

# Washington Digest

National Topics Interpreted  
By WILLIAM BRUCKART  
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Washington.—The government's silver policy again is attracting attention. Several things have caused it. First among these things is the matter of rising prices for foods and other necessities of life, but attention seems to have centered on the silver question again as a result of the Treasury's newly arranged agreement to trade some of its gold for some of the Chinese silver.

Probably the silver question is not as widely discussed as it might be because it is a complex subject and there are not too many people who understand it and its implications.

I cannot refrain at this time, however, from recalling that when the silver act of 1934 was passed, I wrote in these columns a prediction that the country sooner or later would regret that legislation. I repeat the statement now and I do not believe it will be long until the average citizen will recognize what the silver policy is doing to most of us. I mean by that, it will not be long until Mr. John Q. Public will understand that the silver policy has a lot to do with the high prices he is paying for his pound of bacon, his slice of beefsteak or a thousand and one items that he buys at the grocery store. He will feel it, too, when he seeks to buy a new suit of clothes or a new pair of shoes. There can be no argument about it: The affect of inflation brought about by a perfectly ridiculous silver policy is upon us.

Early in July, the Chinese minister of finance visited Washington and called personally at the Treasury to express the appreciation of the Chinese government for the satisfactory conclusion of negotiations that enable the Chinese to give the American Treasury silver for gold. It was the usual diplomatic courtesy. At the same time, however, the visit of the Chinese minister served to awaken America to the fact that the Treasury has been going along, buying silver from foreign countries in order to maintain an arbitrary price which the Washington administration contended should be the world price for silver. This price is forty-five cents an ounce, and it is a most profitable price for silver producers in Mexico and Canada and some other foreign countries. It is not as profitable, however, as the price the Treasury pays to American producers—which is seventy-seven and one-half cents an ounce.

But, one may ask, what has this thing to do with the cost of beefsteak, ham and eggs or shoes?

I hope I may be able to explain it as I have watched the picture unfold and to explain it in a manner that those unacquainted with high finance may see the thing in its true light.

First of all, the policy of the administration that has brought billions of gold into the Treasury to be stored as so much dead weight has resulted in many thousands of shares of stock in American corporations or their bonds being bought by foreigners who gave gold in payment. President Roosevelt early in his administration insisted that gold should not be in circulation as money. Consequently, the Treasury has so much gold that it has had to build separate storehouses to protect it. Now, we are sending some of that gold to China in trade for China's silver. I think most everyone will agree that the silver is just as useless because we have no need for it in our currency structure. People do not want to carry silver dollars around in their pockets.

Assuming that the exchange was simply an even trade of two objects, neither of which was usable to us, one probably could dismiss the matter with a wave of the hand. Regrettably, such is not the case. The additional silver frankly is adding to our troubles because of the Silver Act of 1934 which permits the Treasury to issue currency—silver one-dollar bills—against it.

So, instead of being sterilized and stored away in vaults, the silver accession results in a prompt increase in the amount of currency in circulation. That action tends to increase the excess reserve—unused money—of the banking system. As this money becomes available for circulation, its value necessarily and obviously is cheapened. Or, to say it another way, the things you buy with money become of greater value because it takes more of these pieces of currency to buy the same quantity of food or clothes or shoes.

Authorities will disagree with the above statement to the extent that all kinds of currency have not been expanded (which means inflated) by the issuing of silver certificates. That is true. But we must be realistic and recognize that

a silver certificate occupies exactly the same place in our currency structure as does a bill that is backed by gold or one that is issued by the Federal Reserve banks. Therefore, it seems to me to be a fair statement to say that the whole currency structure is tainted by this deluge of silver certificates now and heretofore coming from the Treasury. And it is equally a fact that prices of every kind are going to increase exactly in accordance or in ratio with the new money that is put out from the Treasury.

I do not know how long it will be until the voters wake up to the necessity for repeal of the silver act. It probably will not be long before there is a wave of public indignation against the policy if the average person realizes that the program is actually a tax upon the American public. Surely, if the silver policy were labeled, "tax to support the silver program," the attitude of the country would change overnight. That really should be the name of the Silver Act of 1934 because that is its effect. The tax results from the fact that the Treasury is paying foreign producers as well as American producers prices for silver that are higher than the value of the silver warrants. This means that any article of silver that you buy in a store costs you more than it would if silver producers abroad and in the United States were not being subsidized. The additional cost is a tax on every buyer just as much as though you had paid the tax directly into the Treasury.

