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Wednesday, December 30, 1942

When you speak of being in the pink of condition, you usually refer to something more than just your nose.

We are persuaded that a silver tongue orator is one who never speaks for more than fifteen minutes.

Now that Santa has gone his merry way, we wonder what modern parents plan to use for the discipline of their not-so-good little girls and boys.

New Rationing

WE wish that every intelligent adult in Brunswick county had heard Elmer Davis and Secretary Claude Wickard Sunday night.

As usual, Davis was just as blount as a bulldog, but what he said had the ring of good common sense. He declared that rationing was distasteful to the American people, but that nobody had yet devised a better means of seeing that everybody had his share of the food and materials available in this country.

Secretary Wickard, in his portion of the talk, was extremely practical when he declared that persons would not be required to report home canned fruits and vegetables when the new rationing program begins.

There'll be much more said and written about point rationing, because it is the next big program in which the civilian population will be asked to aid the fighting men. Meanwhile, the best advice we can give our readers is to become informed about the new rationing system, and cooperate with it in every possible phase.

More than ever before, a hoarder deserves our contempt.

Farmers Producing Powerful Weapon

WE imagine that farmers must encounter considerable difficulty in grasping the enormity of their task in the winning of this war to the finish. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the role of the farmer in the war effort is comparable to that of the man at the fighting front.

Neither can we truthfully deny that food is probably the most powerful weapon at the disposal of the United States at the present moment. President Roosevelt has promised that reconquered territory will be supplied with food and necessities as soon as that territory is regained by the United Nations.

This very fact itself imposes a tremendous responsibility upon the already burdened farmer. In the raising of food with which to feed our armed forces, the people at home, and our allies in this fight for freedom, the American farmer is doing just as much as those who are building the tanks, the guns, and the planes with which our boys are battling the Axis.

If, as we said at the outset, the farmer has had some difficulty in comprehending the full proportions of his job, and the vital part it is playing in the war, it is no more than the government has done up until recently. This fact has been clearly evidenced by the unqualified drain upon the farm labor in America by the selective service.

Some sensible plan must necessarily be worked out by the Manpower Commission whereby farmers will be able to have enough labor to carry on their farms.

That is not to say that farmers, like everybody else, are not going to have to work short-handed during the coming seasons, but they have shown during the past year that they can produce even in the face of tremendous labor problems. Production of all crops outdistanced previous years by noteworthy increases, and we are sure that the farmers are going to continue to furnish one of the most potent of our weapons which will ultimately have its part in the victory.

Shears And Paste

A YOUNG MAN'S WAR

(The Morganton News-Herald) It was with practical realism the President Roosevelt ordered a halt on the induction into the military service of men thirty-eight years and past. Facts and figures, past and present, support such a decision:

Over 100,000 "men" fought in the War Between the States who were aged 11 to 15; at the end of that war, the average soldier age was 19 1/2. In the Spanish-American fracas, average age was 22. World War I it was 24.89.

Now mark this: in March of 1942, the average soldier age was 26 years, two months; in June it was 27 years, five months; in August it was 28 years, two months. According to the beliefs from more than one quarter, that's too old in anybody's Army or Navy. Men that age do not make the best fighters that we find in the 18-20 group. Twenty per cent of men already inducted into armed services, says one military authority, are fit only for limited services, and not for combat duty.

So if one is dismayed lest we "rob the cradle" for additional military supply, he should remember that boys and not full-grown men have always made the best soldiers. Mature men bear scars; they have been kicked around; they take fewer chances. On the other hand, youth is impulsive; it rushes in where age fears to tread. It takes youth to win this war.

And may we add that youth should have a large part in the making of the peace.

MORE RATIONING AHEAD

(Wilmington Star) Secretary Wickard's announcement of the rationing program for next year, under which sale of many prepared foods will be limited to a point system similar to England's, had been so widely heralded in advance that it created no general surprise. If anything, the American people had expected to hear even more prohibitions and limitations were in prospect, and may be supposed to have sighed in relief when Mr. Wickard had completed his broadcast.

