

CURRENT EVENTS PASS IN REVIEW

EIGHT AND A HALF BILLION DOLLAR BUDGET OFFERED BY THE PRESIDENT.

By EDWARD W. PICKARD
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BECAUSE work relief must be carried on the federal budget will not be balanced for the coming fiscal year, and probably not for several years thereafter. In presenting the budget to congress, President Roosevelt admitted this, but without quirms. He estimated \$8,520,000,000 as the amount of money necessary to carry on the government's activities for the 1935 fiscal year beginning July 1 next. The expenses for the current year, partly estimated, are \$8,581,000,000.

If one wishes to know who spends all these huge sums, an idea may be obtained from these figures showing the estimated expenditures for the fiscal year 1935:

1. Legislative, judicial and executive	\$4,597,000
2. Civil departments and agencies	741,001,169
3. National defense	792,484,242
4. Veterans' pensions and benefits	704,581,500
5. Debt charges	
Interest	\$75,000,000
Retirements	614,424,000
6. Refunds	44,945,300
7. Recovery and relief	4,542,011,475
8. Supplemental items (for above groups 1 to 4 inclusive)	40,609,000
Total expenditures	\$8,520,412,693

Total receipts for the same period are put at \$3,161,944,033, so the estimated deficit will be \$4,528,508,970.

Of the recovery and relief fund the President asked that \$4,000,000,000 be placed at his disposal to be allocated by him "principally for giving work to those unemployed on the relief rolls."

Here are some other vital things disclosed by the message:

The national debt will increase from \$31,000,000,000 at the close of this fiscal year to \$34,230,000,000.

No new taxes are requested. Congress is asked to continue the so-called nuisance taxes which expire soon and the 3-cent stamp rate.

A national defense appropriation of \$899,948,065—the greatest in the history of the country—is requested.

A total of 137,134 federal workers are to be dismissed.

The \$2,811,000,000 gold profit has not been disturbed.

Veterans pensions in 1935 will reach the staggering total of \$704,000,000.

The accumulated New Deal deficit for three years on June 30, 1935, will total \$11,700,000,000.

While the trend of recovery and relief expenditures is downward, regular federal expenses will increase. This is due in part to a 5 per cent pay restoration for federal workers which involves \$65,000,000.

It seemed certain that some of the President's proposals would start bitter fights in congress. Old line Republicans insisted that such "squandering" of the nation's resources would lead to inflation and bankruptcy. The more radical legislators thought that four billions for work relief was not enough. Lots of senators and representatives resented the President's request for a free hand in allocating that fund, feeling he was infringing on their prerogatives. But the administration forces in congress are so overwhelming that there was no doubt that the budget would be accepted as presented.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT in his message to congress, delivered in person at a joint session, offered the lawmakers a "new and greatly enlarged plan" of work relief. He did not estimate its cost, but asserted that the system of outright doles should be dropped and the government should undertake projects of slum clearance, grade crossing elimination and other public works that would give employment to about 3,500,000 persons now without jobs. The figures to be proposed for this were reserved for his budget message, but he assured congress that they would be "within the sound credit of the government."

Mr. Roosevelt declared the gains made in the year 1934 were greater than the losses and expressed "a strong hope in the coming year." He reasserted his belief in the "profit motive" but uttered a warning against wealth "which, through excessive profits, creates undue private power over private affairs, and, to our misfortune, over public affairs as well." This, naturally, was taken as applying especially to the public service interests, which have been so apprehensive of the administration's intentions.

As for a legislative program, the President made no attempt to outline one, but he did promise that definite legislation soon would be proposed covering old age and unemployment insurance, benefits for children and mothers, and other features of his social security plans.

He declared the nation was making headway toward the "new order," but under the framework of the Constitution, and he spoke of the increased industrial activity, benefits to agriculture and profits to merchants that have been realized. Then came this stern warning:

"Let him who, for speculative profit or partisan purpose, without just warrant would seek to disturb or dispel this assurance, take heed before he assumes responsibility for any act which slows our onward steps."

The President reported an unsettled condition in the foreign field, with the resurrection of old jealousies and passions and new strivings for armament and power in more than one land, adding:

"There is no ground for apprehension that our relations with any nation will be otherwise than peaceful."