It may be interesting to know that the Treasury has issued nearly eight-hundred million in silver certificates. In addition something like seven million silver dollars have been coined, and these still remain in the package in which they were wrapped at the mints. Besides all these, there is silver bullion that cost \$375,000,000 piled up in the Treasury. Silver certificates can be issued against this.

The silver act of 1934 provided that the Treasury could buy one dollar's worth of silver to three dollars' worth of gold for what is called reserve purposes. On the basis of the gold now held, the Treasury can buy under that law a total of \$4,125,000,000 in silver. At the present time Treasury records show we have silver reserves amounting to around \$2,600,000,000. These figures show, or ought to show, how much inflation lies ahead—how much higher prices may go—unless something is done to restore a sound currency policy in the United States.

Some Democrats who are not too friendly with Postmaster General Jim Farley, along with the Republicans in congress, are having fun

these days with the Democratic National committee. They are also succeeding, it appears, in making President Roosevelt's political seat uncomfortably warm. Nothing will come of it except that the subject will fill many newspaper columns of attack and defense as the politicians shoot back and forth.

To review the situation, it should be recalled that the Democratic National committee found itself in debt to the tune of about \$650,000 at the end of the 1936 campaign. Some bright mind in the Democratic National committee conceived the idea of selling Democratic campaign handbooks to corporations at \$250 per book, or more, as a means of raising money.

To make the book attractive, a single sheet bearing the autograph of Franklin Delano Roosevelt was inserted. Hundreds of corporations were solicited, and hundreds bought the books—theoretically, because of the autograph of the President. Mr. Roosevelt stated he did not know he was autographing the blank sheets for the purpose for which they were used.

Republican Leader Snell, of New York, introduced a resolution in the house of representatives, proposing an investigation of the sale of these books to corporations. He contended that it was a violation of the corrupt practices act.

Mr. Snell remained determined, however, and sought to harass the New Deal further by asking Attorney General Cummings for an official opinion. At the same time, he read on the floor of the house a long list of corporations who had bought the "souvenirs" of the 1936 campaign, together with a list of prices they had paid.

These facts cut deeply into the Democrats who are seeking to protect Chairman Farley and the Democratic National committee wiggled and squirmed. Nevertheless, Mr. Snell may as well have butted his head against a stone wall since he got no further than Representative Rayburn, the house Democratic leader, would have gotten, if Mr. Snell had been majority, instead of minority, leader.

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## What Irvin S. Cobb Thinks about

This Business of Golf.  
OKLAND, CALIF.—As I sit writing this, I look out where elderly gentlemen, intent on relaxing, may be seen tensing themselves up tighter than a cocked wolf-trap, and then staggering toward the clubhouse with every nerve standing on end and screaming for help and highballs.

I smile at them, for I am one who has given up golf. You might even go so far as to say golf gave me up. I tried and tried, but I never broke a typhoid patient's temperature chart—never got below 102. I spent so much time climbing into sand-traps and out again that people began thinking I was a new kind of hermit, living by preference in bunkers—the old man of the link beds, they'd be calling me next.

And I used to slice so far into the rough that, looking for my ball, I penetrated jungles where the foot of man hadn't trod since the early mound builders. That's how I added many rare specimens to my collection of Indian relics.

But the last straw was when a Scotch professional, after morbidly watching my form, told me that at any rate there was one thing about me which was correct—I did have on golf stockings!

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Congressional Boldness.  
WARNING to pet lovers: If you own guinea pigs or tame rabbits or trained seals or such-like gentle creatures, try to keep the word from them that some of the majority members of the lower branch of congress actually threatened to defy their master's voice.

The senate always has been known as the world's greatest deliberative body—and, week by week and month by month don't those elder statesmen know how to deliberate! But these last few years the house has earned the reputation of being the most docile legislative outfit since Aesop's King Stork ruled over the synod of the frogs.

So should the news ever spread among the lesser creatures, hither to so placid and biddable, that an example had been set at Washington, there's no telling when the Belgian hares will start rampaging and the singing mice will begin acting up rough and the grubworms will gang against the big old woodpecker.

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Professional Orators.  
WE HAVE in Southern California a professional orator who long ago discovered that the most dulcet music on earth was the sound of his own voice. He'll speak anywhere at the drop of the hat and provide the hat.

