age, in a billion-dollar country.

We have already appropriated in round figures some \$9,000,000,000 for war purposes. We are preparing to appropriate about \$10,000,000,000 more, making \$19,000,000,000 in all. Our loans to our allies will reach some \$7,000,000,000, which will be repaid. Our appropriations on our own account, therefore, foot up to about \$12,000,000,000. This includes, however, large sums for ships, which will be of service when peace is made. But the figures do not look so large when compared with our resources. For example:

Our National wealth in 1916 is estimated at \$187,739,071,090, whereas in 1900 it was only \$88,517,306,000. Our National income for the fiscal year ended June 30 last was more than \$45,000,000,000.

The value of our farm property in 1916 was \$40,991,000,000, and of our farm produce in the same year \$10,501,686,000. The value of our manufactures that year was \$20,672,051,000.

In every column to which we turn for information about our National greatness, our industry and our productiveness, we encounter billions. The billion is fast becoming our unit. What wonder, then, if we conduct our war on a billion-dollar basis?—Oregonian.

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AN EDITORIAL FROM THE "OREGONIAN" OF SEPTEMBER 6, 1917.

IS LUMBER REALLY DEARER?

It is generally understood that the lumbermen of the Northwest have had a tough time for quite a number of years, but there are a few people, aside from those interested in some branch of the business, who understand fully, or even partially, the great slump several years ago and the prevailing unfavorable conditions at the present time.

It is estimated by government officials that in normal times about one million people are employed in the lumber industries in the United States, and that one quarter of these, or 250,000 are employed in the Northwest—Oregon, Washington and Idaho. But during several years, up, say, to the first of July, 1916, 25 per cent of these men were idle.

When the loss of wages to over 60,000 people is added to strikes, car shortages, and the low price of lumber, it can be seen that the lumbermen have had their worries. But many think, since war orders began to pour into the mills and dealers, that once more the lumbermen are profiting. Is that true? Is it not a fact that lumber comparatively is today one of the cheapest commodities on the market?

An advertisement of the Tum-A-Lum Lumber Co. makes the following statements: "In 1914 a Tum-A-Lum barn cost 40 hogs; in 1917 same barn costs 24 hogs. In 1914 a Tum-A-Lum house cost 480 bushels of wheat; in 1917 same house costs 225 bushels of wheat. In 1914 a Tum-A-Lum silo cost 220 bushels of corn; in 1917 same silo costs 110 bushels of corn. In 1914 a Tum-A-Lum machine shed cost 20 tons of alfalfa; in 1917 same shed costs 10 tons of alfalfa."

Nowhere have we seen the facts as to the present comparative prices of lumber so tersely stated.