

Government Food Stamps Seen as Poor Substitute for Weekly Envelope

Editor's note: The testing grounds for President Kennedy's new federal food stamp program include sections of Kentucky, West Virginia, Pennsylvania and Illinois. In each area there are many jobless men. The reasons vary from day to day but to provide a close-up picture of the problem and the people in one of the affected areas United Press International has assigned a team of three veteran reporters to southern Illinois. Here is their report.

By FRANK L. SMOTHERS,
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UPI Special Reporting Team

West Frankfort, Ill. — (UPI) — The triangular tip of southern Illinois, that is known as "Egypt" and what once was the old frontier's land of milk and honey needs more than food stamps today.

The emergency program of food for the unemployed announced by President Kennedy Wednesday will make life a little brighter in south-

ern Illinois — even though few cupboards are bare and nobody is starving.

Housewives no longer will have to settle for the surplus powdered milk or dried beans which the federal government has been handing out for years.

But the housewives' husbands will still be out of work and the relief rolls will still be full, no matter how many grocery bills Uncle Sam picks up.

For what southern Illinois needs is new ideas — new ideas to found new industries and put its men back to work. The same probably may be said of West Virginia, Pennsylvania, eastern Kentucky and any other areas named by Kennedy as victims of chronic unemployment, and eligible for the experimental food stamp program.

Economists call these places "depressed areas" — a phrase which makes any southern Illinoisan wince. They point out that many towns in the area are rising and bank deposits keep rising.

They feel that all might yet be well if only the coal mines would open up again and the men of Egypt could go back underground.

Coal is still king in West Frankfort and the rest of

Egypt. But he is a king who has lost his power to rule.

Venerable Town
West Frankfort is a venerable town of 9,000, astride the Chicago & Eastern Illinois tracks 30 miles north of Cairo and 30 miles south of Chicago. It is not the most needy city in Egypt. But it is not wealthy. Not well.

The town is in the center of Franklin county and in Franklin county there are 4,000 unemployed of a total population of 38,000.

Police Arrest Man On Check Charge

Medford city police Thursday arrested Larry W. Ritchie, 29, of 3423 Madrona lane on a check charge after Ritchie admitted in a signed statement to cashing approximately \$150 in bad checks during the past few weeks.

Ritchie was formally charged with drawing a bank check with insufficient funds to pay same in full. He told police he cashed the checks because he is unable to find work and has a wife and two children to support.

From 7,000 to 8,000 men went down every day into Franklin county's mines at the end of World War II.

Today, only 500 to 700 men work in Franklin county's mines.

The town once was known as a center of the world's richest coal fields and still is except that now not so much coal is coming out of the ground. Today, only one mine near Town-Old Ben No. 9 is in full-time operation. It employs 350 men.

Throughout Southern Illinois, mines are still operating. But automation — a vastly mixed blessing which has come early to Egypt — enables two men to do the work which once required four full teams of miners of from two to four men each.

Along with West Frankfort's main street, few persons got overly excited about the food stamp program.

Will Take Long Time

R. H. Chapman, a cement finisher, wasn't sure he liked the idea.

"Handouts have ruined a lot of good men," he said. E. A. Bennett, a former coal miner, who now serves as night clerk at the Dimmick Hotel, said, "Automation is the thing that hurts this area

it's taken a long time to get in this condition. It'll take a long time to unget it."

Other West Frankfort folk didn't want their names used, but this is what some said: "Politicians have hurt us by talking about relief all the time. Industries begin to think this is tobacco road country."

"Some of these people on relief are third generation reliefers."

"We don't need any Santa Claus."

Matter of Dispute

West Frankfort is close to the center of the storied country known in Illinois as Egypt.

The nickname's origin is a matter of dispute. Some say it stems from the delta land where the Ohio and Mississippi rivers meet at the foot of the state. The Egyptian names of Cairo and Thebes grace the map of this region.

It is a proud land. It is a land which has grown used to hardship in the last 15 years ever since the coal mines began closing.

Today, according to Rep. Kenneth Gray, D-Ill., of West Frankfort, at least 54,000 persons are in immediate need of the government's food stamps — 34,000 of them in his own 25th district.