What's worse, this coast-defender of ours labors under the delusion that, if he shouts at the top of his voice, his eloquence will be all the more forceful. The only way to avoid meeting him at dinner is to eat at an owl wagon. But the other night, at an important banquet, he strangely was missing from the array of speakers at the head table. One guest turned in amazement to his neighbor:

"Where's Blank?" he inquired, naming the absentee.

"Didn't you hear?" answered the other. "He busted a couple of ear drums."

"Whose?" said the first fellow.

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Foes of Nazidom.  
THE veteran Rabbi Stephen Wise of New York has been reasonably outspoken in his views on Nazi treatment of his own co-religionists and the practitioners of other faiths as well. And one of the most venerable prelates of the Catholic church in Europe, while discussing the same subject, hasn't exactly pulled his punches, either.

So what? A friend just back from abroad tells me that in Berlin he heard a high government officer fiercely denounce these two distinguished men. About the mildest thing the speaker said about them was that both were senile. Somehow or other, the speech wasn't printed in the German papers—maybe by orders from on high.

Well, far be it from this innocent bystander to get into religious arguments and besides I have no first-hand knowledge as to the Christian clergyman's state of health, although, judging by his utterances, there's nothing particularly wrong with his mind. But I do know Rabbi Wise, and, if he's in his dotage, so is Shirley Temple. And I risk the assertion that he would be perfectly willing to have one foot in the grave if he could have the other on Herr Hitler's neck.

IRVIN S. COBB  
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## FARM TOPICS

PULLETS FED WELL  
WILL LAY IN FALL

Careful Summer Attention  
Pays Good Returns.

By H. H. Alp, Extension Poultryman, University of Illinois.—WNU Service.

Cheapest of all ways to feed pullets this summer will be to feed them well. Egg production next September and October will depend on the summer feeding. Experience has demonstrated that worms and disease thrive best in poorly fed flocks, and that good pullets are never raised by making scavengers out of them during July and August.

Prospects look favorable for egg prices next fall because many people will attempt to economize on feed. Such a practice will make the feed used doubly expensive.

A ration which has given good results with pullets after they are eight weeks old is the one made of a starting mash and ground grain. For each 200 pullets two range feeders are recommended; one containing starting mash and the other a coarsely ground grain mixture of equal parts of corn, wheat and oats.

Grinding the grain has a tendency to insure greater consumption of it and less of the mash. Some poultrymen are making a practice of closing, for a part of the day, the feeder containing the mash, especially if there is a tendency toward too early sexual maturity of the pullets.

This ration in combination with a good clean green range such as alfalfa, plenty of clean drinking water and some protection from extreme heat should go a long way toward developing pullets of normal growth, free from worms and ready to lay next fall when egg prices are expected to be high.

Despite the fact that most laying flocks are laying well at this time of year, the need for careful culling should be noted. Every bird not laying and not having any value as a future breeder will consume about 20 cents worth of feed a month.

Gully Control Varies  
With Local Conditions

Farmers keep in mind economy, effectiveness, and permanence when they build soil-saving check dams, earth fills or diversion ditches to control gullies, says T. B. Chambers of the Soil Conservation Service. Check dams of straw, poles and logs, woven wire, and loose rock serve their purpose well, although they do not last as well as dams of well-laid rock or concrete and earth.

Gullies waste millions of tons of valuable soil every year. SCS men on more than 140 demonstration areas are showing farmers how gullies can be prevented and checked. Control varies because climate, soils, and cropping methods vary in different parts of the country, but farmers will find one or more of three methods effective.

In practically all sections of the country gully sides may be planted to grass, shrubbery, or trees. Once established, the vegetation slows the flow of "little waters" after rains and holds the soil. Choice of grasses, trees, or shrubs for such plantings is a question which may be referred to county agents or SCS specialists on demonstration areas.

When gullies drain a fair-sized watershed, run-off can be retarded by the right crops and contour farming. Terraces or diversion ditches take care of excess run-off.

Where the volume of run-off is high, earth, masonry, or concrete dams may be necessary. These dams are most effective where a gully slope is comparatively gentle and where they can be high enough to prevent further cutting back of the gully head. These dams also create reservoirs for livestock water and irrigation.

With the Farmers  
Large eggs do not hatch so well as small ones.

Nearly 900,000 tons of wheat was grown in Great Britain last season.

