

WILSON LAYS BEFORE CONGRESS SEVERAL SPECIFIC PROPOSALS FOR CHECKING

(Continued From Page One.) make shift for itself as it can, or a peace buttressed and supported by the will and concert of the nations that have the purpose and the power to do so and to enforce what is right. Politically, economically, socially the world is on the operating table, and it has not been possible to make any anesthetic. It is conscious. It even watches the capite operation upon which it knows that its hope of a healthy life depends. It cannot think its business out or make plans or give materials and provisions to its affairs while in such a case. Where there is no peace of mind there can be no energy in endeavor. There can be no confidence in industry, no calculable basis for credits, no confident buying or systematic selling, no certain prospect of employment, no normal restoration of business, no hopeful attempt at reconstruction, no dislocated elements of enterprise until peace has been established and so far as may be guaranteed.

Other Nations Worse Off. Our national life has no doubt been less radically disturbed and dismembered than the national life of other peoples whom the war more directly affected, with all its terrible ravaging and destructive force, but it has been, nevertheless, profoundly affected and our industries, our industries, our credits, our productive capacity, our economic processes are inextricably interwoven with those of other nations and peoples—most intimately of all with the nations and peoples upon whom the chief burden and confusion of the war fell and who are now most dependent upon the co-operative action of the world.

We are just now shipping more goods out of our ports to foreign markets than we ever shipped before—not foodstuffs merely, but raw materials of every sort, but this is no index of what our foreign sales will continue to be or of the effect the value of our exports will

INTERESTING FEATURES FOR SUNDAY OBSERVER

"O. Henry and Al Jennings," their first day together and that the fourth of July, in Honduras, Al Jennings tells all about it tomorrow's chapter of his story of the life of the great short story writer as the former band knew him. By the way, the chapter to be printed tomorrow constitutes a fine beginning point for those who have not yet begun reading Jennings' story. In the preceding chapters he has covered his own life up to the time he met O. Henry. From now on he will tell the gripping story of the tragic years of Bill Porter's life as Al Jennings knew him intimately. Other features for tomorrow include an especially interesting "Potash & Perlmutter" article by Montague Glass, another article by Charles M. Ripley on war inventions of great value in peace time, and the thrilling chapter of Rickenbacker's story of "Fighting the Flying Circus," the pictorial grave section, eight pages of pictures, devoted to "Carolina Colours," and numbers of other timely articles and news stories.

have on supplies and prices. It is impossible to predict how far or how long foreign purchasers will be able to find the money or the credit to pay for or sustain such purchases on such a scale; how soon or to what extent foreign manufacturers can resume their former production, foreign farmers get their accustomed crops from their own fields, foreign mines resume their output, foreign merchants set up again their old machinery of trade with the ends of the earth. All these things must remain uncertain until peace is established and the nations of the world have concerted the methods by which normal life and industry are to be restored.

Any Remedy Not Permanent. All that we shall do, in the meantime, to restrain profiteering and put the life of our people upon a tolerable footing will be makeshift and provisional. There can be no settled conditions here or elsewhere until the treaty is peace is out of the way and the work of liquidating the war has become the chief concern of our government and of the other governments of the world. Until then business will inevitably remain speculative and unsteady, now this way and again that, with heavy losses or heavy gains as it may chance, and the consumer must take care of both the gains and the losses. There can be no peace prices so long as our whole financial and economic system is on a war basis.

Europe will not, cannot recoup her capital or put her restless, distracted people to work until she knows exactly where she stands in respect of peace; and what we will do is for her the chief question upon which her quietude of mind and confidence of purpose depend.

While there is any possibility that the peace terms may be changed or may be held long in abeyance or may not be enforced because of dissensions among the powers associated with Germany, it is idle to look for permanent relief.

Immediate Action Urged. But what we can do we should do, and should do at once. And there is a great deal that we can do, provisional though it be.

Wheat shipments and credits to facilitate the purchase of our wheat can and will be limited and controlled in such a way as not to raise, but rather to lower, the price of flour here. The government has the power, within certain limits, to regulate that. We cannot deny wheat to foreign peoples who are in dire need of it, and we do not wish to do so; but, fortunately, though the wheat crop is not what we hoped it would be, it is abundant if handled with provident care. The price of wheat is lower in the United States than in Europe, and can, with proper management, be kept so.

By way of immediate relief, surplus stocks of both food and clothing in the hands of the government will be sold, and, of course, sold at prices at which there is no profit. And by the way of a more permanent correction of prices, surplus stocks in private hands will be sold out of storage and put upon the market. Fortunately, under the terms of the food control act, the hoarding of foodstuffs can be checked and prevented; and they will be, with the greatest energy. Foodstuffs can be drawn out of storage and sold by legal action, which the department of justice will institute wherever necessary; but so soon as the situation is systematically dealt with it is not likely that the courts will often have to be resorted to. Much of the accumulating of stocks has no doubt been due to the sort of speculation which always results from uncertainty. Great surpluses were accumulated because it was impossible to foresee what the market would disclose and dealers were determined to be ready for whatever might happen, as well as eager to reap the full advantage of rising prices. They will now see the disadvantage, as well as the danger,

of holding off from the new process of distribution.