Discussing the matters that will be brought before congress for action, Mr. Roosevelt said:

"Among the subjects that lie immediately before us are the consolidation of federal regulatory administration over all forms of transportation, the renewal and clarification of the general purposes of the national industrial recovery act, the strengthening of our facilities for the prevention, detection and treatment of crime and criminals, the restoration of sound conditions in the public utilities field through abolition of the evil features of holding companies, the gradual tapering off of the emergency credit activities of government, and improvement in our taxation forms and methods.

"We have already begun to feel the bracing effect upon our economic system of a restored agriculture.

"The hundreds of millions of additional income that farmers are receiving is finding its way into the channels of trade.

"The farmers' share of the national income is slowly rising. The economic facts justify the widespread opinion of those engaged in agriculture that our provision for maintaining a balanced production gave at this time the most adequate remedy for an old and vexing problem.

"For the present and especially in view of abnormal world conditions, agricultural adjustment with certain necessary improvements in methods should continue."

PETROLEUM control provisions of the National Industrial Recovery act, specifically section 9 (c), are held by the Supreme Court of the United States to be invalid as unconstitutional abdication of legislative power to the President. Eight of the justices united in rendering this decision, Justice Cardozo alone dissenting, and the opinion was read by Chief Justice Hughes.

The section declared void authorized the President to ban interstate shipment of "hot" oil—that is, oil produced in excess of state quotas.

While the opinion did not deal with other phases of the recovery act, it aroused widespread speculation as to disposition of other cases. This was the first major "New Deal" case to come before the court. Some legal authorities pointed out that application to the act generally of the principle found untenable in this case might undo much recovery legislation.

The petroleum code itself was not involved in the decision. However, the decision was believed to finish the work of the federal tender board established as a regulation issued under authority of the provision involved.

Emergency legislation by congress to remedy the situation and to meet the objection of the court was reported to be an immediate likelihood.

THE Seventy-fourth congress, elected on the sole issue of support of the New Deal, began its first session on the dot and devoted its first day to the organization of the two houses and the swearing in of new members. The lawmakers assembled in the Capitol were a serious looking lot, and with reason, for they have on their hands a big job, that of making the New Deal permanent; and in the doing of it they must solve some of the most perplexing problems that our national legislators ever have faced. It would seem that the Democrats will have no trouble in passing any legislation they wish, for they have an overpowering majority.

In the speaker's chair sits Joseph T. Byrns, chosen unanimously by his fellow Democrats. He is too much of a compromiser to suit many of them, but is now tied to the administration, which declined to oppose his election.

John H. Bankhead of Alabama, like Byrns one of the old school, won the leadership of the house after a brief struggle. Senator Joseph Robinson of Arkansas was re-elected majority leader of the senate, and Senator Lewis of Illinois continues as whip.

In their pre-session caucus the Democrats voted to reduce materially the Republican representation on house committees, and decided to abrogate the 145 rule for discharging a committee and bringing a bill to vote within a week. The number now required for this action is 215.

PREMIER R. B. BENNETT of Canada, appealing for support for his administration, promises to give the Dominion a "New Deal" that bears a close resemblance to President Roosevelt's economic and social program. Among the reforms the premier endorsed were: Contributory employment insurance, a remodeled old-age pension scheme; health, sickness and accident insurance, amendments to the income tax laws to correct inequality of wealth distribution, minimum wages and maximum hours of work, and further legislation in the interests of farmers.

THERE were huge sighs of relief in the chancelleries of Europe when the success of the conversations in Rome between Foreign Minister Pierre Laval of France and Premier Mussolini was announced informally. For two days the two statesmen discussed the points at issue between their nations and conditions in general in central Europe. Emerging from the last of their meetings, Laval, smiling broadly, said to a group of French and Italian war veterans:



Pierre Laval

"I am glad to tell you that Premier Mussolini and I are now in complete accord."

Without waiting for an official communique, those best informed said Laval and il duce had reached a full agreement, the principal features of which are a joint declaration to preserve the independence of Austria, a five or six power pact of noninterference, and provisions for colonial concessions in Africa. The pact agreeing not to interfere with one another's internal affairs presumably will include Italy, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Austria, and Hungary; and later England, France and Rumania may be asked to adhere to it.

This Franco-Italian rapprochement, in the opinion of many high officials, will go far toward insuring the maintenance of peace in Europe, and in time may lead Germany to re-enter the League of Nations.

