

Industry May Be Fooled

As this column pointed out last week, American industrial production in many fields has shot suddenly upward, even though consumption has remained at about the same level. Obvious reason for the rise is the expectation of big war orders from Europe, plus the supposition that raw material prices are due to go up and stay up. Manufacturers have figured that they'd best buy heavy stocks at once, while prices are relatively low, and be prepared for big business when Europe begins calling for supplies.

But, going by some significant recent indications, there is a very good chance that the manufacturers who have been planning on a major war boom taking place soon will be fooled—and that the "war prosperity" balloon may be rudely deflated.

In the first place, it is a certainty that our only major war customers will be England and France—Britain rules the waves, and the German merchant marine has been almost entirely driven to cover. Britain has been preparing for this war for a long time. She didn't say much about it, but has been laying in abnormally heavy supplies of basic materials for many moons. The result is that considerable time must go by before she will have to face a shortage of any important material asset.

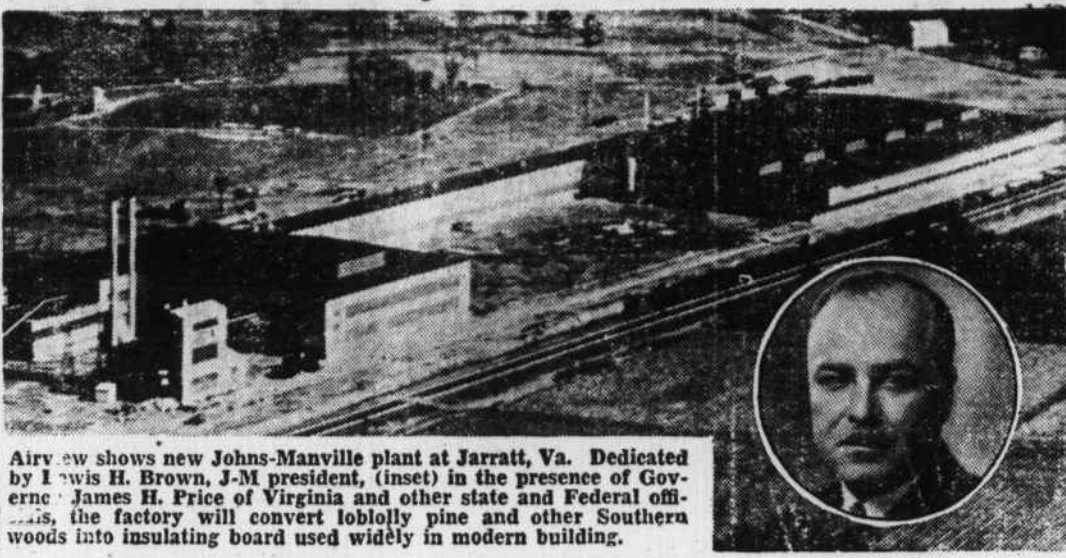
In the second place, the allies must husband their slender gold possessions. They haven't any money to spend foolishly. Every penny expended must do two pennies' work, if possible. That means Britain will exhaust to the utmost the resources of that empire on which the sun never sets, before she makes any big purchases elsewhere. And the British empire (taking it for granted that her fleet will be able to keep the trade lanes open, and hold down losses from German submarine, battleship and air attack to a minimum) is exceedingly rich in almost everything that is necessary to the maintenance of a country in either war or peace. To a considerably lesser extent, this is also true of the French empire. And what the French lack will, as long as possible, be supplied them by the British.

The effect of the war so far has been harmful to American business. England and her possessions normally constitute our largest single foreign customer. The outbreak of hostilities caused an immediate drop in British imports from this country. Where, for instance, we used to have a fine stable market in England for perishable fruit, that market has dwindled—and, think some, in the near future it may disappear entirely.

There is one obvious exception to this—and the exception is arms. If the embargo is removed, we may confidently expect the munitions industries to boom. Britain is not able to produce adequate war materials, even though all the resources of her great manufacturing establishments are today being given to supplying her soldiers with the weapons of destruction. If you have airplanes, rifles, shells, or machine guns to sell, you have no need to worry about your future business—you will probably receive more orders than you can handle, if the war goes on. But producers of other materials cannot be sure of a sanguine outlook as yet. And those who are buying raw materials on a big scale in anticipation of sustained and growing foreign demand, may be sadly disappointed. The truth is that if the war lasts long, all of Europe will be practically out of gold, and won't be able to buy here no matter how great the need, unless this government permits belligerents to obtain American credit. And the temper of Congress now is almost 100 per cent against that.