Other towns are in deep trouble. Rosiclare's fluorspar industry finds it difficult to compete with foreign imports. Cairo is a victim of agricultural recession and mechanization. In McLeansboro, textile industries are battling for

markets against Japanese imports. The troubles of the automotive industry are reflected in Herrin's car furnishings plants.

Specials Announced
Today the newspapers which carried dispatches on the food stamp program also carried grocery advertisements announcing this week's specials.

Practically every housewife in West Frankfort checked them carefully and watched the prices against what she had in her purse.

Too often, the gap between price and cash could not be bridged.

Within a few weeks the gov-

ernment food stamps will narrow the gap a little. But they can never be a substitute for a weekly paycheck.

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OLD FRIENDS MEET—Two "old" friends make their second trip to the Orthopaedic Hospital in Los Angeles and enjoy a reunion. Tracy Patrick, left, and Sylvia Oroneza, both 2, became acquainted last fall when they were at the hospital for treatment of birth defects. This time both will undergo surgery and rehabilitation. The two little ones are among 75,000 handicapped children cared for at the hospital. (UPI Telephoto)

Rep. Durno's Mail Opposed Changing Rules Committee

By YVONNE FRANKLIN
Mail Tribune Washington Correspondent

Washington (Special) — Oregon's two Democratic and two Republican members of the House of Representatives split their votes Tuesday on the question of whether the Rules committee should be enlarged to insure that President Kennedy's program comes before the House for a vote.

Mrs. Edith Green was jubilant over the 217-212 vote. "This is a great day for freedom and the rule of the majority," she said. She and Rep. Al Ullman voted with the majority.

Rep. Edwin R. Durno and Walter Norblad voted "no" to the resolution to enlarge the committee. Both said that the problem was strictly a Democratic one and should not have been brought to the floor. Said Durno:

"They could have taken off Colmer (D-Miss.) and inserted

a man of their own choice instead of getting into this vicious fight." He said that he has no objection to the Kennedy program coming to the floor for debate.

Durno laughed ruefully about being awakened during the night by telephone calls, one at 4 in the morning, mostly from his former colleagues in the State Legislature urging him to vote for the resolution. His mail was running 20 to 1 in opposition to changing the committee. Norblad had 35 letters, 34 in opposition, one in favor of the change.

Norblad also said that the resolution was a "packing" measure, which Mrs. Green heatedly denied. She said: "If they felt this was a Democratic problem, then they should have refrained from voting. It is inconceivable that anyone who understands government and politics would not say that the Rules Committee should be responsive to the leadership of the majority party whether it be Democratic or Republican."

Norblad also said that he did not think the Rules Committee was obstructing in moving bills to the floor. Once again, Mrs. Green disagreed. "The record is full of instances when the Rules Committee has been obstructionist. They held up the education bill when it came back from conference and would not let the House vote. Congress adjourned and it died. They held up my juvenile delinquency bill, and many major bills."

The Rules Committee was never set up to vote on the substantive nature of bills. It was set up as an instrument for the leadership of the majority party to move bills to the floor in orderly procedure. Howard Smith (chairman of Rules) decided he would make it a committee on which he passes judgment on what his conscience tells him is good for the country. The people of Oregon never voted for Howard Smith to be the representative for Oregon.

Representatives Durno and Norblad said that no pressure had been applied by party leaders or by lobbyists here in Washington. Durno said: "I will certainly work to see that Mr. Kennedy's measures have ample consideration on the floor of the House. I will probably not agree with him in the domestic field, but I certainly agree with free discussion and free debate."

Off-Duty Period For Teachers Bogs

Salem—(UPI)—Two bills to provide better pay and an off-duty lunch period for teachers got bogged down in the Oregon senate today after heated debate over one of the measures.

The bill to give teachers a 30-minute minimum duty-free lunch break failed by a vote of 15-14. However, Sen. William Grenfell Jr., (D-Portland) changed his vote so the bill will be reconsidered Monday.

The measure to raise salaries of teachers with bachelor's and master's degrees by as much as \$600-700 a year was sent back to the senate education committee.

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