If there is any justifiable complaint at this time concerning what lies ahead for 1943, so far as the family table is concerned, it is the same that has existed from the first—that by announcing additional foods will be rationed in February the authorities are encouraging private hoarding. Between now and February it is quite possible for non-cooperative households to buy up and secrete heavy stocks of canned goods, dried fruits and the other food products mentioned by Mr. Wickard as destined for rationing. Even if only one can or package of any of these foods is to be obtained at a single store, there seems no way of preventing purchasers to move from store to store, picking up a can here and another there and repeating the process within a few days, until a considerable stockpile has been accumulated.

This was the case with sugar, and probably is the case with coffee, and very few heavy hoarders have been caught up with. The government has been too willing to forewarn the people of what to expect. A wiser course would have been, and still is, to put rationing into effect without "calling the shot" in advance. It seems fair to accept Mr. Wickard's assertion that there will be food enough to prevent any one going hungry. And it is true that the armed forces of this nation and of all Allied nations must have enough to eat during these war times. No one would hesitate to go on slim rations if by so doing it could be assured that victory would come the sooner. Even if it were necessary to have but one meal a day, and that skimpy, there could be no reasonable protest if the food thus done without were to keep the armed forces in proper fighting form. We know that without victory we would soon be reduced to the state of tens of thousands in Europe from whom the Axis has stolen everything but the barest necessities, and in many cases these too.

Let the government apply the strictest rationing regulations, in the interest of defeating the enemy as quickly as possible. But above all, let the government silence the bureaucrats whose chief amusement for so long a time has been to threaten the people with dire punishment for any slip.

It is right to think that the public will willingly cooperate in any new rationing project if persuasion is used, but will continue to grumble if rationing is increased to the swish of a big stick swinging in the air.

We believe Lucky Strike Green got the biggest send-off of anybody who's gone to war.

We understand there's a shortage of green dye. Now if some guy could make things turn green with envy.

THE HOME FRONT

As the war progresses, the Allies no longer are caught napping at any point, however obscure it may appear in the grand strategy of the United Nations. If it is surprising that American light tanks are reported in action on the jungle-enclosed strip of New Guinea Beach, how much more extraordinary must have been the means of getting them there.

On the economic front our government must be equally far-seeing. More than 50 million pounds of seed, for example, have been destined for planting on foreign soil, under Lend-Lease arrangements. Some of these seeds are supplied to areas occupied by our troops, who will raise fresh vegetables when they aren't fighting. Grass seeds are sent to new air fields for surfacing barren strips. But the bulk of the seeds go for foods to feed the peoples of Allied lands in desperate need of them and to replant farmlands lately freed from Axis control. And seeds take up less shipping space than produce in any other form.

CIVILIANS WILL NOT BENEFIT

Although American farms must raise a great deal more crops of many kinds next year, civilians must not expect to benefit by the increase. Our armed forces will need much more of all that is raised, and so will our Allies, England, Russia, and the French in North Africa. For not only is food, as it supports fighting men, a direct instrument of warfare, it is an essential bulwark of civilian populations in war time. The hatred felt by the people of occupied Europe for their Nazi oppressors is fed by the pangs of hunger, their hopes of liberation and of ultimately getting food from us strengthen their resistance and definitely aid the Allied cause.

The plight of starving millions abroad and the fearful conditions under which many of our soldiers are fighting in jungle and desert should awaken in all of us at home the willingness to take cheerfully the slight discomforts and minor hardships which necessarily go with a war of this kind, especially the inconveniences connected with rationing and other restrictions of scarce goods.

The combined savings of millions of Americans, in motoring and heating, particularly among those living along the Atlantic Seaboard, helped our army land in North Africa and attack the Axis, but the total quantity of these products needed for a continuing campaign is enormous, and will require the service of a fleet of tankers. For this reason, the Army has sent an urgent plea to civilians to save gasoline and fuel oil in every way possible. At the same time, the Petroleum Administrator has warned that several areas in the East have only enough motor gas for essential needs — supplies in storage have been drained by non-essential driving beyond previous estimates.