Where he applied triple superphosphate to a 16-acre pasture at the rate of 100 pounds to the acre, Jason Spencer, of Ashe County, has secured one-fourth to one-half more grazing than formerly.

New Industry Comes to the South



Air view shows new Johns-Manville plant at Jarratt, Va. Dedicated by Lewis H. Brown, J-M president, (inset) in the presence of Governor James H. Fries of Virginia and other state and Federal officials, the factory will convert loblolly pine and other Southern woods into insulating board used widely in modern building.

Planned Dictatorship

If anyone is still looking for a sound reason for rigorously maintaining American neutrality, all he need do is examine the plans now being made for expanding and changing the power and set-up of the Federal government if we again go to war.

These plans are now about complete. According to a review published in the Washington Times-Herald, four great new divisions of government are proposed. The first, National Defense, would include all military affairs and counter-espionage. The second, Production, would include the Agricultural Department, the Labor Department and social security, and would have sweeping powers over the country's non-military manpower. The third, Construction and Transportation would control Federal public works, all communications, the Power Commission, the Interstate Commerce Commission, the Post Office, Interior Department, etc. The fourth, Finance, would include the Treasury Department and other government fiscal bureaus, and would deal with banks, trust institutions, insurance companies, etc.

All of these divisions would be under the direct control of the President, who would appoint

their heads. The catch comes in the plans for giving the proposed new divisions authority. And, according to the news reports, this authority would be virtually unlimited. Every business and every individual in the country would come immediately under the fullest possible official domination. Labor would be virtually conscripted—no man could change a job without permission from the government. The orders which any business could accept would be determined by official fiat. Industries' owners and executives would be mere figureheads, who could do nothing save carry out the orders given them by government. A dictatorship, complete in every detail, would be established.

And this isn't all there is to "M Day" plans by a long shot. Complete government control and censorship of the radio, the press, the rights of protest and assembly are envisioned. Elections could be deferred if the powers-that-be decided that the emergency made it necessary.

All this and more is going to happen if war comes to the United States. Gone will be democracy, gone our liberties. Could there be a stronger case for neutrality?

Three new national forest established since September 6 bring the total number in the United States to 161, reports the U. S. Forest Service.

One Million Bureaucrats

As the New York Times observes, "Though we have got used to the spectacle of enormous government spending and to some remarkable comparisons as a result, it is none the less rather startling to learn that on June 30, last, there were 920,310 civil employees on the Federal government's payroll—2,550 more even than at the World War peak of November 11, 1918."

This is one more reason why about 25 cents out of every dollar we earn goes directly or indirectly into the insatiable maw of government. Our entrance into the World War caused the number of government workers—entirely aside from those in the military forces—to be doubled. By 1923, the number of employees had dropped almost to the pre-war level. Then a slow rise set in, which became a fast rise in 1933. There were 583,000 government tax-eaters in 1932—and 718,400 in 1935. And where 824,259 workers lived at the expense of the rest of us in 1936, some 920,310 eat at a tax-supported table today.

Most startling of all is the fact that the number of government workers seems to increase regard-

less of changes for the better in business conditions. The years 1932 and 1933, going by all the statistics, were the worst of depression. But more than 150,000 additional people were employed by the government in 1937, when a comparatively high level of industrial production was reached, and the national income was substantially greater.

As the New York Times also says, "The increase in Government employes is in some respects even more impressive evidence than total expenditures, of the relentless growth of Government functions and of Government regulation and control." It is not surprising that, in spite of the highest taxes in our peacetime history, the Treasury is still unable to balance outgo with income, and the national debt soars to incredible heights.

NEGRO FARMERS ORGANIZE

The Negro farm men and women of the Bunn District were called together Wednesday night, by J. E. Tuck, Negro County Agent to organize an Adult Farmers Club. The purpose of this club is to plan the activities of the farmers in that community to raise their standard of living.

The officers of this club are: H. A. Clemon, President; Daniel Nicholson, Vice-President; G. C. Crudup, Secretary; John Crudup, Asst. Secretary; J. T. Conyers, Treasurer.

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