Supply and Demand Annulled. Some very interesting and significant facts with regard to stocks on hand and the rise of prices in the future abundance have been disclosed by the inquiries of the department of agriculture, the department of labor and the federal trade commission. They seem to justify the statement that the cases of many necessary commodities effective means have been found to prevent the normal operation of the law of supply and demand. Regarding the surplus stocks in the hands of the government, there was a greater supply of foodstuffs in this country on June 1 of this year than at the same date of last year. In the combined total of a number of the most important foods in dry and cold storage the excess is quite 19 per cent. And yet prices have risen. The supply of fresh eggs on hand in June of this year, for example, was greater by nearly 10 per cent than the supply on hand at the same time last year, and yet the wholesale price was 40 cents a dozen, as against 30 cents a year ago.

The stock of frozen fowls had increased more than 288 per cent, and yet the price had risen also, from 34 cents per pound to 37 1/2 cents.

The supply of creamery butter had increased 129 per cent and the price from 41 to 53 cents per pound. The supply of salt beef had been augmented 3 per cent and the price had gone up from \$34 a barrel to \$38 a barrel. Canned corn had increased in stock nearly 92 per cent, and had remained substantially the same in price.

In a few foodstuffs the prices had declined, but in nothing like the proportion in which the supply had increased. For example, the stock of canned tomatoes had increased 102 per cent and yet the price had declined only 25 cents per dozen cans. In some cases there had been the usual result of an increase of price following a decrease of supply, but in almost every instance the increase of price had been disproportionate to the decrease in stock.

Combinations Formed. The attorney general has been making a careful study of the situation as a whole and of the laws that can be applied to better it, and is convinced that, under the stimulation and temptation of exceptional circumstances, combinations of producers and combinations of traders have been formed for the control of supplies and of prices which are clearly in restraint of trade, and against those prosecutions will be promptly instituted and actively pushed, which will in all likelihood have a prompt corrective effect. There is reason to believe that the prices of leather, of coal, of lumber and of textiles have been materially affected by terms of concert and co-operation among the producers and marketers of these and other universally necessary commodities, which it will be possible to dress. No watchful or energetic effort will be spared to accomplish this necessary result. I trust that there will not be many cases in which prosecution where necessary. Public action will no doubt cause many who have perhaps unwittingly adopted illegal methods to abandon them promptly and of their own motion.

And public action, accomplished with a great deal of care of himself if he knows the facts and influences he is dealing with, and purchasers are not distinguished to anything else singly or collectively, that may be necessary for their self-protection. The department of commerce, the department of agriculture, the department of labor, and the federal trade commission can do a great deal towards supplying the public, systematically and at short intervals, with information regarding the actual supply of particular commodities that is in existence, but not available because of hoarding, and with regard to the methods of price fixing which are being used by dealers in certain foodstuffs and other necessities.

There can be little doubt that retailers are in part—sometimes in large part—responsible for exorbitant prices; and it is quite practicable for the government, through the agencies I have mentioned, to supply the public with full information as to the prices at which retailers buy and as to the costs of transportation they put in order that it may be known just what margin of profit they are demanding. Opinion and concerted action on the part of purchasers can probably do the rest.

Funds Needed. That is, these agencies may perform this indispensable service provided the Congress will supply them with the necessary funds to prosecute their inquiries and keep their price lists up to date. Hitherto, the appropriation committees of the house have not always, I fear, seen the full value of these inquiries, and the department has been constrained for means to conduct its service. That is, the department provided by appropriation for this purpose, and provided the necessary funds are available, the department is greatly ameliorating the present distressing conditions of livelihood that I have come to urge, in this attempt to

concert with you the best ways to serve the country in this emergency.

It is one of the absolutely necessary means among the peoples of the world. And, of only our own interest, we must help the peoples overseas. Europe is our biggest customer. We must keep her going or thousands of our shops and scores of our mines must close. The life of the world is depending on her going on without ourselves sharing in the disaster.

In such circumstances, face to face with such tests, passion must be discarded, passion and a disregard for the rights of others have no place in the councils of a free people. We need light, not heat, in these solemn times of self-examination and saving action. There must be no threats. Let there be only intelligent counsel and let the best reason win, not the strongest brute force. The world has just destroyed the arbitrary force of a military junta.

It will live under no other. All that is arbitrary and coercive in the world, those who seek to employ it only prepare their own destruction. "Serenely Confident." We cannot hastily and overnight revolutionize all the processes of our life. It is not the business of our people to do so. These are days of deep excitement and of extravagant speech; but with us these are things of the surface. Everyone who is in real touch with the silent masses of our great people knows that the old strong fiber and steady self-control are still there, firm against violence or any intemperate action that would brow beat their affairs into confusion. I am serenely confident that they will readily accept the sharp correction of selfish processes; and these, no doubt, are necessary. But there are other forces that we may count on besides those resident in the department of justice.

