

News Review of Current Events the World Over

President Roosevelt Asks Congress to Provide for 12 Banks to Help Small Trade—Mussolini Predicts World Fascist Era in 60 Years—Rickenbacker Causes Stir.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT, in a letter to the senate and house banking committees, asked congress to set up twelve industrial credit banks which he had been told would safeguard the jobs of 346,000 persons and create work for 378,000 more. Immediately after the President's wishes were known legislation was introduced in both houses giving the federal reserve system authority to create the banks, financing them by selling \$140,000,000 of stock to the treasury.

The plight of the "small or medium size" industrialist was stressed by the President, and he cited results of a survey indicating that such industry was badly a need of \$700,000,000 working capital.

The President asked for "early consideration" of his proposal, pointing out that the situation called for "immediate relief."

The President's letter to Chairman Fletcher and Steagall of the senate and house banking committees said the proposed banks would be controlled by directors a majority of which will themselves be industrialists. Mr. Roosevelt said:

"I have been deeply concerned with the situation in our small industries. In numberless cases their working capital has been lost or seriously depleted.

We have afforded much aid in the recovery of agriculture, commerce, our large industries and our financial institutions, and our improved condition nationally furnishes full justification for these efforts. We must continue in behalf of the medium size man in industry and commerce."

The credit banks proposed in the bills introduced would be chartered by the existing Federal Reserve banks and be operated subject to the regulations of the reserve board. They would set up branches.

SPEAKING before an assembly of 5,000 cheering chief Fascists Premier Mussolini outlined a 60-year program of internal and external expansion which, he predicted, would in the Twenty-first century give Italy the "primacy of the world." That century, he said, will be a "black shirt era."

"In this age of plans," Il Duce declared, "I want to lay before you a plan not for five years or ten years but for 60 years carrying on to the Twenty-first century, at which time Italy will have the primacy of the world."

"Italy has no future in the West and North. Her future lies to the East and South in Asia and Africa. The vast resources of Africa must be valorized and Africa brought within the civilized circle."

"I do not refer to conquest of territory but to natural expansion. We demand that nations which have already arrived in Africa do not block at every step Italian expansion."

Here, it was said, he was referring particularly to France.

Internally, Mussolini said, immediate objectives are completion of swamp reclamation by 1940, new aqueducts and highways, plans to recreate Italian municipalities, complete rebuilding of 500,000 rural houses and repairs to 930,000 rural houses, a work of 30 years.

"Every rural person will have a clean and healthy house," he asserted. "Only in this way can the rush to the city be combated."

In the midst of a pandemonium of applause Mussolini said Fascism "became universal in 1929."

"But in this phenomenon," he continued, "it is necessary to distinguish positive from negative Fascism. Positive Fascism knows how to destroy the old and rebuild the new, whereas negative Fascism knows only how to destroy."

SECRETARY MORGENTHAU reported to President Roosevelt that income tax receipts for the first quarter of the year were well above estimates and far more than a year ago.

Payments to the close of business March 15, the day when all returns were due, were \$147,794,000. In announcing this figure on the basis of telegraphic reports from collectors, the treasury said corresponding collections last year were \$99,847,000.

In 1933, however, the date for filing returns was extended from March 15 to March 31, after the bank holiday.

Treasury estimates of income tax payments for March are \$250,000,000 as compared with \$174,000,000 last March.

TRACKS urging the public to donate cash to promote the sport of flying in Germany were circulated in Berlin Sunday. Under the Versailles treaty public funds are not permitted to be used to stimulate aviation, but the leaflet points out that the treaty does not refer to private initiative, and adds:

"We are unable to construct military planes, but the development of the sport of flying and training German people as flyers is entirely dependent upon ourselves and our readiness to make sacrifices."

The demand for a German air force was also emphasized by Gen. Hermann Wilhelm Goering, premier of Prussia and reichsminister of aviation. In speaking at a flying exhibition at the Essen airport, Goering declared that Germany can enjoy no security, no peace, no equality until she is granted the right to defend herself in the air. This demand cannot be altered, the air minister proclaimed.

"If other countries are permitted the heaviest weapons of attack in the air, Germany at least must be given the right of defense," he said.