The University of California conducts a large horse breeding farm.

Poultry raising in America is rightly called "a billion dollar business."

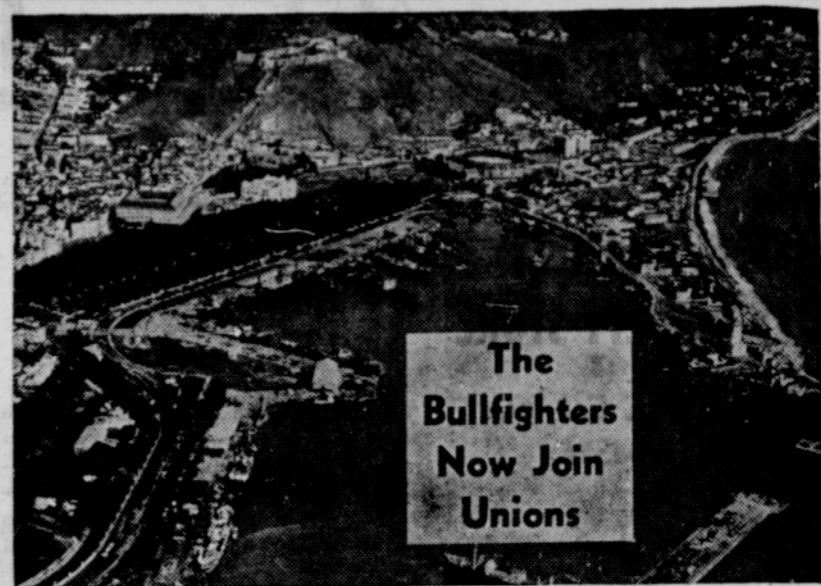
Non-layers of all ages should be carefully culled out of the flock until September 1.

The Department of Agriculture says that the cost of keeping a farm horse, including cost of depreciation, is approximately \$100 per year.

A summer shelter provides cheap, comfortable quarters for housing yearling layers at the end of the first laying year.

The Rose Comb White Leghorn is identical with the Single Comb White Leghorn except in the matter of the rose comb.

Eggs are imported into the United States in the form of shell eggs; whole eggs, dried; whole eggs, frozen; dried and frozen yolks; and dried albumen.



Malaga, Spain, before shot and shell marred its beauty.

## Civil War Makes World Conscious of Modern Changes Felt in Spain

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

CIVIL war in Spain signals the startling changes which have swept that ancient land in recent years.

In the swift rush of daily news, more is said of military leaders and their campaigns, of statesmen and changing governments, than of the deep social and economic transformations behind the news, or the character of this land and its people.

Long before King Alfonso fled, these changes were of course under way, and because of them his monarchy failed.

These transitions have gathered momentum, until today this once romantic land of duennas, monasteries, bullfights and leisurely pastoral life has written a new and dramatic chapter in its long history.

Where centuries-old country lanes and mountain trails used to wind, fine new concrete roads now streak over the hills. To a large degree, men have exchanged their saddle mules for flivvers, and the high-wheeled, clumsy oxcart yields to the whizzing motor truck.

Senioritas Bob Their Hair.  
From the Bay of Biscay down to the blue Mediterranean, traditional peasant costumes are being discarded and men are dressing in plain blue overalls. Black-eyed senioritas today lay away the time-honored mantilla, get their hair bobbed and hunt city jobs as typists, telephone girls and shop clerks, as do their sisters in many lands.

New thinking, as well as new machines, changes the way of Spaniards. Bullfighting still goes on, but now the intrepid toreadors belong to a labor union! You may still find guitars and fandangos, for Spaniards are ever a music-loving people, and possibly you may find here and there a lovesick couple mooning at each other through an old iron-barred window. More and more, however, the radio supersedes the guitar and the girl has come out from behind the historic grillwork and gone to the movies with her sweetheart—or to the street barricades to fight with him!

One fact to grasp, in understanding the social muddle here, is that Spain is divided into 50 provinces; and not so many years ago it was commonly said that it also had 50 different national dances and costumes, together with almost as many dialects.

Comparatively sudden advent of new high-speed roads, faster vehicles, speeches and news broadcast by air, and the breakdown of church influence, all combine now to dissipate this old conservative provincial spirit. Thus has Spain been turned into a milling, restless land. For the first time country and town life are freely blended, and the peasant can hear the exciting talk of city radicals and revolutionaries that yesteryear came only as a remote murmur.