And I entertain another confident hope. I have spoken today chiefly of measures of imperative regulation and legal compulsion, of prosecutions and the sharp correction of selfish processes; and these, no doubt, are necessary. But there are other forces that we may count on besides those resident in the department of justice. We have just fully awakened to what has been going on and to the influences, many of them very selfish and sinister, that have been producing high prices and imposing an intolerable burden on the mass of our people. To have brought it all into the open will accomplish the greater part of the result we seek. I appeal with entire confidence to our producers, our middlemen, and our merchants to deal fairly with the people. It is their opportunity to show that they comprehend, that they intend to act justly, and that they have the public interest sincerely at heart. And I have no doubt that housekeepers all over the country and everyone who buys the things he daily stands in need of, will presently exercise a greater vigilance, a more thoughtful economy, a more discriminating care as to the market in which he buys or the merchant with whom he trades, than he has hitherto exercised.

I believe, too, that the more extreme leaders of organized labor will presently yield to a sober second thought and like the great mass of their associates, think and act like true Americans. They will see that strikes undertaken at this critical time are certain to make matters worse, no better—worse for them and for everybody else.

The worst thing, the most fatal of all, is that we should not be able to regulate interstate commerce in every case where their form of package makes it possible to plainly mark with the price at which they left the hands of the producer, such a quantity of goods as to be sold under certain provisions of the pure food act, by which it is required that certain detailed information be given on the labels of packages of food and drugs.

To License Corporations. And it does not seem to me that we can confine ourselves to detailed measures of this kind, if it is indeed our purpose to assume national control of the processes of distribution. I take it for granted that that is our purpose and our duty. Nothing less will suffice. We need not hesitate to handle a national question in a national way. We should go beyond the measures I have suggested.

We should formulate a law requiring a federal license of all corporations engaged in interstate commerce and embodying in the license, or in the conditions under which it is to be issued, specific regulations designed to prevent competitive selling and prevent unconscionable profits in the methods of marketing. Such a law would afford a welcome opportunity to effect other much needed reforms in the business of interstate shipping, which are engaged in it; but for the moment I confine my recommendations to the object immediately in hand, which is to lower the cost of living.

I do not add that there is a bill now pending before the Congress which, if passed, would do much to stop speculation and to prevent the fraudulent methods of promotion by which our people are annually fleeced of millions of dollars of hard-earned money. I refer to the measure proposed by the capital issues committee for the control of security issues. It is a means formulated by men who know the actual conditions of business and of the adoption would serve a great and beneficent purpose.

We are dealing gentlemen of the Congress, I need hardly say, with very critical and very difficult matters. I should go forward with confidence along the road we see, but we should also seek to comprehend the whole of the scene amidst which we act. There is no ground for some of the fearful forecasts I hear uttered about me, but the condition of the world we should face it comprehendingly. The situation of our own country is exceptionally fortunate. We of all peoples can afford to keep our heads and to determine upon moderate and sensible courses of action which will ensure us against the passions and discontents which are working such deep unhappiness for some of the distressed nations on the other side of the sea. But we may be involved in their distress unless we help, and help with energy and intelligence. "Must Pay."

The world must pay for the appalling destruction wrought by the great war, and we are one of the world, and we are one of the world. For five years now the industry of all Europe has been slack and disordered. The normal crops have not been produced, the normal quantity of manufactured goods has not been turned out. Not until there are the usual crops and the usual production of manufactured goods on the other side of the Atlantic can Europe return to the former conditions, and it is upon the former conditions and not the present that our economic relations with Europe were built up.

We must face the fact that unless we help Europe to get back to her normal life and production, she will not be able to contribute to the well-being of this country. For the present it is manifest, we must quicken, not slacken, our own production. We, and we almost alone, now hold the world steady. Upon our shoulders and self-possession depend the affairs of nations everywhere.

It is in this supreme crisis—that this crisis for all mankind—that America must prove her mettle. In the world's eyes, she must show herself self-possessed, self-contained, capable of sober and effective action. She saved Europe by her action in 1918; she must now save it by her action in 1919. Europe she will save herself, as she did upon the battlefields of the war. The calmness and ca-

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thing that can be done now is to stop or interrupt production or to interfere with the distribution of goods by the railways and the shipping of the country. We are all involved in the distressing results of the high cost of living and must unite, not divide, to correct it. There are many things that ought to be corrected in the relations between capital and labor, in respect of wages and conditions of labor and other things even more far-reaching, and I, for one, am ready to go into conference about these matters with any group of my fellow countrymen who know what they are talking about and are willing to remedy existing conditions by frank counsel rather than by violent contest. No remedy is possible while men are in a temper, and there can be no settlement which does not have as its motive and standard the general interest. Threats and undue insistence upon the interest of a single class makes settlement impossible. I believe, as I have hitherto had occasion to say to the Congress, that the industry and life of our people and of the world will suffer irreparable damage if employers and workmen are to go on in a perpetual contest as antagonists. They must, on one plan or another, be effectively associated. Have we not steadiness and self-

possession and business sense enough to work out that result? Undoubtedly we have, and we shall work it out, in the meantime—now and in the days of readjustment and recuperation that are ahead of us—let us resort more and more to frank and intimate counsel and make ourselves a great and triumphant nation by making ourselves a united force in the life of the world. It will not then have looked to us for leadership in vain.

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