



Washington D. C., Dec. 16—**GOVERNMENT** statistics can justly be viewed with suspicion. When Prentiss Brown resigned as head of OPA Oct. 21, he issued a statement in which he declared that OPA had prevented inflation; that the cost of living was forced down and that the average weekly wage had been increased 33 percent, corporation profits after taxes were up 15 percent over 1941, and that the cost of living was up only 12 percent. The administration promptly took credit for keeping living costs down over a period of 22 months and putting brakes on inflation.

Secretary of labor Frances Perkins, one week later, Oct. 28, 1943, issued a report sinking the optimistic picture of Prentiss Brown by reporting how prices had been going sky high since August, 1942.

In one week, judging from these two press releases, the picture was entirely changed and only a subsidy to the farmers would prevent wild inflation. Having first accepted the pleasing report of Prentiss Brown, two days after the report by Madam Perkins the president sent a message to congress demanding a subsidy and a roll-back as the only way to remedy the high cost of living, which is another way of referring to inflation. It is assumed that the two reports were based on the same statistics, but whereas Prentiss Brown saw only sunshine and happiness Madam Perkins was convinced of gloomy times ahead.

For the purpose of scaring congress the president, naturally, decided the report of the secretary of labor was better than that by Mr. Perkins interpretation of the statistics Brown, and as a matter of fact, the ties showing the constant increase in living costs is more nearly correct, as civilian consumers are aware.

Then again, the president some-time ago stated that oil production in the nation had increased 65 percent since the start of the war. Harold Ickes, fuel administrator, who likes to go along with the president challenged the statement and said that production had increased only 15 percent. Subsequently the figures of "Honest Harold proved to be correct. The deduction is that

not all the statistics presented by the president held water, because they have been handed to him by buracrats who are anxious to put their best foot forward and their figures are not carefully checked.

After all, the occupant of the White House has been so absorbed in international affairs that he has neglected the domestic scene and has to rely for his information upon the various bureaus. Formerly the president would dig into a problem to satisfy himself, but came the war and that has claimed his major attention.

WHY Harry Hopkins and his wife left the White House and rented an old house in Georgetown has caused endless gossip in social and political circles. One theory is that Mrs. Hopkins insisted on leaving the presidential mansion because she wanted a home of her own and was weary of being a guest of the Roosevelts. Harry, however, was quite content to be the "man who came to dinner" and wished to remain under the same roof with his pal, the president; but his bride's insistence prevailed. Latest yarn in the national capital is that Hopkins and Willkie understand each other and that it was Harry Hopkins who talked the president into assigning a plane crew for Willkie to circumnavigate the globe last year when planes and pilots were sadly needed in the European theater.

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the Columbia river as a post war project will be construction of Umatilla dam. It is estimated by the army engineers that the cost will be \$47,000,000 and that it will have power as well as navigation. This was intended as the first step in the development of the Columbia, but later a site was found at Bonneville. The project is assigned to Washington and Oregon as both states will be benefitted although from a navigation standpoint it will be better for the Columbia basin when the reclamation project is completed as it will furnish water transportation.

THE recent order of the U. S. maritime commission suspending Sunday work in several of the large northwest shipyards is the forerunner of abolishing one complete shift in many of the yards. Before next spring it is expected the maritime commission will discontinue

the graveyard shifts. Shipbuilding past year have been relatively schedules have been maintained small as compared to launchings. and production of freighters is well The United States now has the in advance of present needs. Losses largest fleet in the world, and also from U-boat sinkings during the the largest navy.

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