

Washington Digest

National Topics Interpreted
By WILLIAM BRUCKART
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Washington.—Several weeks ago, I reported to you the apparent necessity for presidential action in the direction of a curb on spending.

Must Cut Spending

I have written about this subject many times and I have no regret that I have done so, because for a half dozen years our government has been spending money too rapidly.

The President's latest message reviewing the budget situation indicates that the Chief Executive at last has started his thoughts in the direction of curtailed spending. Indeed, Mr. Roosevelt's message to congress in which he asked for a billion and a half dollars for relief purposes was characterized by quite a new note of firmness in his discussion of the need for cutting government costs. I think it is fair to say that in previous messages the President gave little more than lip service to the cause of economy in government. His previous suggestions to congress lacked force. Not so with the current call for a reduction in expenses. It had the earmarks of determination—but it yet remains to be seen whether he will insist strongly upon his conclusions when the showdown with congress comes.

The President's message was interesting in several respects beside the note of firmness, mentioned above. He confessed, for example, that there was no chance for a balanced budget in the next fiscal year. There is no chance, he disclosed, even for achieving the "layman's balance." That "layman's balance" ought to be explained for, my understanding of economics does not contemplate more than one kind of budget balancing, namely, income equalling outgo. But Mr. Roosevelt, in his campaign last year and in his message to congress last January, spoke of "layman's balance" as meaning a balance of income and outgo with the exception of expenditures for relief and for retirement of the public debt. I have heard it described in many quarters as a trick balance which I truly believe it should be called since it is not an honest balance.

In the January message, Mr. Roosevelt talked at length about the necessity for business taking on workers who were then on relief rolls. Only in that manner, he emphasized, could there be a reduction in relief rolls.

In the more recent message, the President omitted any reference to the responsibility of industry for reducing relief rolls by re-employing workers. That is not strange. The fact is, according to the government's own records, that industry is taking on workers at a more rapid rate than the administration had expected. But still there is no hope of a balanced budget this year.

So we must look elsewhere to find the reason. Instead of one, we find two reasons. The first and most important of the two is the fact that, by whatever analysis you make, the New Deal is guilty of continuing to waste money by hundreds of millions and it was not until a few weeks ago that any serious effort was made to choke off this drain, assuming the current effort is serious.

That statement sounds complicated and dull. It is not either one. The unvarnished truth is that Secretary Morgenthau and the flock of experts, trained only in theory, with whom he has surrounded himself, were unable to calculate what the present taxes would produce in revenue. Or, to say the same thing in a few words: Revenue receipts were far below what the Treasury experts guessed they would be.

Thus, the picture seems to be clear. On the one hand, the President heretofore has allowed the alphabetical agencies to run hither and yon in their money spending spree. On the other hand, the lack of competent financial men in the Treasury again is glaringly shown.

To get back to the question of curtailed spending I should like to call attention to the President's

Sounds Strong; but— language in his latest message.

He said that he proposed to use "every means at my command" to eliminate the deficit next year. That statement sounds strong enough. I question, however, that it can be called a program of retrenchment. In other words, Mr. Roosevelt was content in his message to congress simply to criticize, if not to denounce, extravagant outlays insofar as new commitments are concerned.

During the last few weeks, Mr. Roosevelt has called upon the various agencies of the government for statements of their financial requirements and something of a review of what they have done with previous funds. Considerable ballyhoo accompanied announcement of this survey of governmental requirement. But again, there was no evidence of specific determination by the Chief Executive as to what

governmental activity should be restricted or entirely eliminated. It was like a charge of bird shot. It scattered. There was no target mentioned except in a general way. There has been some talk that possibly Mr. Roosevelt's message and promise to use every means at his command for curtailing expenditures may have been intended as a message to his own subordinates that definite orders were to follow; that he intended his subordinates should see where they themselves could lop off spending plans, and could put their own houses in order. I hope it works out that way. On the other hand, I entertain very serious doubt that such a procedure will ever cause such individuals as the impetuous Mr. Harry Hopkins, relief administrator, to cut down on his spending. Mr. Hopkins loves to spend money. He seems to be happiest when he has billions to spread around, regardless of whether the spending plans really accomplish aid for the destitute. I suspect that congress alone can curb Mr. Hopkins and the only way congress can do so is by declining to appropriate extra money for him.