A DEMAND by Col. Edward V. Rickenbacker, famous war ace, that President Roosevelt "purge his official family of traitorous members" who advised him to cancel air mail contracts, threw the senate post office committee into an uproar Saturday.

Chairman McKeller charged Rickenbacker with making a "political speech" and accused him of "attacking the President." Rickenbacker replied: "I am not attacking the President. It is my confidence in him that I do not want destroyed."

Rickenbacker's statements came extemporaneously after reading a prepared statement denouncing cancellation of contracts as "unfair and un-American," and after cross-examination, arising from the witness chair, he declared cancellation had "caused doubt in the minds of millions of Americans." He continued:

"It is the doubt in the minds of millions whether the President has so ably accomplished, such as the NRA, CWA, gold content and others, has been proven or has had time to be proven, or whether they are as big a mistake as the cancellation of the air-mail contracts; whether tomorrow that also may be questionable."

Rickenbacker agreed with Lindbergh and Chamberlin that a federal aviation commission should be named to take charge of the industry at once and that the proposed bill is "destructive to industry."

SAMUEL INSULL, fugitive utilities magnate, is, at this writing, somewhere on the high seas aboard his chartered freighter Malotis, bound for an unknown asylum. The Malotis is the boat on which Insull made his secret escape from Greece, and which was ordered to return by the authorities when his absence from his hotel in Athens was discovered. Later he was given permission to depart.

Reports are vague as to his destination. Some say he is bound for Abyssinia and that he would find refuge there from the indictments returned against him in Chicago.

An Athens lawyer who has represented Insull denied that Abyssinia was the goal, but he would not suggest any alternative. His reticence was attributed to fears that a kidnap plot was being laid to snatch Insull from his slow-moving ship on the high seas.

On the other hand, friends of the fugitive in his seventeen-month fight against extradition to the United States said that the Malotis might remain at sea until April 20 "or perhaps longer."

THE Bankhead compulsory cotton control bill, designed to stabilize cotton prices, passed the house Monday. This measure would limit production in the coming cotton year to 10,000,000 bales and levy a tax of 50 per cent of the market value on staple produced in excess of quotas allocated to producers.

AFTER being grounded for eight days following a series of crashes that killed ten men in twenty-two days, United States army pilots took to the air again with the mail on Monday.

Precautions to put planes and men into safest possible condition have

been taken by army officials. Blind and night flying equipment has been installed in planes. Two-way radio facilities have been put into planes on transcontinental routes, and soon will be in all planes in mail service.

Under the new setup the army will cover about 40 per cent of the route mileage formerly flown by the commercial lines, according to Maj. Gen. Benjamin D. Foulois, chief of the air corps.

SPEAKER RAINEY, irked by so many old-time regulars breaking away from the administration on veterans' legislation, has ordered a detailed check to show which house Democrats voted "wrong" on 21 different occasions. Rainey and other leaders are unwilling to admit that they plan any action against the outstanding irregulars. They say that nothing tangible can be done.

"But we'll have the information showing how many men have voted against us and on what occasions," the speaker said.

IN A new revolt against administration policy the house insisted on adding more than \$200,000,000 in veterans' benefits and government pay to the federal outlays in the next fiscal year. However, this was a compromise, for the amendment adopted by the house involves a total annual expenditure of approximately \$300,000,000 for veterans as compared with the \$118,000,000 called for under the veterans' amendment adopted by the senate.

Briefly summarized, the house measure as sent to conference provides:

1. That all Spanish-American war veterans be restored to the pension rolls on a basis of 75 per cent of what they received prior to enactment of the economy bill last session.
2. That all World War veterans with service connected disabilities be restored to the rolls on a full basis.
3. That World War veterans with presumptive disabilities be returned to the rolls on a 75 per cent basis.

In addition, it eliminates pensions for emergency officers, pensions for the widows of the men lost in airship disasters, and knocks out the so-called Borah amendment limiting the restoration of the federal pay cut to persons receiving less than \$6,000 a year.

SENATOR WAGNER of New York, chairman of the national labor board, has put forth a warning that unless "misconstruction" and "evasion" of the collective bargaining provisions of the National Industrial Recovery Act are checked "we may expect to witness a vast swelling of industrial unrest with the coming of spring."

