

THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON

With the bitter struggle over repeal of margarine taxes holding the spotlight, other important developments in the Washington scene included the under-cover and secret house ways and means

committee sessions on the reciprocal trade agreements in the house and the consideration of minimum wage bills in the senate.

Of course the record of the Republicans in house and senate on the reciprocal trade policy has been in opposition to the trade agreement act and with the GOP in control of congress for the first time since these agreements have been in existence, there is an inclination on the part of many of the leaders to let the law die as of June 30 this year when it passes out of existence. There is another bloc which would merely extend the law for

one more year instead of the customary three years and then there is still another group which would repeal the acts entirely and set up a Republican tariff act in place of the reciprocal agreements. Such action on the part of congress, however, would be in direct opposition to the bipartisan foreign policy program. Under ERP, for instance, this country is imposing a policy of economic cooperation and reduction of trade barriers upon the countries of western Europe if they are to be recipients of benefits of the European Recovery Act.

Democrats in the house are loudly critical of the decision of the ways and means committee to hold these hearings in secret in direct disregard of the intentions of the congressional reorganization act which bans secret committee meetings and they declare that to foster a program of reciprocal repeal or to discuss a new tariff policy in the face of our foreign policy, behind closed doors is a "perversion of democratic principles."

Labor leaders are fearful that the bill introduced by Senator Ball of Minnesota which is now before the senate would not only lower the minimum wage but would narrow coverage of the fair labor standards act instead of expanding this act to bring more workers under its provisions:

The Ball bill narrows the definition of interstate commerce and would expand existing exemptions of workers in retail, service, food and processing establishments and to seamen and thus would exempt probably a million workers now covered by the minimum wage law instead of bringing more workers under the law. It would provide a sliding scale of minimum wages, fixing a minimum of 60 cents an hour with provisions for lifting it to 70 cents or lowering it to 50 cents at the discretion of industry committees. Sen. Elbert Thomas in the upper house and Congressman John McCormack in the lower house have a measure which would enable men who worked a 40-hour week to get a minimum of 75 cents an hour and would enlarge coverage of the law. The present minimum of 40 cents is of course obsolete, for most every worker receives more than that figure an hour, so for all practical purposes witnesses have told the senate committee, we have no minimum wage law.

With meat prices soaring to new highs and with some cuts unobtainable at any price, department of agriculture officials are apprehensive of real meat famine within the next few months. They point out that the continued record demand for meat consumption and the excessive high prices have combined to bring even breeding stock onto the market to such an extent that the nation's reserves of beef, pork and sheep are rapidly nearing famine proportions.

Cattle numbers, for instance, dropped from 85.5 million head at the beginning of 1945 to 78.6 million head at the beginning of this year; hogs declined from 83.7 million head in 1944 to 55 million head; stock sheep from 49.3 million head in 1942 to 30.5 million head this year. Last January the department says stock sheep was actually the smallest since they began keeping records in 1887.

Observers here say that the Taft-Ellender-Wagner housing

bill which passed the senate and which will total up a cost of some five billion dollars during the next five years, will be stymied in the house. The real estate lobbyists are set to make a last-ditch stand to prevent its passage. The same fate awaits, according to observers, the federal aid for education bill, also passed by the senate but being held up in the house committee.

Among the guests visiting at the home of Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Thomas Sunday to observe Mother's day and the birthday of Mr. Thomas, were Mr. and Mrs. Joe Babin and three children and Lee Thomas of Cleveland, Ohio; Ker-

mit Thomas of Connelly Springs, N. C. and Mrs. Basil Shores and children of Vilas.

Misses Earle and Cora Leigh Trivette who are employed in Bristol, Va. were guests here of their parents Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Britton of Morganton, N. C. and Mr. and Mrs. John Adams and Miss Mae Younce of Kingsport, Tenn. visited Mrs. Polly Greer here Sunday.

Life is half spent before we know what it is.—George Herbert.

Zionville News

Mr. and Mrs. John Wilson of Meat Camp and Mr. and Mrs. Glenn Woodring and family of Todd were recent guests here of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Miller.

Mrs. Lillie Thomas has returned from Sugar Grove where she visited a daughter, Mrs. Don Bingham and Mr. Bingham.

Mrs. Carl Byers of Boone R. F. D. was a guest here recently of Mr. and Mrs. N. T. Byers.

J. A. Younce of Sheridan, Wyo. arrived here Saturday for a visit with relatives and with a daughter, Mrs. Bower Hartzog at Idlewild.

Miss Judy South of Lancaster, Ohio is visiting for a few weeks here with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Hobart South.

Mr. and Mrs. Reeves Holman visited last week with Mr. and Mrs. Clifton Holman at Todd.

Mrs. W. O. Stephens has returned from Reese where she was called last week due to the serious illness of a grandson, Arvil Cornette. The little fellow, son of Mr. and Mrs. Homer Cornette is a patient at Watauga Hospital now where his condition is critical.

Mr. and Mrs. Doran Shoun and daughters, Beulah Deane and Jo Ellen of Mountain City, Tenn. and Miss Reba Warner of Bristol, Va. were week-end guests here of Miss Etta Younce.

Mrs. Frank Proffett of Meat Camp was a guest here Sunday of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Wilson and they with Mrs. Maggie Wilson visited with Mrs. Verda Thomas and Mr. and Mrs. David Wilson of Reese in the afternoon.

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DEMOCRATIC COUNTY CONVENTION

The Democrats of Watauga county are called to meet in convention at the courthouse in Boone on

SATURDAY MAY 15, 2 p. m.

for the purpose of naming delegates to the State convention to be held in Raleigh, N. C. on May 20, 1948. for the the purpose of perfecting a county organization, and for the transaction of such other business as may properly come before the convention.

It is requested that the precinct chairman hold meetings in their respective townships on Friday May 14, for the purpose of naming a precinct chairman and to elect delegates to the county convention.

W. R. WINKLER

Chairman Democratic Executive Committe.

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1. Salaries: "First of all, I wish to see the State pay salaries that will attract and hold in the State's service the most competent and consecrated teachers. To accomplish this, there must be a substantial increase in teachers' salaries".

2. More Teachers: "We must lighten the teacher's pupil load . . . A reduction in the pupil load can be accomplished only through the employment of more teachers. This will cost money but it will be money well spent".

3. State School Building Aid: "Some of the surplus now on hand in the State treasury should be used in aiding less fortunate communities, particularly rural areas, to provide adequate school buildings".

4. School Health: "We should have in North Carolina a school health program that will insure to every child in every section, however disadvantaged, a fair chance at a healthy start in life".

5. Additional Progress: "A State School Commission, composed of intelligent and public-spirited citizens, is now making a thorough survey of our state school system, of our educational needs and of our ability to meet them. Its recommendations will have my sympathetic consideration".