

Washington Digest

National Topics Interpreted
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NATIONAL PRESS BLDG. WASHINGTON D. C.

The Coal Industry

Washington — During the recent bitter campaigning, both national political parties engaged in a good deal of palaver about the coal industry. As usual, the politicians were patting the miners on the back, telling them what wonderful assets to the nation they are, and carrying their demagoguery further by criticism of the mine owners every now and then because it was popular with labor to attack employers. Altogether, it was a rather sorry spectacle and, I think, did not do credit to either side to any extent.

But in this report, I want to stress a very much less obvious phase of the problem than was made apparent in any of the electioneering. With all of the verbiage cast aside, with all of the political hoodwinking forgotten, there is a very deep and difficult problem in the coal industry. I think it can be summarized in one question: What is the future of coal, the coal industry, and the thousands of men who know no other source of livelihood than that which they eke out in the bowels of the earth?

This question, if proper analysis is made, encompasses more than the usual factors that operate in economics. It does that because of policies of the federal government, among states and among municipalities. Because of the attempts to influence votes, the whole question has got into politics and that of itself is ruinous, an obstacle to a scientific solution.

Not so many years ago coal mine owners and coal labor units had what amounted to a monopoly on our fuel supply. Then came oil, oil with all of the scientific development that followed in its wake. Despite this, operators and labor leaders continued to take their toll from the hapless user of coal for fuel, be that user a great factory or an individual consumer in furnace or round oak stove. But that was not all. Electricity came along with its constantly increasing automatic control. First, of course, in the larger communities and later it came to villages and farm homes. Still, the mine owners and the coal labor leaders followed an unwise course, still, they continued to take their toll and before they fully realized what the circumstance was, they had succeeded by their acts in building up a desire on the part of millions of people to use some other sort of fuel. The end is not yet, and that is why the subject is most important at this stage of our history.

Public Ownership

During the Roosevelt administration we have seen an impetus given to public ownership of power plants never equalled. I think much of this development has gone on in a hit-and-miss fashion and that eventually the public will pay for the shiftless methods employed in development, but that is beside the point. The present question is whether our nation is going to continue to expand public ownership in such a way as to ruin an industry that is as much a part of our basic economic structure as any other unit of our natural life. I think sometimes it goes beyond that for the reason that, unless people are awakened to the fact that they are being hoodwinked to a considerable extent by public ownership propaganda, it is likely to spread and public ownership will become a frankenstein, a parasite on our body public.

When I referred to the destruction of a great industry, I had in mind the thought that the consequences will run in two directions. Yet, paradoxically as it may seem, they constitute a cycle. It works out like this: As the demand for coal declines, it is quite natural that production costs go up. When production costs go up, they eventually reach the point where a further diminution occurs in demand. When that decline in demand occurs, there is only one answer: Labor is thrown out of work because you cannot produce and have those products piled high in storage. It takes money to keep labor and machinery occupied. The coal itself, after being removed from the mines, represents money and it is subject as well to deterioration. So, the ultimate to be expected on this side of the picture is an industry dying of dry rot.

On the other side of the problem is an equally important factor at work. It takes an immense amount of capital, massed in corporate form, to maintain a going concern whether that concern be coal mining, railroading or any other of our great industries. These industries operate largely on funds obtained through the sale of stocks and bonds of the corporation. But it has always been true, and human nature shows no signs of changing, that capital is not attracted to, it does not seek investment in, a declining industry. There you have a possibility at least of insufficient funds to carry through for the coal mining industry until it can readjust itself to the new place

it must occupy in our economic structure. It will occupy a new place because it will readjust itself, but it has not done so yet and the consequence of this condition is, in my opinion, coal mine labor is due for some very hard sledding in the next decade, notwithstanding the honeyed words of the politicians.

Blame Demagogues

Now, to turn to the part that government plays in bringing about present conditions I have attempted to show how greed on the part of both capital and labor was responsible in a measure for building up what amounts to ill-will among many coal consumers. But the industry itself is not wholly responsible. Indeed, I rather hold the opinion that government is as much responsible for conditions as the industry itself, and when I say government, I must limit my reference to political demagogues. They always have been shortsighted and they are still shortsighted. They have been and they are now willing to sacrifice great masses of men and money for personal political gain of an entirely transitory character.

I have said before in these columns that the country is being sadly kidded—it is almost tragic—by the wonders of such parasitic organizations as TVA. The public ownership crowd have had a willing leader in President Roosevelt and his hangers-on have promoted his policies of public ownership without being honest as to the ultimate goal, or the eventual effect.

It is not alone that there have been millions wasted in the development of the Tennessee valley electrical mirage. It is not so much that taxpayers throughout the country will be paying a bill and paying it over and over again, that causes me to complain. It is not so much that the Tennessee Valley Authority will never be economically operated or become self-sustaining that brings this outburst. It is the fact that when a government, national, state or local, leads the way in this direction, it wields an influence upon a certain percentage of our population. Since public ownership advocates, in many instances, plain socialism, where in control of these agencies such as TVA, it is perfectly natural that they present to the taxpayers only the most rosy side of the story. They do not disclose to the taxpayers the adverse, the costly side, of the situation. Naturally then, hundreds of thousands of people believe that government can do this sort of thing better than private enterprise. They become convinced that private initiative has been turned into a spigot through which individual pocketbooks are drained. They do not realize that their pocketbooks are being drained much more heavily through public ownership by means of the taxes they take from you and me and everyone else. That is the sad story, made worse by the fact that through nearly four years the Washington government has been encouraging people to believe public ownership propaganda and distrust and destroy private investment.

