

Editorial

The Other Side of the Coin

You generally hear inflation discussed in terms of prices, as if sellers were getting rich and buyers having a tough time.

Generally, the reference is to the government's cost of living index, which measures consumer prices. That has indeed gone up, by 120 per cent since 1947.

But that's only one side of the coin. Take a look at another government figure—the average American paycheck. Since 1947, it has gone up 238 per cent—twice as much as the price index.

Can you really blame inflation on pricing?

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Piedmont's entrants in the annual FAA Safety Awards program included, from left, James Hurt, Leonard Bean, Dallas Brown, K. D. Oakley and F. L. Sfreddo. R. G. Boggs, W. C. Powles, Jim Borden, W. W. Wishon and P. G. Peacock also submitted suggestions but were unavailable at picture taking time.

Industry notes — new secretary of transportation

William T. Coleman has been confirmed as secretary of transportation. A Philadelphia attorney, Coleman succeeds Claude S. Brinegar who resigned. Coleman, 53, is a former president of the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund and has served as a part-time official or consultant in four administrations prior to Ford's.

Author Robert Serling has been commissioned to write a history of Western Airlines to commemorate that company's 50th anniversary.

Western is the oldest airline in the U. S. Serling's last book was *Maverick*, the story of Robert F. Six of Continental.

The Civil Aeronautics Board approved the TWA/Pan Am route exchange. The agreement was approved for two years or until 90 days following final Board action on the Transatlantic Route Case. Pan Am will drop service to Paris, Lisbon, Madrid and the Azores and on routes linking London with Los Angeles, Philadelphia and Chicago. TWA's service to Frankfurt,

Guam, Hong Kong, Bangkok and Honolulu will be suspended. Pan Am gained new authority to service Taipei, Bombay and Okinawa, replacing TWA. TWA got new authority for Barcelona, Nice, Casablanca and Vienna in place of Pan Am.

REA Express, Inc., a major private surface and air delivery service, has filed a petition for reorganization under federal bankruptcy laws. The company said it would continue normal operations while working out a plan to pay debts and reorganize.

Coon huntin': a novice's interpretation

Coon huntin'.

Mostly I'd just heard about it, from friends who've done it for years and from a record by some man from Mississippi. I understand it is a somewhat universal sort of activity.

I knew you went at night and you took dogs.

I'd heard a lot about how fine and very fine the dogs are that you take with you.

Well, I've always loved dogs and sometimes, usually in weak moments, I like to try doing different things.

Recently, some very patient Piedmont coon hunters let me go with them.

It was one of the most different things I've ever done.

For those of you who know even less about coon huntin' than I did, a coon is really a raccoon. Webster defines them as "small flesh eating mammals — chiefly gray, with bushy ringed tails, living largely in trees and active, especially at night."

The only thing I would add to that would be very, very active.

They, the coons and the hunters, cover a lot of territory. It doesn't take the coons and the dogs as long as it does the hunters to cover what I thought was pretty rough ground.

But back to the beginning. When the hunters have chosen the general area where they'll hunt, they hook up the dogs' trailers — yes, the dogs have their own travelling kennels — to whatever vehicle they're using. Station wagon, truck or jeep — the type doesn't seem to be too important. (At this point I didn't know what was and what wasn't important and I was trying to remember everything.) After a few stops along the way, one for a supply of liquid refreshments — that was important — and one to pick up more hunters and more dogs, also vital, we arrived at a welcoming fire in an open field somewhere in Stokes County.

Following some preliminary conversation around the fire and final warming of feet it was time to let the dogs out of their trailers. Like the hunters, the dogs knew each other well and were anxious to get on with the coon huntin'.

Now, if I understand how all this is supposed to be, the dogs find the tracks or traces or

something of the coons and off they go. The dogs are supposed to chase the coon up a tree. That's called treeing. Then the hunters, who are supposed to be not too far behind the dogs, gather round the tree with the coon in it. During all this there is a lot of barking. Then somehow the hunters get the coon down from the tree. There seem to be a number of possible ways to do this. But I only heard about the alternatives. Our coon hunt never got to that stage.

Meanwhile back to the field. The just freed dogs romped around the hunters for a few minutes and then the hunters started following the dogs across the field, over and under several fences and into a cow pasture.

On through the cow pasture, recently used — I was warned to watch where I stepped — the dogs headed for what the hunters called a creek.

The coons, the hunters said, often travel along the creek banks. A creek, again according to Webster, is a stream of water smaller than a river but larger than a brook.

The Stokes County creeks that I saw were lots larger and not much smaller.

Crossing and re-crossing and crossing these creeks again was the hardest part of coon huntin' for me.

The hunters barely slowed their pace at the creek crossings. That is, the first ones to cross. It took those who were behind me a little longer, just to get to the tree.

Trees, besides being a place for the coon to go, were also the way you crossed creeks. Trees that had conveniently fallen sometimes all the way and sometimes just part of the way across the creeks were the hunters' bridges. They were almost my undoing.

It seems the Stokes County creeks have steep banks. In other words, the water is a long way down. For someone, like me, who gets too dizzy on the second step of a three-step step-ladder to get to the top, the creek probably looked further down than it really was.

The hunters just walked across the tree bridges. I crawled and clawed and clutched vines and hoped that the dogs and the coons

would run away from the creek. A long way away.

All the time we were trying to catch up with the dogs we had to stop and listen to hear where they were.

We listened a lot. There was some conversation about which dog was where. Was it Rock and Brummey who had treed? Or was it Drum and Ugly? The hunters could tell from the barks, where the dogs were and what kind of barking they were doing. There are many kinds of barks, running barks, treeing barks, water barks.

It occurred to me that these special, fine dogs are very talented. My dogs just bark at strangers or when they're hungry or when they want attention. But they never tell me where they are or what they're doing. Maybe because I don't have a Blue Tick or a Red Tick or a Plott or a Walker. These are the kinds of coon dogs I met on the hunt.

Occasionally while listening for the dogs there would be interference. Once it was a car. Another time some house dogs joined the chorus. The hunters had special comments for those unwanted sounds. Their remarks wouldn't make very wholesome reading.

The dogs didn't take too long treeing the coon. It was us trying to get to the tree that took a while.

We never did. Get to the tree with the coon and the dogs, that is.

But far from all that creek crossing having been to no avail the outing wasn't over. We returned to the fire and the host hunter had delicious steaks cooking over the glowing coals.

As the hunters sat by the fire tales of other hunts went well with the midnight meal. There was the time the Piedmont crowd from Wilmington came up to hunt in this neck of the woods . . . and the story of the Japanese YS-11 folks who showed up to go coon huntin' in coats and ties. They had to learn to chew tobacco before they ever got started with the huntin'.

To Lloyd and O. V. and Rope and Larry, I loved it! Creeks and all. And unlike the poet and the purple cow, I still hope to see a coon.

—Betsy Allen