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RUBBER MONEY

Rubber money—imitation dollar bills that stretched and shrank—used to be sold at country fairs. You bought one and passed it out to your friends as a joke.

Today rubber money is no longer a joke; it's a grim reality. Good U. S. bills are shrinking—not in size, but in value. They won't buy as much as they did last year. According to some reports, they won't buy as much next year as they do now. The inflation that Congress talked about and did little to prevent is here.

As a result, the housewife who took \$10 to market last spring to buy a week's food for her family is finding that \$10 is no longer enough. Last fall, in the months to come she needs \$11.26 to get the same she may need even more. Prices are going up, a penny here, a dime there, week after week.

Government surveys show that pork chops, for example, jumped 12 cents a pound in the last six months; eggs soared from 29 cents a dozen in March to 45.9 cents in September. Textiles have already gone up 30 per cent in contrast to their 25 per cent rise during the World War period.

Facts like these bring home the menace of inflation. It strikes at everybody's pocketbook. It hits the farmer as well as the wage earner, the housewife as well as the industrialist.

And, with every passing month, it's going to hit them harder, unless Congress gets busy and passes effective control legislation to put on the brakes and check the trend.

ALL IN SAME BOAT

The recent announcement of a plastic automobile suggests that the time may not be far distant when cars will be made entirely of products grown on the farm. When that happens, harvest time may come to mean a bumper crop of limousines.

The idea is not so fanciful as it might at first appear, for already many farm products are changed into industrial articles. Though the magic of research casesin from milk becomes wool and also a plastic material. Corn is used in making glycerines and dry ice, cornstalks in making paper. Sugar cane goes into building boards; soy beans into paint, enamel and linoleum. One large chemical company alone buys 16 million pounds of cotton, 36 million pounds of cotton lint, and 36 million bushels of corn from farmers each year. As industrial research finds new uses for farm crops, industry will depend more and more on agriculture as a source of raw materials.

And agriculture, in turn, will depend on industry for more inventions like radios, telephones and labor-saving machinery that have made the farm a much pleasanter place to live than it was a generation or two ago.

Because the two groups provide markets for each other's products, the prosperity of the one depends on the other. Past experience has shown that when industry is making money, agriculture is making money, too.

Facts like these prove that here in America, we've all got a stake in each other's future. We may work in different parts of the country at different jobs. We may have different likes and dislikes. We may be divided into various groups—industrial employees, farmers, doctors, lawyers—but in the long run we're



STRAIGHT FROM NEW YORK

THE "TWO-PIECE LOOK"
Whether it's an evening gown with skirt falling in graceful elegance to the floor, or a street-length afternoon frock—it's the "two-piece look" that's top fashion today. The tunic, so popular this season, gives it to the pearl grey dinner gown with its slit skirt and silver studded coral belt. The other New York creation, an afternoon dress, grey-green in two tones, has smoothly fitting jumper top with side lacings, and a tucked skirt.

at in the same boat. And today we've all got to work together to solve our common problems. We've got to work together to check inflation, finance defense, prevent unnecessary government controls on our freedom—in short we've all got to work together to insure our continued prosperity in the years to come.

PRIORITY ON DEATH

While we are on the subject of the National Defense Program and the effect of priorities, we refer to the report of Mr. W. D. Townson, well known mortician.

Mr. Townson has just returned from the National Funeral Convention (yes, they have such things) in St. Louis, and reports that the outlook for those in his profession is very dark indeed.

There was a time says Mr. Townson when a person could have almost any kind of a funeral he wanted—provided, of course, that he had the necessary money. But now, it doesn't make much difference if he's a Croesus. He can't have any better funeral than a pauper.

The reason, it seems is that the more expensive caskets are vital to the defense program. Copper, bronze, and other metals which make such handsome coffins also make handsome guns.

Gloomy because of the effect on his business, Mr. Townson was reminded that the American people could revert to the use of the old-fashioned wooden kimonos, as the ligneous casket are sometimes called.

"We could," he frowned, "only we can't get handles, and we'd have to train pallbearers to get along without them."

All of this started us wondering just how one would get one's fingers under a coffin, lift it, and carry it safely to its final destination without some mishap. But then, we aren't trained pallbearers.

Perhaps the Federal Government, in a cooperative mood, will form an Adult education project, which will travel from state to state instructing prospective pallbearers in the new art of carrying handleless caskets.

Or, maybe they'll make rope "cradles."

HAROLD THE ICK

Sitting in a swivel chair on the fourth floor of a massive gray limestone building in Washington, scowling out on the little triangular plot of grass across the street, is Harold the Ick.

He is scowling because some un-

suspecting Government Clerk is about to walk on his lawn.

When the Government clerk does walk on the lawn, Harold the Ick will scream loudly and dispatch a corps of his U. S. Park Policemen to the scene and order an arrest made.