Expensive Dream

Recent Treasury figures show that the Resettlement Administration has paid approximately \$27,750,000 of its total appropriation of \$134,518,000 for administrative expenses. That is, the organization which is the pride and joy of Professor Rexford Guy Tugwell has paid that amount of money to job holders in trying to carry out the professor's impossible dream.

While the sum shown as used for administrative expenses by Professor Tugwell is small, compared to the billions of total waste in the Roosevelt administration, the proper way to consider this circumstance is on a percentage basis. If you take your pencil you can calculate that about 20 per cent or one-fifth of all the funds appropriated to Professor Tugwell for resettlement, has been used in management of his plan. It may be a fraction under 20 per cent, but it is so close that even the fastidious Mr. Tugwell would not quarrel about the difference.

One-fifth of an appropriation that is designed theoretically at least to serve for relief purposes is entirely too much. It is not as great perhaps as has happened with one or two other relief appropriations, but it has always been claimed that the Tugwell scheme was planned to re-establish those who have been resettled on a permanent basis. That is to say, it was planned that the bulk of the money should be used in providing those people with a fresh start in life, but I cannot see where they are getting the full measure of help intended if a lot of job holders sit around in Washington offices or in offices in various states using up one-fifth of the total lay-out of cash.

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OREGON STATE NEWS OF GENERAL INTEREST

Brief Resume of Happenings of the Week Collected for Our Readers

Bandon—The Bank of Bandon, although missing some of its records, opened for business only three weeks after the fire.

Bend—The Bend Bulletin has applied for a permit to operate a radio broadcast station to serve the Central Oregon country.

Eugene—Flax plants at Eugene, Springfield, and Mt. Angel will have increased storage capacity due to approval of more than \$20,000 of PWA funds to each plant.

Albany—A parcel of land 13 by 13 1/2 feet is being condemned by the state highway commission for an estimated value of five dollars. It is on the Sweet Home-Halsey highway.

Junction City—Paving of the Eugene-Junction City cutoff was started recently. The work will progress two miles at a time. The entire 12 mile project is expected to be completed by spring.

Oregon City—The lives of dogs here are severely menaced by poison. "Buster," pet dog of Mrs. William Gold was the twentieth to succumb to its effects within the past few months.

Forest Grove—Building in Forest Grove has already greatly surpassed that of the entire year of 1935. A \$10,000 theatre project is the greatest single piece of construction so far this year.

Monmouth—For the first time in the history of the school, there is a man's dormitory on the campus of the state normal. West house was recently remodeled into a dormitory, accommodating 20 men.

Salem—State police are eyeing windshields carrying stickers other than those provided for by law. Numerous complaints have been received calling Superintendent of Police Pray's attention to the violations.

Salem—A crime detection laboratory is to be installed in the pathology department of the University of Oregon medical school in Portland. The laboratory will employ the latest scientific equipment and methods.

Portland—"Old Man Oregon" is a lucky landlord according to recent reports. Vacancy of state owned property is only two per cent, only 11 properties out of 661 owned by the state only the World War Veteran's state aid commission being unoccupied.

Pendleton—The ancient art of spinning yarn from a spinning wheel has been revived by Mrs. Phil Hirl of Heppner. She brought the spinning wheel from Ireland years ago and is using wool from Angora goats. She will use the yarn to make a sweater for her husband.

Salem—Work on the actual construction of Oregon's new capitol building will start about December 1 with bids being opened November 20, according to C. C. Hockley, PWA administrator for Oregon. It is hoped that bids will be low enough to allow white marble to be used.

Salem—The state board of control has accepted the recently completed \$190,000 addition to the state hospital for the insane. The new addition will accommodate 160 patients. This still leaves the institution crowded, however, as there is an overflow at this time of 216 from a total population of 2400.

Eugene—County courts so rarely receive praise for its works that it was considered to the "man bites dog" idea, in other words "news," when some farmers presented the county officials with a box of cigars in appreciation for the graveling of a half mile of road relieving five families of traversing the distance on foot in mud during the rainy season.

DEER TURNS TABLES

Baker—A buck deer opened his own season recently and with a well directed blow of his antlers brought down a man at Ironside. The animal, a pet, was chasing school children when the man, to protect the children, interfered, driving the animal away. Later the animal attacked him.

NEW RADIO STATION

LaGrande—The state is building a short wave radio station here for use by the police and state highway department and at the same time comes word that a party has applied to the federal communications committee for permission to construct a broadcast station with unlimited hours of operation and with power of 100 watts at night and 250 during the day.