What I am trying to say in using Mr. Hopkins as the "horrible example," is that Mr. Roosevelt has taught his subordinates to spend money as freely as they can. To a considerable extent, he has let congress have a taste of new spending morsels and what politician does not like to spend money! Therefore, the President is confronted with the necessity of educating both his own subordinates and congress to the new order of conserving taxpayers' money. If he does not accomplish this, we will be saying in another six months what we have said many times—that we are confronted with national bankruptcy.

I cannot believe that the budgetary situation looks any different than it did last January. The difference in the picture is that Mr. Roosevelt at last has begun to see some of the dangers in the situation which he either failed to see or elected to ignore last January. There were few who believed in January that the tax receipts were going to amount to the estimate given congress by the President. The fact that they have fallen short of his calculations by four or five hundred million is a serious thing but it is not so serious that a remedy can not be worked out. The remedy, it seems to me, is a simple use of a simple practice among Americans: When you do not have the money, deny yourself some of the things you would buy if you had the cash.

Mr. Roosevelt's message asking for a billion and a half for relief served to get the collective mind of congress off the Supreme court packing plan only temporarily. The relief message caused quite a stir in the house of representatives where there has been a decided move already to continue appropriating huge sums of federal money for relief purposes, but it held the senate off the court question no longer than one business day.

I think there has been no question more frequently asked in my time in Washington than: "Will the President's bill to pack the Supreme court pass?"

I have watched the ebb and flow of the tide of sentiment in the senate constantly since the court packing plan was submitted. As the situation now stands, I believe Mr. Roosevelt has the odds in his favor. There is probably a margin of from five to ten votes on the President's side. Whether that will be the state of affairs when a vote comes, I think no one can foretell because the vote in the senate is going to be close.

Many informal polls of the senate have been taken. The results have varied somewhat. They have varied of necessity because there are many senators who remain non-committal, and who are unwilling at this time to take a position for or against the President's scheme.

One may properly ask why this is. The answer is politics. A good many senators do not know how their home states feel about the plan. That is, they are not able to determine whether there has been a crystallization of sentiment for or against the thing.

Consequently, these senators are trying to wait outside of the playing field until they can tell whether they can be justified in going against presidential wishes or capitulating to the President's command. It is to be remembered that if they turn against the President, they antagonize the administration and particularly the Farley political machine. It is rather unhealthy for a New Dealer or Democrat to oppose the Farley machine.

Another reason why many senators are keeping their own counsel on the court packing scheme is that they believe there will be something in the nature of a compromise come out of the hearings and senate judiciary committee consideration.

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what Irvin S. Cobb thinks about:

Touring Accommodations.
SANTA MONICA, CALIF.—For the sake of comparison two of us, out lately on a little trip, stayed one night at a wayside motor camp and the next night at the most expensive tourist hotel in three states, rates \$25 per day per sucker.

At the tourist camp, the company was mixed but neighborly and, for the most part, pleasant. The only really discordant note was a lady in the adjoining cabin who, at all hours, kept waking her husband up, apparently for the purpose of telling him another thing about him that she didn't like.

At the exclusive establishment were many guests who seemed to be suffering from severe attacks of nervous culture, being fearful, I'd say, that, if ever they behaved naturally, they'd give themselves away. Mainly they were dull. Waxworks, even when animated, usually are dull.

But stopping at a \$25 a day hotel has one advantage, I find. Afterward, you can go around bragging that once you stopped at a \$25-a-day hotel. This should be a great help socially.



Irvin S. Cobb

Dealing With Snakes.
A CONNECTICUT congressman is pushing an act to prohibit importation of venomous serpents from other countries for exhibition purposes. His fear is that an earthquake or something might shake the zoo apart and liberate a lot of deadly reptiles that would start multiplying and constitute a new menace to the lives of such of the populace as have thus far escaped being killed by automobiles.

