

Looking at WASHINGTON

Worker In U. S. Gets More Than The Workers Of Russia

It is rather difficult to measure the purchasing power of money in various countries but it is possible, sometimes, to estimate the labor necessary to secure funds for the purchase of specific articles.

Figures prepared by the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reveal that the worker in Russia, despite all claims, is in a bad way, compared to American workers. Here are some examples:

A wool suit for a man, if available, would cost the average Russian a little more than twelve weeks' work, but the average worker in this country can get one of high quality for less than a week's pay.

A cotton dress for the Russian worker's wife takes the pay of four days but, in this country, it would cost a little over half a day's pay.

The same contrast is apparent in regard to food, with groceries costing the Russian worker from five to thirty-eight times as much when measured in hours of work. In fact, the living standard in Russia is meager compared with that of the average American.

Soviet Group Completely Controls Danubian Parley

Before the war, the Danube River, which flows from the Black Forest in Germany to the Black Sea, some 1,725 miles, was a busy waterway, carrying industrial products to Eastern Europe and food and raw materials to Western Europe.

Eighteen months ago, when the Big Four nations drafted the peace treaties for the Balkan nations, they inserted a clause providing for free and equal navigation of the Danube and agreed to hold a conference to work out the technical details.

The conference now going on in Yugoslavia is supposed to carry out this arrangement. At the present time, the United States controls about one-fifth of the river and the rest of the route is under the control of Russia and her satellites. This agreement between the Americans and the Russians has stopped through-traffic. Whether a satisfactory arrangement can be concluded at the conference is questionable.

It is interesting to note that Russia has a majority of the votes. The United States, Great Britain and France are expected to stand together but the Russians will have the

backing of the six Danubian nations. This means that the Russians will have seven votes to three for the Western nations.

Soviet Tactics At Geneva Puzzles The Other Nations

The Soviet delegate, at a meeting of the United Nations Economic and Social Council in Geneva, Switzerland, recently surprised the assembled delegates by suggesting that Russia and the Western nations, "notwithstanding the differences in approach", must "endeavor to build up a permanent platform" for European recovery.

The Russian delegate urged that, despite the differences between the Western European countries and the Soviet Union, efforts should be made to find common ground "in a business-like manner and that the Soviet delegation is willing to go half-way for the sake of achieving a common agreement."

In addition, according to the understanding of English and French interpreters, the Soviet delegate declared that "the Soviet Union has never forgotten and will never forget the great help it received from the United States during the war."

The Russian move was rejected because of the fact that his speech made an issue over the European Recovery Program and its interpretation by the Russians. According to Williard L. Thorpe, Assistant Secretary of State for Economic Affairs, the real issue was whether the Marshall Plan was what the United States says it is or what the Russians say it is.

Considerable speculation followed the remarks of the Russian delegate, with many observers believing that it represented a "clear change" in the Russian line. Some thought it meant that the Russians are ready to recognize the European Recovery Program as a fait accompli and are, therefore, willing to keep their animosity out of the discussions on economic cooperation within Europe.

Others pointed out that there are various evidences that the Polish, Czechoslovak and Yugoslav governments are increasingly insistent on their right to do business with the western part of Europe, despite the Soviet Union's ideological objections or the manner in which the West is organizing itself under the stimulus of the European Recovery Program.

Corroborations Important When Spies Give Details

The testimony of Miss Elizabeth T. Bentley, confessed Communist courier, naming prominent officials as sources of secret information, must be received with reservations unless there are some corroborating circumstances to support her evidence.

The lady testified before the House Committee on Un-American Activities, naming names and telling of meetings. She asserted that some of those mentioned knew the information was destined for the Soviet Government and that she "suspected" that some of the others knew it. She admitted that some were not aware of the fact.

It is easy for anybody to take the stand and testify to secret meetings with other people. It is also easy for anybody to say that somebody told her that information came from somebody else. If what the woman testified to is the truth, it is very important that there exists the possibility that she, a self-confessed Communist, at one time, likes publicity and the spotlight.

Bigness, By Itself, Can Wreck Capitalist System

The recent warning of the Federal Trade Commission that unless something is done to check the trend toward monopoly and great concentrations of economic power, "collectivism will have triumphed over free enterprise" is a conclusion which should interest all Americans.

There is a tendency in economic enterprises to consolidate competing businesses for the purpose of lessening competition. The objective is easily discernible, the corporations have the opportunity to reduce expenses by eliminating some of the cost of competition and, if so minded, reduce prices to the consuming public.

While this is possible, the experience of the past tends to support the belief that the prime purpose of such mergers is to eliminate competition solely for the purpose of enhancing the profits of those who control the giant corporations. Obviously, there is a danger to free enterprise when economic activity, in any particular field, is under the control of a small group who possess what amounts to almost exclusive power in their field of operation.

When the time comes that the railroads, the utility companies, or any other industrial enterprise, becomes too big to be regulated by the Government, the people of this country will inevitably demand Government operation of the enterprises in-

voiced. We favor the free enterprise system, but quite frankly say that if it comes to a choice between control by a group of profit-seeking individuals and control by the Government, in order to assure a reasonable supply of necessary goods and services, at a fair price, we would be for Governmental control.

It is not safe to permit those who operate for profits to possess the power of arbitrarily increasing their profits. Bigness per se in any area of enterprise, holds an element of danger to free enterprise and free society. Economic bigness, it must be admitted, at a certain point, sets up power greater than any that should be permitted in private hands.

Hard To Get The Facts About E. R. P. In Europe
The United States is exhibiting an unparalleled generosity when it taxes the taxpayers of this country something like \$5,000,000,000 a year in order to put into effect the European

Recovery Program.

The natural assumption is that the European countries would be anxious to get their economic houses in order, providing an adequate and workable

monetary exchange, and as fast as possible, lowering their tariffs in order to duplicate a large free trade area, like that in the United States. (Continued on Page Six)

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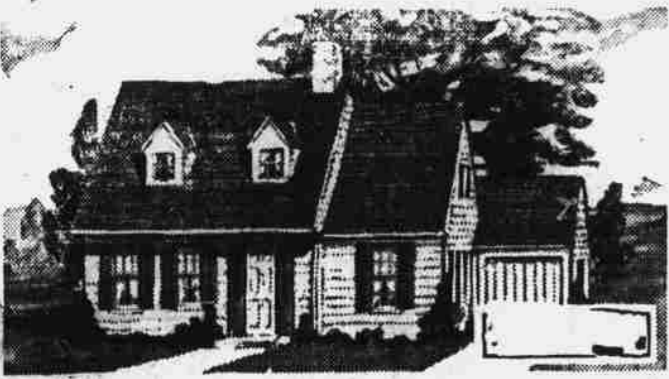
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