ISLANDS in the Pacific held under mandate by Japan, and which she says she never will give up though she has left the League of Nations, are virtually closed to foreign visitors, in violation of the treaty of Washington.

The permanent mandates commission of the league has reported that sums Japan announced she spent purely for civil and commercial purposes on ports on these islands are disproportionate to the volume of commercial activity. Further particulars on the expenditure were asked in the next Japanese report.

A Tokyo representative in his previous report sought to allay "suspicions" expressed in Geneva that Japan is building fortifications or constructing naval bases in the Marshall, Caroline, Ladrone or Pelew Islands, granted her after the World war.

The mandates commission has issued a communique saying "suspicions are constantly giving rise to comment in the world press, and one method of refuting them would be to afford free and unrestricted access to the islands for foreign travelers and vessels."

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT did not wait for the opening of congress to start his fight against immediate payment of the veterans' bonus. The commander of a Legion post in Texas wrote him for information on the matter and Mr. Roosevelt replied at length, detailing his reasons for opposing the payment. He argued that the obligation is not immediately due; that of 3,500,000 certificates outstanding, 3,038,500 veterans have borrowed \$1,690,000,000, or "more than the present worth of their bonus certificates," and that when the veterans borrowed 50 per cent of the face value of the certificates in 1931 they used the funds to discharge their debts.

This last point, according to National Commander Belgrano of the American Legion, is one of the strongest arguments for immediate payment of the adjusted service certificates.

Speaker Byrns admitted that the cash bonus bill would pass the house "because there is no opposition to it there," but he added that if the measure is finally enacted the administration will insist on some additional taxation to meet the estimated \$2,000,000,000 expenditure. It is believed the senate also will pass the bill, but leaders doubt its passage by congress over the Presidential veto that is regarded as a certainty.

Stern Justice Makes No Appeal to the Emotions

One of our readers writes to the column about the case of Bruno Hauptmann, the accused kidnaper of the Lindbergh baby.

"It makes my hair stand on end," she says, "to hear talk about whether the state really has a strong enough case to convict him, if there is enough evidence to get the death penalty, and so on. This man was found with the money gouged from the distraught parents of the poor baby who was murdered. Isn't that enough? I'd like to know if any of your other readers cares if he did it alone or had an accomplice, if he actually shot the baby dead, or if his death was an accident. I can't imagine any right-thinking person, any normal human being, quibbling as to the details of his part in the hideous crime. He was living on the fruits of it, and that's enough for me. As far as I'm concerned, I wouldn't waste the people's money on a trial for such fiends. It is just that farcical technicality and red tape in our courts that encourages criminals in their confidence they can beat justice. Tell me, is there any shred or ghost of a chance of a technicality saving this man from his just deserts?"

Pointing out inconsistencies in this emotional outburst, the newspaper writer to whom it was addressed answers as follows:

"I don't think that we need worry about Bruno Hauptmann cheating justice in his trial in New Jersey. But, while many of us will have the same emotional reaction to this case, we must remember the fundamental postulate upon which our law is founded; that is, that it is better to let ten guilty men escape than to punish one who is innocent. That is the reason for the legal technicalities in our courts—to give a man every possible protection until he is proved guilty. And we cannot deny that it is the humane and civilized procedure, and that but for it many innocent people might have been unjustly punished. However, innocent or guilty, our reader's suggestion to dispense with this man's trial is nothing more nor less than meeting lawlessness with lawlessness. And it requires very little thought to realize where that would lead us.

*The mention of red tape in our

courts encouraging criminals brings up an interesting point with which our best criminologists have long concerned themselves. They tell us that offenders are not afraid of severe penalties—that is, in communities where more crimes have been made punishable by execution, the crimes have not decreased. It is the certainty of punishment, though this is less severe in nature, that deters criminals. As an example we are given Canada, where there is so much less serious crime than in our own country. Canadian law is no less just than ours, in fact it is upon the English common law that both are based. They are no less eager than we to protect the innocent. But in Canada there is more certainty of punishment—because they do not countenance our cumbersome processes and delays. It is not uncommon there to have a criminal arrested, tried, and on his way to prison within a few days.

"We must fairly and justly and openly try those accused of crime. But it would certainly be an improvement on our present methods if we could take a leaf from the book of Canada and make justice more direct and swift without possibility of interference with the certainty of punishment once guilt is established."

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