Without presuming to assume that the gentleman is a bit of an alarmist, I'd like to point out that he can obtain millions of adherents for this measure among old-fashioned Americans by tacking in an amendment to his bill providing that the bars likewise shall be put up against foreign-born communists.

How Times Change.
I JUST read what I once knew for myself but had forgotten in the rush and bustle of these latter days. It related to the attitude which America, considerably less than half a century ago, held toward unescorted woman. For instance, as recently as 1890 not many respectable hotels would permit one of them to register.

Some time after 1900—in fact, as I remember, it was about 1910—a prominent lady was asked to leave one of the smartest hotels in New York city because she dared to light a cigarette in the public lounge. As for women drinking at a bar, well, not even the most forward-looking liberal could conceive of so incredible a sight as that.

And now just look at the darned things!

Hardships De Luxe.
WHEN our plutocratic classes decide to go simple, they go simple, regardless of what it costs 'em.

A rich couple have just completed a trip out here, following the ancient trails of the early pathfinders. Like true pioneer stock, they roughed it in specially built twin trailers, each about the size of a pullman but much more complete, and were towed by a couple of Rolls-Royces. The servants, only six in number, had to put up with two much cheaper cars.

During the entire trip there was no dressing for dinner and thus, with true democratic spirit, was the primitive plan of the expedition carried out. Every hardship encountered enroute—such as the champagne getting all jolted up and the caviar coming unglued in the can—was cheerfully endured. An armed guard was maintained a night to repel kidnapers and hostile Indian tribes.

I wonder how Jim Bridger and Kit Carson ever stood it with no butler along—in fact, not even a second man.

IRVIN S. COBB.
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Tweeds and Peats
The famous Harris tweeds came into being through an accident of nature. The freezing winds which swept across the barren islands of the Outer Hebrides, off the coast of Scotland, made it imperative that the natives have warm wind-proof, weather-proof garments. With nowhere else to turn, the women of the islands took advantage of the unusually thick fleece which was the winter coat of their sheep, and from it they wove for their men the first crude Harris tweeds. Because they had nothing but the natural dyes made from lichens and crotle, and nowhere to steep their wool except over peat fires, Harris tweed has always been characterized by a peaty outdoor odor. These tweeds had been worn in the Outer Hebrides for many years before the fashion centers of the world discovered them and elevated them to the front rank of sports fashions.

NEWS NOTES OF THE NORTHWEST

A Brief Summary of Events of Special Interest to Oregon, Washington and Idaho Communities.

ROSALIA, Wash.—The Farmers' Co-operative is erecting a large grain elevator here. Pouring of concrete is under way, and the structure will be completed in time to handle this year's crop.

BOISE, Ida.—Reduction of Idaho's WPA roll to 5000 workers by June 1 will be accomplished, it is predicted, "without hardship." Fewer than 7500 men and women are now on WPA projects.

PENDLETON, Ore.—Watermaster Spencer reports between 35,000 and 40,000 acre feet of water in McKay reservoir, in Umatilla county, and that Cold Springs reservoir is certain to be filled.

MORO, Ore.—The Sherman county farmers are told by their experiment station staff that not only is there a larger amount of moisture in the soil than for several years, but also more nitrates than for any year since 1931.

MULLAN, Ida.—Leona Harrang, Mullan school nurse, and Hester Chapman, Shoshone county public health nurse, administered smallpox and diphtheria immunization treatments to 60 school and pre-school children.

WALLA WALLA, Wash.—They can get in but they cannot get out! Police Chief J. G. Gemmel ordered inside handles taken off back doors of the city prowler cars. Too many drunks have been letting themselves out and nearly killing themselves by falling to the pavement.

OREGON CITY, Ore.—According to official report, collisions in Oregon City between two or more automobiles ran 171 in 1935 and more than doubled in 1936, totaling 347. Most of these new collisions came on the detour route made necessary by construction of the new Pacific highway subway and the four-lane highway to the south entrance to the city.