EFFORTS MADE TO CONSERVE OIL

Although fuel oil rations have been increased 10 per cent in 13 Middle Western States, every effort is being made to conserve oil stocks throughout the entire area of 30 rationed states. In order to encourage conversion from fuel oil to coal, new coal stoves have been made available to those who will use the heaters to replace fuel oil equipment, who need to heat an unheated space for essential working or living whose present coal-burning equipment is not usable, or who are eligible for additional fuel oil and will use a coal heater instead.

Because of increased military needs for the "red meats," there will be further reductions in civilian quotas of beef, pork, lamb, mutton and veal, but these reduced allowances will be partly made up through the release for civilian use of millions of pounds of cured and frozen beef, dried beef, beef sausage material, and various domestic cuts not suitable for military diets.

FARM LABOR PRESENTS BIG PROBLEM

The supply of farm labor will be one of our major problems next year. The War Manpower Commission expects that some 7,900,000 persons will be employed in year-round farm work, and additional millions will be needed seasonally in the various agricultural areas. In December of this year farm hired labor showed a decided drop over the same time two years ago. A large part of the loss was due to enlistment in the armed forces, the rest to the attractions offered by war industries. The deficit in farm labor must be met by keeping labor on farms and by enlisting the services of an army of volunteers throughout the country to help harvest next year's crop.

Additional labor, too, is needed to meet our lumber production goal of 1943, set at 32 billion board feet. While our civilian lumber requirements will be about 40 per cent less than for 1942, we'll need far more lumber for aircraft, ship decking, pontoon

construction, ship and boat timber, and structural timbers. 'SEAL LIPS - SAVE SHIPS'

No one can reckon what ships, or how many, have been torpedoed through chance remarks of relatives or friends of sailors and others, or what vital information about our war production, war equipment or other confidential matters has leaked through to the Axis through careless gossip. A safe rule, applicable to all such matters, is expressed in the saying, "Seal Lips—Save Ships."

Fruit and vegetable growers and shippers are urged to stock up on used wooden boxes, crates, baskets, barrels and hampers for 1943 crops, and cotton growers should save and recondition old cotton bale ties. The telegraph industry will abandon its special services to customers, but low-rate form messages may still go to members of the armed services. Production of alarm clocks will be resumed early next year. The nation's castor oil supply is at low ebb. The Director of Defense Transportation urges the abandonment of all meetings and conventions, requiring travel, that do not contribute in an important way to winning the war.

WASHINGTON LETTER

Washington, Dec. 31—Perhaps the most lively topic for speculation is the President's message "on the state of the union." This annual report to the Congress is always an important document whether read in person or delivered by a White House messenger. It takes on special significance in time of war. Democratic Congressional leaders have been consulted and will probably be shown the complete text before it is formally forwarded to the national legislature. Cabinet officers and other "brass hats" of the Administration have submitted various drafts in hopes their ideas will be included in the Presidential recommendations which will be presented next week. In a sense, a portion of the Chief Executive's report is an account to the people of his stewardship, but his proposed program for the incoming year is of greater importance.

Among the subjects which Mr. Roosevelt is expected to discuss is manpower. A number of tentative drafts are on his desk. Reports persist that assignment of labor—the civilian draft to war factories—will await implementation authority from Congress. His views on other labor matters, particularly a longer work week may be written into the message. Political dopesters predict the President will have something to say about an Americanized version of the far-reaching Beveridge social security plan advocated for England. Some advisers urge side tracking the issue until post-war days. If public statements are a true index of sentiment, the new Congress will not be in a mood to handle anything not directly related to the prosecution of the war. The coalition of Republicans and anti-New Deal Democrats, if it works in actual tests of voting strength, will provide tough-sledging for plans bearing approval of the Executive Mansion's distinguished occupant.

The ominous threat of threat of Congressional investigations as to how they obtained their jobs and explanations of their economic and social ideas may force many resignations from Uncle Sam's payroll. Legislators report their constituents believe much of the skepticism about Federal wartime controls can be traced to the suspicion that theorists are utilizing the emergency to try out their philosophies of the role of government. Rather than face ruthless questioning in Capitol Hill, many planners prefer to quit their lucrative posts for less conspicuous private employment. No one expects a complete "purge," but advocates of practical methods detect hopeful signs in the house-cleaning at O. P. A. which may spread to other alphabetical agencies.