Secretary of Labor Perkins joined with Wagner and other witnesses before the board in urging the passage of Wagner's bill which would create a permanent labor board and outlaw employer influence over the organization of employees. Representatives of the American Federation of Labor demand that employers be forced to recognize the unions and predict general strikes especially in the automobile industry unless prompt action is taken to satisfy the men.

DESPITE the fact that President Roosevelt phoned personally to a number of senators of both parties seeking to persuade them to vote for ratification of the St. Lawrence waterway treaty, the pact was defeated in the senate by a vote of 46 to 42.

Thus the affirmative vote was far below the required two-thirds of those voting. Party lines were disregarded. Twenty-two Democrats voted against ratification, along with 20 Republicans. In favor of the pact were 31 Democrats, 14 Republicans and 1 Farmer-Laborite.

Mr. Roosevelt, it was said in Washington, was decidedly vexed by this defeat of a major administration measure, and he began preparations to resubmit the treaty at a future session of congress. Senator James Hamilton Lewis of Illinois, Democratic whip of the senate and one of the leading opponents of the rejected treaty, predicted that Canada would soon offer the United States a substitute treaty.

This may be true, but dispatches reveal that in Montreal, at least, the defeat of the pact was hailed with joy because business men there think the project too expensive to be undertaken at this time. The President's warning that Canada would, on its own initiative, build an all-Canadian waterway seems to be met by this news from Montreal.

Chicago and the Mississippi valley are blamed by Mr. Roosevelt for the rejection of the treaty, and there is no doubt that their arguments against the proposed restriction of diversion of water from Lake Michigan to 1,500 cubic feet a second were potent. This amount, according to Senator Lewis and other Middle West senators, would be wholly inadequate to maintain navigation on the Mississippi waterway. The Atlantic seaboard senators, too, were almost solidly against the treaty.

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FARMING IN CHINA



Chinese Foot-Power Irrigation Wheel.

Prepared by National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.—W.N.U. Service.

CHINA has its lean years and fat, its serious famines in some sections, but on the whole it performs pretty well its stupendous job of feeding a quarter of the human race. And it has carried on successfully for thousands of years, although it has had none of the advantages of scientific bureaus for the study of soils, crops, and weather conditions.

This enviable position China owes to the note of permanent agriculture struck by its husbandmen when our ancestors were skin-clad nomads. In no other country on earth is it so true that "all trade, as all life, rests upon the farmer's primitive activity."

In China this is all the more significant, for its soil has been cultivated since the days of Noah, and has supported the densest population in the world through millenniums of history longer and more checkered than our own.

It is difficult to determine at exactly what period the Chinese settled in the "Middle Kingdom," but the latest archeological discoveries seem to prove that their first home on the Great Plain of northern China, near the Yellow river, was made so early that they may, perhaps, be counted as the aborigines of the northwest China provinces.

The Chinese themselves attribute to the Emperor Shen Nung, who is supposed to have lived about 2700 B. C., the arts of husbandry and the invention of the plow. This mythical personage still remains the patron of farmers and was, until the abolition of the monarchy, in 1911, worshipped yearly at the season of the spring sowing by the emperor in Peiping, and by his delegates in every province.

To this sovereign are also credited the original arrangements with regard to landed property in China. As a matter of fact, it seems probable that the early settlers separated into clans or family groups, that these clans came naturally to vest authority in elders, and that the latter in the course of ages became the rulers and, finally, the owners of the land.

Vast Areas Not Cultivated.

Despite the density of the rural population in China, where, in some provinces, there are sections having 3,800 people, 384 donkeys, and 384 pigs to the square mile, or 240 people, 24 donkeys, and 24 pigs to one of our 40-acre farms, there remain vast areas of uncultivated, because unprofitable, mountain land in China proper.

The Chinese are able to live on their small holdings only by reason of favorable climatic conditions, the fertility of the soil, effective agricultural methods, extreme personal economy, and the small taxes taken by the state.

That wise old Emperor K'ang Hsi, in honor of the fifty years' jubilee of his reign, in 1711 A. D., issued a decree saying that "as the population of the empire increased, the amount of arable land did not increase," and that the land tax should therefore, be estimated on the census of that year and should never be increased. It never was.