COEUR D'ALENE, Ida.—Invitation were sent out from the high school here to 15 schools of northern Idaho to join the school here in an outdoor playday for girls May 8. The program, the first of its kind in this region, will be held at the Memorial athletic field and city park, officials said. Tennis, volley ball, ping pong, relay races and other games are planned.

LA GRANDE, Ore.—Sam Graham, past master councillor of Sunnyside chapter, Portland, was elected state master councillor at the business meeting of state convalesce of the De Molay in a 2-day session here. Two other elective officers are Blair Warner, senior councillor of Takena chapter, Salem, elected state junior councillor, and Pat Fitzgerald, master councillor of La Grande, elected state senior councillor. Eugene's bid for the 1938 convalesce was accepted.

RUM REVENUE RISES
SALEM, Ore.—Oregon's liquor monopoly returned a net profit of \$188,200.33 for the month of March, and \$750,493.01 for the first quarter of 1937, the state liquor control commission reported.

Gross sales in the stores' division totaled \$638,707.73 during March. Books of the commission showed an unallocated surplus balance of \$912,477.92 as of March 31.

INDIANS DEBATE MOVE

MOSCOW, Ida.—All factors will be considered before action will be taken on the proposed removal of the Nez Perce Indian agency from Moscow to Lapai, Louis Balsam, field representative for the bureau of Indian affairs, told the chamber of commerce last week.

Balsam has been here "sizing up" the situation. Lewiston and Lapwai organizations have asked removal of the agency from here to Lapwai and the matter has been brought up in recent Nez Perce tribal councils.

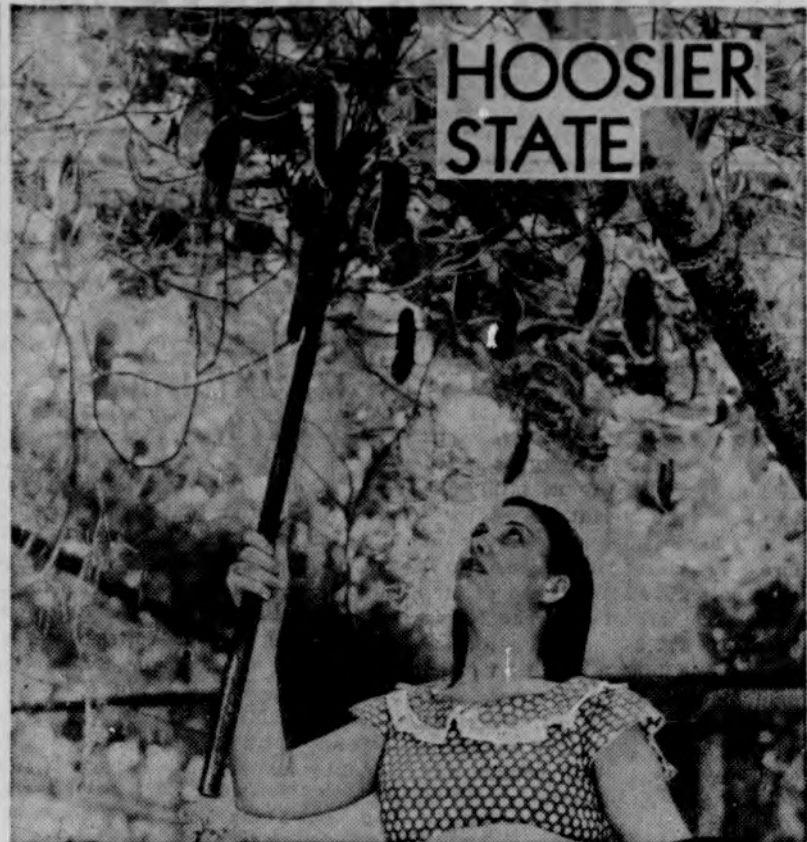
OLD COIN FOUND

RAYMOND, Wash.—Walter Foren of Bay Center, found a blackened copper coin bearing the date 1707, which revives tales of early explorers along the Pacific coast. He found the coin while working the soil in his garden, which is next to the historic old "Shaker" church at Bay Center. He purchased the land last fall, but did not work the soil until this spring.

