'New Look' Given Italian Coin During Its Minting

Rome—(U.P.)—Italy's money is getting a "new look," and there are suggestions to give it a new name, too.

Shiny, feather-light white metal coins are gradually replacing the paper notes that have been in the pockets of Italians since the war in various stages of dirtiness and disintegration.

Sixty minting machines at the state mint here are working at full speed to turn out new 50 and 100-lire (eight and 16 U. S. cents) coins and at the same time continue production of one, two, five and 10-lire coins.

A total 2,350,000,000 coins of the four smaller denominations must be produced to replace paper money completely by the December, 1956 deadline fixed by law. Only 1,334,000,000 have been turned out and are circulating so far, with over one billion coins still to be minted.

The 50 and 100-lire coins—scheduled to number 100 million of each denomination—must replace paper currency completely by the end of 1957. None of these is yet in circulation.

The new 50 and 100-lire pieces, like the smaller denominations, are in a special inoxydable steel called acmonital (acciaio monetario italiano or Italian monetary steel), first used under Mussolini. They are so light that you can carry them in your pockets by the dozens and hardly notice it.

Not The Old Days

The 50 and 100-lire coins are about one inch in diameter. Figures in the front represent Minerva, goddess of wisdom, with a laurel tree, for the 50-lire coin, and blacksmith Vulcanus, god of craftsmanship, on the 100-lire piece. On the rear, both coins bear a woman's head, representing the Italian republic.

Gradual elimination of the paper notes for the lower denominations has helped improve the domestic prestige of the Italian lire, now one of Europe's stablest currencies, thanks to the determined anti-inflation policies of post-war governments. But it is a far cry from by-gone centuries when one lire was worth a pound of silver—lire comes from "libbra," a pound—or even from 100 years ago when national hero Giuseppe Garibaldi claimed every Italian could live on two lire a day.

The time at the turn of the century when the lire was worth more than its face value in gold is like a half-forgotten dream. During World War II and in the immediate post-war years, with their flood of Allied military lire (AM-Lire), the lire dropped to about one-sixtieth of its pre-war value, and has stayed at that level ever since. Its exchange rate is 625 to the dollar.

New Name

The drop in the lira's purchasing power has been more than offset by raises in worker's income. But one unpleasant effect of the devaluation is that all prices sound much higher than they did before the war. One, two or five lire don't buy anything any more. Chewing gum costs ten lire, and a bus fare is from 25 to 40 lire.

To eliminate the unpleasant impression of high prices, some experts are now suggesting one simple change—call 100 lire one fiorino (florin), 1,000 lire 10 florins, and so on.

This, they contend, will have a healthy psychological effect, making people feel that you can buy more for your money. It will increase confidence in currency, and stimulate savings.

Public response to the idea was none too enthusiastic. A poll conducted by the Doxa organization showed only six per cent of Italians had heard about the suggestion. Well over half of them had no opinion on the subject and just did not care. Few felt it would have any influence on people's spending habits.

Supporters of the idea were not discouraged. They pointed out that the public's reaction to the new small-denomination coins was likewise negative. Most Italians disliked the coins when they first came out, and showed it by smuggling thousands of them to Switzerland where they were used to make buttons.

But little by little people have become appreciative, and now generally prefer coins to paper notes. They feel the little metal pieces at least are cleaner than paper. Also, they are more useful than bits of paper to impress the value of money on children.

Salk Plans Test For New Version Of Polio Vaccine

Pittsburgh — (U.P.) — Dr. Jonas E. Salk plans to conduct tests on volunteer school children to learn whether a new version of his vaccine will provide greater immunity to polio.

The University of Pittsburgh scientist disclosed that laboratory tests show that a new vaccine appears more potent than the anti-polio shots now being administered to school children.

Dr. Salk announced, in an article published in the Allegheny County Medical Society's weekly bulletin, that the vaccine to be tested is basically the same as that now in use, but several different strains have been developed to bolster the vaccine's ability to halt polio.

First Three Grades

He will ask Pittsburgh school authorities for permission to test the more powerful vaccines in "certain selected schools," which will include kindergarten pupils and children in the first three grades.

"Our plan is to intiate the new studies within the next few weeks," he said.

It will be the second time in his polio vaccine research that Dr. Salk has called upon Pittsburgh area school children for help. Approximately 15,000 were inoculated in the original tests, which were the basis for a nationwide field trial.

Results of the 1954 tests showed the vaccine was 80 to 90 per cent effective in preventing paralytic polio. Salk had been seeking a vaccine capable of producing 100 per cent immunity, even before the historic announcement of the first vaccine was made at Ann Arbor, Mich., last April 12.

Dead Polio Virus

Dr. Salk has indicated that some of the preparations to be tested contain strains of dead polio virus which differ from those used in the licensed product.

It was believed that Dr. Salk may have developed a substitute for the Mahoney strain which some critics contend should have been removed from the Salk vaccine because it was too dangerous for experiments.

Ashland-Talent Fund Drive Opens

Ashland — A drive to raise $14,300 for the Ashland-Talent Youth Activities council during October, got under way here Saturday.

Sports events, radio auctions, food sales, dances, parties and other fund raising activities have been planned by civic groups. drive, the Boy scouts, Girl scouts, Campfire girls and YMCA, have also planned events to aid the drive in reaching its goal.

Permanent status for the Activities council has been assured by the adoption of a constitution. Membership in the organization consists of one or more representatives from each service organization and recipient group.

Members at large are the drive chairman for the current year, representatives of the American legion, Elks club, Ministerial association, Demolay, Parent-Teacher's association, and the American Association of University women.

Marcola, Ore. — (U.P.) — The Mohawk Lumber Company mill which employed about 100 men in this eastern Lane county community was closed Saturday. The firm plans to continue woods operations. An official said it was impractical to continue mill operations.

Battleground for Hells Canyon Dam Issue Spreads

Vancouver, Wash. — (U.P.) — The Hells canyon battleground extended farther downstream on the Snake river today after public and private power forces clashed over plans for development of two more damsites.

The Northwest Public Power association, representing 99 municipal and rural electric systems, charged Saturday that private construction of the Mountain Sheep and Pleasant valley projects would aid creation of a "power octupus."

Licenses Sought

The Pacific Northwest Power Co., composed of five private utilities, has applied to the Federal Power commission for licenses to construct the two dams. The two dams, about 65 miles downstream from the controversial Hells canyon site, would produce 1,000,000 kilowatts of electric power.

Gus Norwood, associate executive secretary of the Northwest Public Power association, said his group had filed a petition of intervention with the FPC against the private projects.

The association petition proposes construction of a federal dam at the Nez Pearce site downstream from Mountain Sheep. The association said such a federal dam would produce 1,980,000 kilowatts of electric power and also store 4,800,000 acre feet of water.

Controversy Spreads

The petition of intervention also charges that the combination of private utilities into the Pacific Northwest Power Co., raises questions under laws pertaining to holding companies.

The battle over the Mountain Sheep and Pleasant Valley sites spreads controversy over most of the length of Hells canyon, the deepest gorge in North America. Public and private power forces have been fighting since World War II over whether three low-level private dams or one high government dam should develop the upper reaches of the canyon. The FPC this year gave a go-ahead to the Idaho Power company for construction of two of its proposed three low dams, but the decision still is being fought by public power forces.

The average U. S. citizen will eat four more pounds of meat this year than in 1954, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates.

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