In 1753 the total revenue from the land tax stood at taels 29,000,000, or about \$22,000,000 in gold, and in 1900 taels 27,000,000 were collected from the same source, the decrease being accounted for by the calamities of the preceding years.

If the week-end traveler in China gets the idea from looking out of train windows that he is in a land of continuous farms and vegetable gardens; his impressions are largely due to the fact that wherever cultivation is possible it is highly intensive, and that not an inch which might be used is wasted.

One Family to the Farm.

The working of a Chinese farm depends entirely upon personal human labor and generally upon that of one family.

Tradition, custom, and economic conditions do not encourage the investment of capital for large-scale farming. The fields of China, as already pointed out, have been cultivated for several thousand years by the same method without overtaxing their resources. This remarkable fact is due to certain peculiarities of the soil itself, plus very careful working, guided

by the experience of centuries. "When we reflect upon the depleted fertility of our own older farm lands," as Prof. F. H. King remarks, "comparatively few of which have seen a century's service, and upon the enormous quantity of mineral fertilizers which are being annually applied to them in order to secure paying yields, we cannot but admire how the Chinese have managed to maintain so well the first condition of farming—soil fertility—and to solve the problem of soil exhaustion, one of the most fundamental, difficult, and vital problems of all civilized people."

Perhaps the greatest agricultural triumph of the Chinese farmer is his knowledge and use of natural fertilizers. He cannot afford—nor, in many places, could he obtain them, even were he able to pay the price—expensive phosphates and nitrates commercially prepared. The chief aid he can enlist in his everlasting battle against soil exhaustion are human and animal manure.

In the West, and more especially in the United States, "man," to quote Professor King again, "is the most extravagant accelerator of waste the world has ever endured. His withering blight has fallen upon every living thing within his reach, himself not excepted, and his besom of destruction in the uncontrolled hands of a generation has swept into the sea soil fertility which only centuries of life could accumulate. . . ."

Fertilizer Carefully Saved.

"On the basis of the data of Wolff, Kellner, and of Carpenter, or of Hall, the people of the United States and of Europe are (yearly) pouring into the sea, lakes, and rivers, and into the underground waters, from 5,794,900 to 12,000,000 pounds of nitrogen, 1,881,900 to 4,151,000 pounds of potassium, and 777,265 to 3,057,600 pounds of phosphorus per million of adult population, and this waste we esteem one of the great achievements of our civilization. Whereas in China all this is saved and returned to the fields."

Near every farmhouse, and often in a proximity to the living rooms that shock our olfactory nerves, stand pottery jars for storing this precious fertilizer, later to be diluted with water before it is "fed to the crops."

Household waste, stubble, roughage from the fields, ashes, and the droppings from passing caravans, carefully collected by small boys with baskets and scoops, are all made into compost by being mixed with earth.

Agriculture in China falls naturally into two great divisions—the "wet farming" of the canal, or rice-growing, country, and the "dry farming" of the northern plains, or grain-growing section.

The outstanding feature of Chinese agriculture is the amount of human labor expended upon it. Fields are prepared by hand, often watered by hand. Seeds are sown and crops fertilized and reaped by hand.

From dawn to dusk the farmer's family and animals work on the land, often cooking the midday meal—a mess of millet—on an improvised mud stove and using as a manger for their beasts the cart that has carried out compost and will bring home the ripe crop.

Though groups of villagers sometimes work together, hired help is rare. Consequently, the Chinese farmer and his family work their own lands unaided. This means, of course, phenomenal energy on the part of all.

How Rice is Grown.

Nowhere is the industry of the Chinese farmer better illustrated than in the southern, or rice-growing, provinces, where climatic conditions permit of several (sometimes as many as four) crops a year from the same soil. Since rice is not only the staple, but the favorite food of the people, from the highest to the lowest, it is not surprising that paddy fields form an eighth of the total area of cultivated land in China.

Yet, notwithstanding the enormous acreage of rice planted each year since 3000 B. C., this crop is all set out in clumps and every spear transplanted by hand. The double operation allows the farmers to economize their land and save in many ways except in labor, the one thing they have in superabundance.