

**WEIGH THE FACTS!**

(National Republic)

There are obvious remedies, available to the people, for many conditions in industry for which people demand projects of legislative relief that actually end in nothing.

Recently we have had a demand for political protection from the "bread trust." It is complained that a gigantic combination has been buying up the bakeries with a view to increasing the price of bread. The statistics prove that the so-called "bread trust" controls only a small fraction of the ovens in operation, and that independent bakeries have increased their volume of business while the "bread trust" has been extending its operations. But what is perfectly obvious is that every housewife's kitchen is a potential bakery. Our grandmothers did not rely on the delicatessen or the "bread trust" to supply the family bill of fare. They put on their aprons, rolled up their sleeves and feared not the ovens.

Just now, with gasoline at a price higher than has prevailed for some time, a country-wide demand for an investigation into the price of gasoline is voiced in Congress, and the cry goes up that the increase in price is due to the manipulation of monopoly. Here, too, there is a remedy that would work disaster to price boosters in the hands of consumers. If the motor car owners of this country would slow down speed ten per cent on pleasure jaunts for thirty days it would play havoc with gasoline prices. Incidentally motorists would enjoy themselves more by giving themselves an opportunity to get a better look at the scenery and there would be a considerable saving in hospital bills and funeral expenses.

It is surprising that the cost of gasoline is not higher than it is, especially in view of the fact that its cost in Europe averages perhaps a hundred per cent above the American price, with a negligible gasoline freight rate per gallon from the United States. Because of this foreign situation exports of gasoline are increasing enormously, with pronounced effect on the domestic price. During the first four months of this year our exports of gasoline increased 32.6 per cent over those in the same period last year, or at the rate of nearly a billion and three quarters gallons a year. The increase in consumption of this commodity during the past twenty years has been enormous, the supply of crude oil and therefore of gasoline not being unlimited. Every new motor car or aeroplane represents a substantial increase in the demand for gasoline. During the first three months of this year the increase in demand for gasoline in the United States over the corresponding months of 1925 was twenty-two per cent! There is no necessary continuity of supply of crude oil in quantity sufficient to keep pace with the increased demand, the depletion of crude oil stocks, never greater than enough to supply the country for sixty days, naturally produces fluctuations in price. When there is a slump in the accumulations of oil stocks below that point, there is an increase in the price of gasoline. If there was a real monopoly in either crude oil or gasoline, the possibilities of extortion would be unlimited.

Senator Harreid, of Oklahoma, who is an independent oil operator and in

close touch with conditions in the largest source of oil production in the country, gives some interesting figures which throw light on this situation. He presents figures showing that of 400 commodities covered by the investigations of the statistical bureau of the Department of Labor, gasoline since 1913 has shown the least upward fluctuation, and that because of more efficient manufacturing methods, the wholesale price of gasoline has fallen far short of increasing in proportion to the price of crude oil from which it is made. Oklahoma-Kansas crude oil has risen in price 113 per cent between 1913 and 1925, while the price of gasoline has gone up 35 per cent. In 1913 the exchange retail value of gasoline, that is, its purchasing power as compared with other commodities, was 16.8 per gallon; in 1925 it stood at 12.1 cents. That is, if all other commodity values were now reduced to the 1913 level, gasoline would now cost at retail 12.1 cents. Price of farm products stood in 1925 at 57.8 per cent above the 1913 level; the price of gasoline stood at 13.7 per cent above the 1913 level. In every recent year the farmer's dollar has been worth more in gasoline than it was in 1913, and the farmer's dollar has had less purchasing power than that of any other factor in production.

Gasoline is selling today at the refinery at twelve cents. The increase above this represents handling, freight and middlemen's profits. It represents the cost of multiplied filling stations, located at convenient distances, and in many instances expensively equipped. It represents a high cost of labor and of operation in general. It represents gasoline taxes. In part it represents in many instances, too great a price spread between the refinery and consumer.

High prices of gasoline in themselves produce a corrective. They represent a decline in crude oil production, or an insufficient production to meet the demand. Reduction of oil stocks is always followed by an increase in the price of crude oil. There has been an increase of fifty cents per barrel in the price of crude oil in the last six months. Such increases put the "wild catter" to work—the operator in new or doubtful

fields. They stimulate production in defined fields. They thus increase the total production of crude oil, depress the price accordingly and bring down gasoline prices. This is a more certain corrective than an act of Congress or a senatorial investigation.

The gasoline situation is discussed as typical of other situations which sometimes arise in which theories and generalizations take the place of facts in the minds of many politicians and of the public. Nothing is to be gained by blinking the facts, no matter what theory they may support. Nothing is to be gained for the public by an attack on the oil industry, especially the crude oil industry, which is contributing so much to the prosperity of certain portions of the country. It is significant that newspapers carry at length sensational statements about the high price of gasoline, and give little or no attention to the concrete facts presented in such a speech as that of Senator Harreid which seems to explain the rise in price.

**NOTICE OF CLOSING CHINESE PHEASANT HUNTING SEASON.**

Notice is hereby given that by an order duly and regularly made by the State Game Commission of the State of Oregon on the 11th day of January, 1926, it was found and determined that the supply of Chinese (Torquatus) Pheasants is being, and will be, injuriously affected by permitting the same to be taken, hunted or killed in the whole of the State of Oregon, and every part thereof, except Malheur County, during the periods of time

hereinafter specified, and that it shall be unlawful for any person to take, hunt, kill or have in possession any Chinese (Torquatus) Pheasant or Pheasants, within the State of Oregon except Malheur County, during the periods of time from October 14 to October 17, and from October 24 to November 1, 1926; and further, that every county within the State of Oregon where there is an open hunting season provided by law, with the exception of Malheur County, be, and is closed, to taking, hunting, and killing Chinese (Torquatus) Pheasants, for and during the periods of time above mentioned.

Dated and first published this 22nd day of July, 1926.

**NOTICE OF FINAL ACCOUNT.**

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned, administrator of the estate of Eva M. Darbee, deceased, has filed in the County Court of the State of Oregon for Morrow County, his final account of the administration of said estate and the said court has fixed the 20th day of August, 1926, at the hour of 10 o'clock A. M., as the time, and the County Court Room at the Court House at Heppner, Oregon, as the place for hearing objections to said final account and the settlement of said estate and all persons having objections to said final account or the settlement of said estate are hereby required to file the same in said court on or before the date set for the hearing hereof.

Dated this 22nd day of July, 1926.  
C. DARBEE, Administrator.

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