Hood River—More than 4000 tons of Bartlett pears have been canned this season at the Apple Growers association cannery here, giving employment to nearly 500 who are now giving their attention to the canning of apples.

Portland—The state highway commission has decided that all road signs, including club insignia, must be removed as they have been erected without the permission of the highway group and are not in accordance with its beautification program.

what Irvin S. Cobb thinks about:

Campaign's Home Stretch.
BEVERLY HILLS, CALIF.—Here the campaign is practically on its last legs, when it isn't standing on its head and spinning around—but yet not a peep out of the three fairest-haired young hopes of the New Deal.

They're still putting on an act—what's known in vaudeville as a dumb act—entitled "The Bollo Boys in a Sub-Cellar."

Horrid tales abound. 'Tis rumored that the gurgling sound coming from the White House dungeon is caused by Tugwell trying to get the gag out of his mouth with both hands tied behind his back. And a note believed to have been written by Harry Hopkins has been slipped through the bars begging somebody to smuggle in a file in a loaf of bread.

Richberg, once the merriest of the administration's songsters, doesn't chirp any more, having been induced to take on the role of the man in the iron mask.

Remote-Control Patriotism.

DID you ever notice that these impassioned European statesmen, who so boldly defy tyrants in the homeland, generally put two or three national boundaries between themselves and the objects of their hate before cutting loose? One fiery anti-fascist waited until he got to Hoboken to tell Mussolini right to his face—the face being only 5,000 miles distant—exactly what he thought of him.

Not that I'd blame any patriot for playing safety first, dictators being so sensitive to criticism. In fact, I like the idea so much, I'm thinking of taking a correspondence course in lion-taming, myself.

Debunking Politics.

CAN nothing be done to stop the destructive utterances of this man, Al Smith? Think of him, as he did in that Philadelphia speech of his, urging the voters to sift the bunk out of the campaign and study the facts. Does he want to deflate the whole system of American politics? Would you hire a cook who squeezed all the meat out of the sausage and fried the sausage skin for breakfast?

Even so, maybe a little debunking would be gratifying to quite a lot of us who wish to start concentrating on football as soon as possible. I'm especially interested in how Yale comes out on its clever little idea of selling to a commercial broadcast the radio rights for all games played on the home grounds. But the fellow who gets the empty-bottles concession is the one who'll really clean up.

"Lead Dollar's" Immortality.

HOW some old friends do hang on! Twenty-five years ago or thereabouts, it appeared as a short story in Everybody's magazine under the title, "The Lead Dollar."

Twenty years ago, believing I was using an actual occurrence which never before had been fictionalized, I wrote it, too, and called it "Heart of Lead," and, barely in time, was saved by Bob Davis and Charlie Van Loan from the unintentional but nonetheless serious literary crime of plagiarism.

Fifteen years ago, Octavus Roy Cohen and I just did head off a young girl writer who already had sold the same tale to a pleased editor. I forget now what she called her version.

Today, practically complete in all its sequences—poker game, bogus money, practical jokes, god Samaritan, homeless girl, skeptical hotel clerk, pitiable suicide and all—I find this dear old familiar standby in the current issue of a popular monthly with yet another author sponsoring it.

Jack Garner's Activities.

MONTH after month, Uncle Jack Garner never said anything but "Ouch!" and then not for publication. It seemed that, if defeated, he would go back from the comparative obscurity of Washington to the blazing prominence of Uvalde county, Texas, as the most finished specimen of sound-proof nominee American politics ever produced. But he's no longer a perfect example to all innocent bystanders—he's just a candidate.

Having read his first speech, I'm reminded of the English gentleman who fell on hard times but did have a few layin' hens left and was driven by necessity to peddle their product in the open street.

So she picked out a back alley for her debut into vulgar trade, and, as she crept stealthily along, whispered in a stricken undertone:

"Fresh eggs, tuppence. I hope no one sees me. Fresh eggs, tuppence. I hope no one hears me."

IRVIN S. COBB.
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A Trio of Trim Togs

1950
1812
1891

This trio of trim togs offers an appealing variety to the woman who sews at home. There is style and economy in every design.

Pattern No. 1950, the tunic, is one of the season's smartest, featuring a modish stand-up collar and just the right amount of flare or "swing." A grand ensemble for any youthful figure. Simply and inexpensively made, this clever pattern is designed for sizes: 12, 14, 16, 18 and 20; 30, 32, 34, 36, 38 and 40. Size 14 requires three and one-eighth yards for the tunic in 39 inch material and two yards for the skirt. Five-eighths yard ribbon required for the bow.

Pattern No. 1891 is a perfect fitting princess wrap around or a coat frock with a reversible closing. It has everything demanded of a morning or utility frock—style, slimming lines, slashed set-in sleeves, one or two patch pockets, simplicity of design, and a double breasted closing which is smart and compelling. Available in a wide range of sizes, 14 to 20; and from 32 to 48, this versatile frock will win a favorite spot in your clothes closet in short order. Size 16 requires four and three-eighths yards of 35 inch material.

For tiny tots, pattern No. 1812 has all the adorable qualities you like to associate with darling cherubs. The pattern includes a

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