Government Operation Is At Lowest Ebb Right Now

United States Shipping Board at Sixes and Sevens With President's Decision to Bow to Will of Senate in Farley Appointment, Faces Another Reorganization

By DAVID LAWRENCE
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Washington, December 22—Congress may pass a law requiring all American officials, diplomats, consuls and agents to travel on American ships hereafter.

This is the likely sequel to the incident which has just aroused the Senate in connection with the discovery that the American Bar Association did not buy passage for its members on an American ship but gave the business to a foreign steamship line.

Congress has no control, of course, over private bodies like the American Bar Association but the hope is that when the Government compels people on its own payroll to travel on American ships the example may be borne in on other American citizens as a patriotic duty.

The Shipping Board has again and again been confronted abroad with the humiliating argument of prospective passengers that if American officials do not consider their own ships worth while patronizing why should any one else do so. At present it would be a simple thing for Congress to attach a rider to all appropriation bills where travel is involved requiring that passage always be engaged on American ships wherever American ships sail to the destination which the journey on official business is to be made. There could be a proviso, of course, that in case of an emergency a cabinet officer shall have the right to make exceptions to the rule for the benefit of the personnel of his department. This would take care of cases in which officials would be subjected to delays if they waited for particular sailings.

The general effect, however of such a stipulation in appropriation bills would be to make American officials patronize their own fleet and the impression resulting therefrom would be beneficial to the American passenger business as a whole.

Again and again since the United States Shipping Board has engaged in the passenger business, prominent Americans have taken passage on foreign ships even though American vessels like the Leviathan or the George Washington were leaving on the same day. It is said that in many cases the foreign lines have offered to these prominent Americans special inducements, not necessarily in the matter of rate, but in the choice of accomodations. Then when the passenger lists are published these companies have the benefit of the prestige that accrues from such patronage.

The American Bar Association is an important institution and it is no small feather in the cap of the foreign steamship line that can land the business of transporting the Bar Association's members. While it is contended on one hand that the Shipping Board wasn't approached in the matter of accomodations and this is denied by the Bar Association's representatives, the truth probably lies in the question of what accomodations could be secured and what inducements were offered.

The episode illustrates what the Government is up against in the shipping business. Methods that are natural in private business are not always used by the Government in handling its affairs. Already, for instance, Congress is bestirring itself over the matter of salaries to be paid to executives of the shipping board, yet in the case of private companies they have no such restraint placed upon them when they want to hire men of brains and ingenuity and special training.

It's the old story as between Government operation and private operation. The inefficiencies of the former are no longer denied but since the Government doesn't want to sell its ships at ridiculous prices and stand a heavy loss, the inevitable alternative is Government operation for a few years at least.

As for Government operation it is at the moment in worse condition than it has been since the war. The shipping board is at sixes and sevens. The chairman of the board who was appointed during the recess of Congress is having difficulty in getting his nomination confirmed by the Senate, chiefly because he wouldn't toady to Congress and to some extent because he wouldn't give away the American merchant fleet at bargain prices to prospective buyers or make leases advantageous to private concerns and disadvantageous to the Government. President Coolidge has let it be known to the newspapers that he doesn't resent the action of the Senate, but it isn't discreet for him to appear resentful however piqued he may really feel.

The defeat of Mr. Farley for confirmation is the first blow at the prestige of the President in Congress and Mr. Coolidge has about decided that he had betted bow to the will of the Senators and appoint a new chairman. All this means lost motion in the shipping board, more reorganization and more delays in getting the Government fleet on a competitive basis with foreign steamship lines.

Checks and Plaids

In addition to her winter coat for dress wear every well-dressed woman now feels she must have a top coat. These coats are loose, swagger, practical affairs that go on over a suit or heavy dress or knitted costume. They have convertible collars and long loose sleeves.

SHAKERS OF NEW ENGLAND GIVE UP COMMUNITY LIFE

[illegible] N. H., December 24.—The five last members of [illegible] Community of Shakers, established originally in 1782, will abandon the settlement this winter and move over to Canterbury, where there is a similar colony. Death has reduced the group from 150 to these last remaining five, who today are about to close the barns and lock the doors for the last time. In 1886 the membership of the Enfield colony was about the same as at the beginning, but for 37 years it has steadily dwindled. Celibacy was obligatory. The colonists raised garden produce, seeds and roots and manufactured underwear, brooms, pails and wooden articles of various kinds. In keeping with the laws of the sect, all property was held on a communistic basis, and the men and women members lived separate lives of stern discipline awaiting the "Second Coming of Christ."

The colony had friction in the early days with other residents of the town. The records show that in 1788 the legislature was appealed to for some remedy against certain alleged actions of the "Shaking Quakers," but the objectors were overruled and the colonists have pursued their peaceful lives of piety with uninterrupted industry until now.

JARVISBURG BRIEFS.

Jarvisburg, December 22—I. M. Meekins of Elizabeth City and several northern friends were here gunning with the Wright Brothers this week.

Mrs. D. S. Wright, Mrs. D. H. Wright and Mrs. C. A. Wright motored to [illegible] Friday [illegible] spent the day with Mrs. Wright's mother, Mrs. [illegible] at Tyrrell County. Mrs. Wright's three children, Everybody had a very enjoyable time.

Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Wright and son have gone to Hertford to spend the holidays with Mrs. Wright's parents.

John Forbes, Howard Forbes and Marshal Forbes were called to Norfolk Wednesday to attend the funeral of their brother in law, Ernest Belanga.

J. R. Wright motored to Elizabeth City Wednesday.

John Beachman of Savannah, Georgia and Bowen Beachman of Aurora, N. C., are visiting Mrs. D. S. Wright.

Miss Evelyn Baum from Greensboro College for Women is spending the holidays with her mother, Mrs. Lloyd Baum of Poplar Branch.

L. W. Fisher of Elizabeth City spent Sunday and Monday here with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Fisher.

CAMPAIGN LEAGUE OF NATIONS REVIVED IN SWITZERLAND

Geneva, December 24 — Newspapers of Switzerland report a renewal of campaigns throughout the country in behalf of the League of Nations as an organism of benefit to humanity.

Speakers at public meetings have emphasized that it is to the existence of the League of Nations with its aim of conciliation and arbitration that Switzerland owes the fact that France has accepted in principle the submission of the controversy over the customs zones to settlement by arbitration.

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