If no Government worker walks on his lawn, Harold the Ick turns to other things, such as reading the paper. This usually makes him very angry indeed, as the press very seldom says anything nice about him.

As a matter of fact, so uncomplimentary is the Press to Harold the Ick's high office, that this worthy, but somewhat misplaced gentleman often slams his door and fumes for the rest of the day after reading the publicity he so graciously has been afforded.

When he has read a column by Mr. Westbrook Pegler, the Ick is said to tear out large chunks of his hair, and it has been noticed that he cannot afford to keep up this practice very long.

Once in a while, when things get too dull, Harold the Ick decides to vent his temper on John Public. He has a very fertile imagination, and dreams up things like gas shortages.

Of course, John Public gets sore about these things sometimes, and has his Senator make an investigation.

The investigation of Harold's gasoline shortage made him even more angry than usual because it showed that there was no gasoline shortage at all.

At present, the Ick is idle again, and in that mighty mind of his are ambitions of becoming the government's czar of hydro-electric power.

The Ick will be given—if his plans materialize—\$200,000,000 to "buy out" any power companies he likes.

As the plan stands now, the Ick's purchasing would be confined to the northwest. But then, it is very hard to tell beforehand just where his ambitions may turn next—maybe to this section.

In Western North Carolina, hydro-electric power is important. Already, much of the potential reserves have been harnessed, and still there exists such a shortage that the Office of Production Management has ordered a blackout of "unnecessary" uses of electricity.

There can be but one result of the shortage—more power dams. The "usually reliable sources" say another T. V. A. dam is to be built between Murphy and Andrews. It is also said that other dams will be thrown up by private power companies.

Right now, we don't have to worry about much more than the existing shortage. We know it exists.

THIS BUSINESS OF Living
BY SUSAN THAYER

Those "Good Old Days" Great Aunt Matilda loves to "hark back" to the days when she was young and she and Uncle Ezra had "gone west" to new land. "Those were the days," she said the other evening, sighing deeply and letting her knitting rest in her lap for a moment while she looked with dim blue eyes back into the long ago Past.

And then, taking up her knitting again, she explained. "We didn't have all those gimcracks you girls now-a-days think you couldn't get along without. Those fancy vacuum sweepers . . . and automobiles to go gawwivanting around the country in . . . and electric refrigerators big enough for a boarding house. We did very well putting our butter down in a well.

"We didn't have any of these new fangled things. But there's one thing we did have that's more important than all of them put together. We had hope and we had freedom. Those were the good old days when America was great and we knew that if we worked hard enough and put our money in the bank, we'd be all right when the rainy days came."

"But, Aunt Matilda," I answered, "America is still great. Greater than she has ever been. And today we have hope, too, as well as vacuum cleaners . . . and you must admit they do get all the dirt up even from the corner and from under the bed."

"Hope for what?" Aunt Matilda wanted to know. "What kind of hope do you have?"

"Hope for a better time and a better world with opportunity for more people. You talk about the good old days. Well, for us, the good old days

But if and when we get all the power we need; and if and when Harold the Ick is made Czar of Power, who can tell but what he will declare another imaginary shortage?

All of us who want to avoid such an eventually should write our friends in Washington and persuade them to walk on the grass in front of the Department of the Interior. That would, temporarily, at least, divert the Ick's attention.

aren't good enough any more. We're looking ahead to the good new days that are possible in a country like this with its fertile farms and wealth of other resources, and the greatest industrial system the world has ever known. Here free men have speeded up defense production as much in a single year as Hitler did in six with his regimented economy!

"Perhaps a few years ago during the depression when production was at a low ebb, people had some reason to sigh for the good old days. But the America which the reformers said then was washed up and through has found herself once more. And, Aunt Matilda, that America today is astonishing the world.

"When this depression is over, let this same capacity to make things be devoted to the production of peace-time commodities and let these commodities be sold in the traditional American way to the people who need them, and no one will even think of the good old days again. Even you, Aunt Matilda, will be too busy enjoying the good new ones!"

BITS O' BUSINESS

The furniture business is going strong—for the first eight months of the year 22 per cent ahead of 1940 pace, and with final quarter expectations to be even bigger . . .

Military tanks, an industry that wasn't even in existence 18 months ago in this country, by the middle of 1942 will be a "billion-dollar" industry—it's now producing at the rate of \$25,000,000 worth a month, and is scheduled to double that by this year's end, double it again in the first half of '42 . . .

Standard equipment on one of Uncle Sam's battleships includes about 100 typewriters—to say nothing of some 60 filing cabinets, 20 adding machines and a pair of cash registers! . . .

Banks are combing the woods for new tellers—as fast as they get them trained defense plants grab them for paymasters . . .

One of the country's largest vanity-case manufacturers found it easy to switch his machinery over to making shell cases . . .

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