The coin is between a nickel and a quarter size. On the dated side are three crowns with the letters "CXII" and the word "OR." On the other side of the coin is a unicorn and crown with the letters "R" and "S." Attempts to identify it have been fruitless, but it is thought the unicorn denotes an English coin.

ASTORIA, Ore.—Services at Astoria formally dedicating the new First Presbyterian church annex, recently completed at a cost of approximately \$35,000 were held in the auditorium of the new annex last Sunday night.

EMMETT, Ida.—Apricots are in full bloom at Emmett, about a week or 10 days later than usual, due to the cold spring. The crop will be greatly reduced because of the cold winter, which killed about 50 per cent of the buds.



Picking Cucumbers Out of the Air at Terre Haute.

Prepared by National Geographic Society.
Washington, D. C.—WNU Service.

INDIANA is the sum of its parts. Yet how they differ! Streams of planes, trains, motorcars, trucks, and buses whizzing back and forth across its north and central parts; yet how little travel, by comparison, in the south.

In that industrial region on Lake Michigan which is not Indiana at all but a prolongation of Chicago, nothing but smoke, noise, and moving crowds.

In the south, a serene, unhurried people whose ancestors floated down the Ohio in flatboats, came from the Carolinas and Kentucky on horseback, bringing rifles, axes, spinning wheels.

Look down, in fancy, from a drifting blimp; imagine that here and there, painted on the grounds in huge, white letters, are signboards on which you may read about the audacious men whose adventures made Indiana.

Near South Bend, La Salle camped in 1679. At Vincennes, a century later, George Rogers Clark gained for us the whole Northwest Territory.

That tall shaft of Pigeon Roost Memorial shows where, in 1812, Indians slew a whole white settlement.

East of Evansville, at Lincoln City, is the monument to Lincoln's mother, Nancy Hanks, and the boyhood home where her son Abe split rails.

Along the Wabash—the Ouabache of old—are strewn the sites of French fur-trade posts, built in the early 1700's. North of Lafayette, the Tippecanoe battlefield, where Harrison defeated Tecumseh's brother; and, just out of Kokomo, a monument to Elwood Haynes, who in 1894 launched one of America's first "horseless carriages" on the now historic "Pumpkinvine Pike."

In fact and fancy you may see still other markers, showing the homes of such famous Hoosiers as James Whitcomb Riley, Benjamin Harrison, John Hay, Lew Wallace, Joaquin Miller, Booth Tarkington, Albert J. Beveridge, George Ade, Theodore Dreiser, Charles Major, John T. McCutcheon, Meredith Nicholson, and Wilbur Wright; and, up among the scenic lakes of northwestern Indiana, in the "Lumberlost" region, that rustic, tree-shaded log-house home of Gene Stratton Porter.

Story Is Shown on Carter's Map.

It sounds fantastic, the idea of floating over a state and reading its life story on giant signboards. Yet, in a vicarious way, you can do it, for there exists a pictorial map, drawn by Lee Carter and published by the state conservation department, which shows in graphic detail much that has happened here since Father Marquette saw northern Indiana in the 1600's. This map was our guide over some 6,500 miles of Hoosier highways and byways.

"On the Banks of the Wabash" is the state song. It ought to be; down the Wabash came the French, first whites to settle in Indiana; this stream formed part of their long route from Quebec to Louisiana. At Terre Haute you see a street crowd watching a tricky machine turn dough into doughnuts, instantaneously. It is hard to believe that in the pioneer days country folks didn't even have matches; if they let their fires go out, they had to ride over to the neighbors' and borrow some live coals.