Government officials, battered and bruised in their head-on collisions with the public, now realize that no wartime restriction will succeed until it is properly and intelligently "sold" to consumers. Complicated rationing systems, plus conflicting interpretations as to the necessity for these restraints has contributed much to the public's irritation with well-meaning officialdom and threatened a breakdown of vital controls of a war economy. Unfortunately, the end of confusion and cross-pulling is not in sight. The Henderson resignation may abate Congressional attacks for a time. There is no guaranty that the sacrifice of his high position will stop the proposed probe of the Office of Price Administration. It is hinted that an overhauling of the O.P.A. per-

--- NOT EXACTLY NEWS ---

Jim Feger is the most diversified smoker we know. You seldom see him with less than six of the leading brands of smokes represented in his cigarette case. . . . The little chestnut mare that Thomas Russ bought recently from Seth L. Smith is about the classiest little piece of horseflesh we've seen in this county. Herman Stanley has the fever now, and will probably be the next victim of the equestrian fad.

Mean Man Mountain Dean is the feature grunt-and-groaner on the wrestling bill Thursday night of this week at Thalian Hall in Wilmington. . . . Ever since the dance at which he played here last week, local terpsichorean enthusiasts have been looking forward to Don Grimes' reappearance here for tonight's engagement. His is one band that wasn't hurt by the war—not in quality, anyway.

There were four former Registers of Deeds in Southport Monday morning. Capt. R. I. Mintz left

that day to return to duty at Columbia Army Air Base; Lt. (jg.) W. S. Wells left for his inspection duties along the coast; C. Ed Taylor was in his law office; and Geo. H. Grey, of Ingomer, Penna., was here on one of his annual visits to the county. To make a quintet of it, Register of Deeds Amos J. Walton was on duty in his office. . . . A few Brunswick county hunters took advantage of the extra open day for quail hunting on Christmas day and had good luck. Seems that the birds had come out of the thick to enjoy the day, or some thing.

Conspicuous by their absence this year were the firecrackers about town. There was an occasional report, but not the incessant staccato that usually has punctuated the Christmas quiet. . . . It isn't Christmas Eve and Christmas Day that should be given as holidays, but the week after.

sonnel may appease the Capitol Hill crusaders. The agitation will probably make officials dubious about imposing new controls which are vital to keep the civilian population supplied with necessities at low prices.

A preliminary publicity campaign intended to pave the way for the "point" rationing system has not made much headway. The government will intensify its educational work as the program will be effective within a few weeks. Printers are turning out millions of rationing books similar to those used in England since May, 1941. In justification for the "point" system O.P.A. claims it guarantees to all people "their fair share of scarce goods, and it also allows them freedom of choice when they shop." The book of tickets will cover commodities, yet it will not be so extensive as the British for clothing is not included. When meat rationing starts next year it will be under a point system. Although the British do ration meat, they do not use a point system for it. The list of articles to which the system will be changed from time to time.

While the government itself functions on a fiscal year basis (from July 1 to June 30), the fact that a new Congress assembles the first week in January places legislative programs on a calendar year operation. Plans are now labeled "1943" for civilian and war purposes. Considerable interest attaches to the

annual reports of government agencies which are usually issued at this season but carrying an account of the previous fiscal year. Because of war conditions much valuable data will be eliminated from these public documents. Some deletions are necessary to keep valuable data from enemy agents. Ordinarily, the reports and recommendations provide a broad gauge as to what the Federal agencies want to do during the next 12 or 18 months. Even the voluminous Budget Bu-

reau estimates of proposed military and naval expenditures are incomplete now. The data is presented at secret hearings of Congressional committees.

A bi-weekly British Army newspaper with a circulation more than a million is printed in eight languages.

Substitution of glass containers for metal cans in the paint industry will reduce its steel consumption from 73,000 tons to 700 tons.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Effective Tuesday, January 5, 1943, our store will be closed on Tuesday of each week until further notice.

G. W. KIRBY & SONS SUPPLY, N. C.

MOVING

The Newspaper office will be moved tomorrow (Thursday) from its present location in the Ruark building into new quarters in the J. B. Church Building.

The new office is conveniently located, and we invite you to come in to see us whenever you are in Southport.

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