Spain is now becoming so modernized that busses of every kind and color race along from village to village, from town to city. Till a few years ago, many country people never journeyed more than 20 miles from home in their lives. Now by cheap, or even free, rides in war times, they travel all over the country!

Political Parties Are Many.  
With the rise of the republic came, of course, more liberty of speech and action; but, born of the 50 provinces and their 50 different ways of thinking, came also wide division of opinion and action. Political parties of all shades sprang up in great variety and number. Certain factions held that progress should be attained gradually through education of the masses—masses as yet untrained in the art of government. This is obviously a slow process and one would suppose that in a romantic "land of manana" a slow process would be acceptable.

But the manana idea is another of those old Spanish customs so rapidly disappearing; many now demand a quicker approach, a faster progress. Thus a peek at Spain of today reveals a startling modernity of thought, civilization and up-to-the-minute comforts and contrivances, superimposed upon the stubborn survival of many local ways and prejudices that bend or break but slowly.

Irrestibly, however, the cities put on a more modern dress and quicken their pace. Consider, hastily, some of the cities and towns that have figured in recent war news.

The New York of Spain.  
Take a look at Barcelona, the New York of Spain. It is the largest city in the country, the most important financial and industrial center and by far the busiest seaport. The sun shines in air crisp and exhilarating as you stroll down the Paseo de Gracia, Barcelona's most important thoroughfare and indeed one of the most interesting and modernistic streets in the world. Fine motorcars (no trucks allowed on this wide avenue) stop and go at modern American traffic signals.

At the foot of the Paseo is the very heart of Barcelona—the Plaza de Cataluna—a large open space filled with statues, fountains, flower beds, paved paths, and benches. Always animated, human streams flow in and out of its subway entrances. The Plaza, too, is the center of fierce turmoil in every political upheaval. It is surrounded by large, ornate structures—banks, hotels, and new telephone office building with copper-green tower, a Yankee skyscraper indeed in a Spanish metropolis!

Flying at another corner is a welcome sight for American eyes—the Stars and Stripes—indicating the splendid offices of the United States consulate general.

Use American Cash Registers.  
Big signs advertise American automobiles. Indeed, three-fourths of all cars in the Plaza are of familiar make. There is a large American bank a few doors up the street; in bookstores are displays of American fountain pens, and in the tobacco shops even chewing gum!

All these business houses use American adding machines and cash registers, and the offices hum with American typewriters. Many of the fine new apartment buildings are equipped with American doors and electric refrigerators. Here "foreign trade" is a pulsing thing far removed from the dry statistics of our commerce.

"Rambla" really means a dry ravine, but in Barcelona the word is used to designate a wider street or boulevard. The original fascinating Rambla of Barcelona is like no other thoroughfare in the world! It is a long, straight avenue with a wide promenade for pedestrians in the center and is lined with tall plane trees.

Busy stores flank the Rambla from end to end, interspersed with theaters, cinemas, an ancient church or two and a large number of cafes. Under bright, wide awnings that canopy the sidewalks and shade the little tables, idlers sit and watch the lifeblood of the metropolis stream up and down its main artery—streaming at a much quick tempo since recent shooting started!

Like the Paris boulevards, each section of the Rambla bears a different name. First come ornamental kiosks displaying an amazing variety of newspapers and magazines in every European language. Then comes the bird market. Arranged in cages of all sizes along the promenade is a bewildering show of yellow and brown canaries, gray parrots from western Africa, green ones from Brazil, tiny parakeets, all setting up a lively chatter.

New World Gives Way.  
The next section is the brightest of all—the Rambla de las Flores. Here open-air flower stalls, bossed by black-haired peasant women, offer flowers of every color and shade. Love of flowers is one point at least upon which all divergent political parties can agree!

Following the flower stalls come more kiosks where one may procure ice cream or soft drinks. Buildings begin to look older now—the New World gives way to the Old—and finally we come out into the wide water front, with its ornate customhouse, the tall statue to Columbus, and the palm-lined Paseo de Colon. To the right, in the shadow of the huge, somber stone barracks, is a long double line of bookstalls.

Sloping up on the right of the harbor is the high hill of Montjuich, with a sinister old fort upon its crest. In turbulent days of riots and strikes, executions of ringleaders take place here.