

Trading Stamp Rumpus Now In Parliament

(Editor's note: United Press International reported recently on the apprehension with which some British business men were awaiting a full-scale American trading stamp "invasion" of the country. The uproar, now in full swing, is described in this dispatch.)

By HARRY HOBBS
United Press International
LONDON (UPI) — An injection of American high pressure salesmanship has the biggest rumpus going on Britain's "high streets" — shopping thoroughfares — in living memory.

The ammunition is trading stamps and their noise is being heard as loud in Parliament as among the housewives storming the stores to get in on the fun — and the bargains.

Facing each other over the store counters are the country's most powerful retailing interests, "pro-stamp" and "anti-stamp."

The war actually is an old one in Britain, going back more than 80 years to a time when trading stamps first were invented here. It is only in this century, and especially since World War II, that stamps have become such big business in the United States. Here, they had somewhat died down until this fall when one of America's biggest stamp firms (Sperry and Hutchinson or S & H) decided to move powerfully into the British market.

Surprising Twists
Although most of the maneuvers, gimmicks, stances and arguments have been seen and heard in the United States in recent years, a lot of the twists in the game in England have surprised even the American stamp tycoons.

One "American stamp" client — a furnishing store group — had to discontinue the stamps or watch its supplies of good quality furniture dry up when the m a n u facturers rebelled. This was what Britons call "resale price maintenance" (RPM) at work. Warring against trading stamps being given with their products, several big industrial groups already have prohibited any form of stamp trading for their goods.

Retailers who ignore their suppliers and give stamps anyway face legal action and an immediate end to their supplies. All the major makers of Scotch whisky and gin, cig-

arettes and tobacco, chocolate and cocoa, television and radio sets and phonograph discs have forbidden retailers to give stamps when trading their goods.

They argue it is a form of price cutting and a breach of their sales contract.

Even Dance Stamps
Even so there is a wide range of stamp-givers, mostly in the food stores. A dance hall proprietor has started dispensing stamps with the sale of each ticket for the evening. At the oddball end of the scale a commercially minded duke is giving

out stamps to fee-paying visitors to his "stately home."

Apart from anti-stamp retail store owners fearing the loss of what they like to call "customer loyalty" to their stamp giving competitors, there are other organizations fighting stamps. The shopworkers' own trade union

condemns stamps. So do 20,000 auto agents who say the stamps are "a threat to motoring," damaging to everyone except the stamp companies.

The politicians have gotten into the fight and a parliamentary debate on the topic looms. The government already has

given a preliminary view that it does not propose to intervene — at least not at this stage.

Both big parties — the ruling Conservatives and opposition Laborites — have members holding strong views on stamps, and the vocal ones seem opposed to this form of sales promotion.

Their common idea at the moment is based on the demand that every stamp must have a money value printed on it's face. And it must be exchanged for hard cash, not "gifts."

Insist on Reserves
Retailers claim each stamp represents — in gifts to be obtained — 2½ per cent of the value of the goods purchased. Some politicians therefore want stamp companies to prove reserves to match the value of the stamps they offer for "gifts."

If later on the government is obliged to legislate on the control of stamp trading its dilemma is that any anti-stamp move can upset possibly millions of vote-carrying housewives who are ardent collectors.

Right now the housewives are having a series of field days. They are enjoying price cuts in the anti-stamp stores and snapping up double issues of stamps in stores embarking on stamp trading. So far the "anti-stamp" argument that they are only kidding themselves and will have to pay higher prices to underwrite the stamp purveyors' "cut" hasn't seemed to bother them.

MEDFORD MAIL TRIBUNE

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Flavored Medicines Becoming Popular
NEW YORK (UPI)—The latest exotic trend in flavors for medicines include apricot-mint, candy fruit, grape, honey-lemon, pineapple-mango, sherry and spice.

No longer is medicine expected to taste "like medicine," reports a flavor-making firm (Fritzsche Bros.). Cherry is still the most popular flavor for cough medicines but "fruit" flavor has become the preferred choice for antibiotics, the company said.

Agronomist Suggests Lower Seeding Rate
TUCSON, Ariz. (UPI) — An agronomist at the University of Arizona suggests growers could decrease the rate of seeding of barley and at the same time increase yield.

Dr. Bob Dennis said this could be done by seeding in mid-November instead of mid-December. Other factors would be an adequately pre-irrigated seedbed and a properly functioning grain drill.

WARM HALLS
NEW YORK (UPI)—As part of its emphasis on rehabilitation rather than punishment, the new Correctional, Reception and Classification Center for Men on Rikers Island, N.Y., has all its corridors and walls finished in such shades as turquoise, lemon yellow, blues and warm tans.



ESCAPES Death — Col. Charles F. "Chuck" Yeager, 40, above, narrowly escaped death Tuesday when he parachuted from his NF104A experimental plane as it plummeted towards earth in an uncontrollable spin. Yeager was the first man to crack the sound barrier. The NF104A is a "souped-up" rocket-augmented fighter designed to train pilots for X15 and space re-entry missions. (UPI)

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