The sight of girls picking long, green, warty cucumbers out of the air lures you into a 35-acre steam-heated glass house. Inside it smells and feels just like Manila in the rainy season, hot and sticky. A bug's paradise! Swarms of bees are kept, purposely, to pollinate the cucumber blossoms. Not on the ground, but high up overhead like grapes on a trellis hung the cucumbers. Perspiring blonds and brunettes reached up with long-handled tools and clipped them off.

Elks' Country Club house, facing the Wabash, stands where Zachary Taylor whipped the Indians in 1812. Parallel with the river is the abandoned Wabash and Erie canal, its grass-grown towpath still visible.

An Englishman—about 1848—wrote of a canal trip from here to Ohio. It was hot, he said. All day

passengers sat on top the boat, many under umbrellas. Some fiddled or sang; others read, or watched the scenery go whizzing by as towpath horses pulled the boat at four miles an hour! This Englishman was disturbed that Americans should eat squirrels!

Through pioneer Terre Haute came the old National Road. Over it swarmed the cheering legions—soldiers, settlers, paire schooners, freighters, live stock, boys and dogs—off to conquer the West. Today this early wagon trail, long but a line of ruts dodging stumps and mudholes, is U. S. 40. At Terre Haute it intersects U. S. 41 to form one of America's busiest crossroads.

South of the city hovers the population center of the United States. For the past 45 years it has been slowly wandering across Indiana.

Historic Four-Cornered Track.

Trotting horses, harnessed to light skulies, set world records at Terre Haute. Nancy Hanks, Maud S., Dan Patch, Mascot, Hal Pointer, and Axtell raced here on the historic "four cornered" track in the days of Bud Doble, greatest reinsman of his age. Now a stadium, with night ball games by electric light, rises where crowds used to cheer goggled drivers holding tight reins to keep their sweating trotters from "breaking" into a gallop.

Spirits, gunpowder, glass, this town makes them all. You see piles of sand, soda, and limestone fed to big furnaces; then gobs of red-hot glass dropping into a magic machine that shapes the bottles—one every two seconds.

Some men are piling tall bottles into a box car.

"Where for?" you ask. "Down to Key West, across on the car ferry to Havana, then east by rail to where Cubans make Bacardi rum."

Oddy self-contained, this region. Local straw makes packing cases; printers make labels, farmers grow vegetables, and canners do the rest.

Out at Rose Polytechnic boys build toy bridges. Some day, when they're full-fledged engineers, they may build big ones in Bolivia or the Philippines!

Saint Mary-of-the-Woods is one of America's exclusive schools for girls. You see groups riding, clad in smartest saddle-club togs, the horses groomed slick and shiny, their hoofs oiled. Perhaps some of these girls have descended from women who also rode horses—from Virginia or the Carolinas, over the wilderness trails, carrying babies, dreading panthers and Indians.

Old Timers on the Wabash.

Glimpses of the Wabash as you ride south to Vincennes make you think of the French voyageurs, and the wild, half-naked coureurs de bois.

The voyager had a license to trade. But the "bush loper" was an outlaw in that long war for fur between French and English. Like the honest trader, the renegade offered knives, beads, axes, guns, and blankets for the red man's pelts, but cheated when he could.

Traders and boats of all kinds used to swarm on the Wabash. John Parsons, a young Virginian who came here in 1840 to buy land, wrote: "In the fall, 1,000 flatboats will pass down the river, the majority loaded with flour, pork, . . . lard, cattle, horses, oats, cornmeal, and corn on the ear. . . They told me of a flatboat. . . carrying a load of hickory nuts, walnuts and venison hams."

You can't ride along the Wabash, with all its traditions, historic sites, old graveyards and monuments, without thinking of its part in making America.

On a Wabash tributary near Peru is the grave of Frances Slocum, stolen by the Indians as a girl in 1778. She spent her whole life with them, refusing, when finally visited by her own white relatives, to leave the tribe. Pioneer John Parrett of Whitley county advertised that he had paid Indians \$2.50 to release a six-year-old white boy, and that he would keep the boy "till his parents, if living, and chance to see this notice, may find him."