

In 1794 Congress Grudgingly Voted To Build Six Ships; This Year It Talks About a Billion Dollar Navy!

By ELMO SCOTT WATSON

(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)
PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S budget recommendation of a billion dollar naval program, the largest peacetime sum ever considered for that purpose, is by its sharp contrast, an interesting commentary on the spirit of economy (perhaps "parsimony" would be the more appropriate word) in which provision for our "first line of defense" was conceived 146 years ago.

For it was in March, 1794, that the first congress approved a bill out of which grew the United States navy, albeit its passage was marked by a long and acrimonious debate during which it was declared that "a navy is the most expensive of all means of defense, and the tyranny of governments consists in the expensiveness of their machinery."

Indicative of the grudging spirit in which this first congressional provision for a navy was made is the fact that the bill won in the house of representatives by a vote of 50 to 39 and in the senate the sentiment was so evenly divided that it took the vote of Vice President John Adams to break a tie and pass the measure.

Despite the success of John Paul Jones and other American sea captains against the superior sea forces of England during the Revolution, one of the first acts of congress, after the fight for liberty ended, was to dispense with the services of the victor of the famous Bon Homme Richard-Serapis battle and begin scrapping such war vessels as we had. In doing this congress was only following the wishes of the citizens of the new nation.

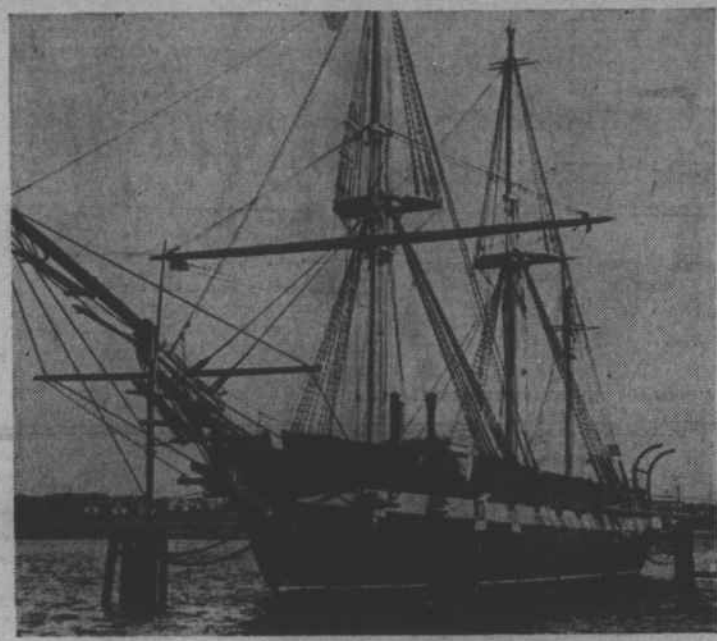
But the United States soon learned a bitter lesson from its naval disarmament program. For centuries the Barbary states in northern Africa—Algeria, Tripoli, Tunis and Morocco—had preyed upon the commerce of European countries and, despite the huge indemnities which France, Spain and the Italian states paid to these pirates, their shipping and their coasts were never safe from destructive raids. England, because of her sea power, had suffered but little from these marauders but her former colonial shipping, now flying a new flag, immediately became the prey of the corsairs.

Ask \$60,000 Ransom.
 In 1785 the Algerian pirates seized two American merchantmen and by the time of Washington's inauguration their 21 officers and men were still held prisoners. The Continental congress had made some efforts in their behalf but these had been contemptuously rejected by the Dey of Algiers who demanded a ransom of nearly \$60,000 for his captives. Soon after Thomas Jefferson was appointed secretary of state in Washington's cabinet, he was called upon to report to congress upon the negotiations which he, as minister to France, had carried on with the Algerines.

In 1790 Jefferson submitted a report, remarking that a solution of the problem "rests with congress to decide between war, tribute and ransom. If war, they will consider how far our own resources shall be called forth, and how far they will enable the Executive to engage, in the forms of the Constitution, the co-operation of other Powers. If tribute or ransom, it will rest with them to limit and provide the amount; and with the Executive, observing the same constitutional forms, to make arrangements for employing it to the best advantage."

But congress was slow to take any action. In the meantime, the Algerian pirates continued their raids on American commerce in the Mediterranean until it was almost destroyed. Finally by 1793, when the corsairs had captured 10 more American ships and imprisoned 105 more American sailors, the federal government decided to do something about it. In January, 1794, a committee of the house of representatives brought in a resolution for building four ships of 44 guns and two of 30 guns each for the protection of our commerce.

Debate on the matter began early in February and immediately it became apparent that sentiment was against creating a federal navy. One of the leading opponents was James Madison of



The Constellation, oldest vessel on the United States navy list, now used as a training ship at the Newport (R. I.) naval training station. In this old frigate Commodore Thomas Truxton won two great victories over superior ships during our "undeclared war" with France at the beginning of the Nineteenth century.

Virginia who believed that peace with the pirates "might be purchased for less money than this armament would cost." Another Virginia representative "feared that we were not a match for the Algerines" and a Georgian thought that "bribery alone could purchase security from them." A New Jersey congressman objected to the "establishment of a fleet, because, when once it had been commenced, there would be no end to it."

Smith of Maryland and Fitzsimmons of Pennsylvania, who championed the resolution, and Fisher Ames of Massachusetts, who supported them, called upon Madison to define his position and he proposed a substitute for the resolution. It was that "money should be employed in such a manner as should be found most effectual for obtaining a peace with the Regency of Algiers; and failing of this, that the sum should be applied to the end of obtaining protection from some of the European powers."

Navies "Foolish Things."
 This suggestion was denounced as an attempt to get other nations to fight our battles for us but Giles of Virginia came to Madison's support with a statement that he "considered navies altogether as very foolish things. An immense quantity of property was spread on the water for no purpose whatever, which might have been employed by land to the best purpose." As it became clear that the two Virginians were taking an isolationist stand which would make the United States a hermit nation, sentiment began to swing in favor of the original resolution.

Despite the effort of opponents of the bill to delay consideration of it, on March 10, 1794, it came up for final passage in the house. Giles made a last effort to prevent its passage. He argued that fitting out a navy would inevitably involve us in wars with all the European powers. Besides that, it would be a perpetual threat to American liberties.

But despite his eloquent plea, the final vote was 50 in favor and 39 against the measure. It had an even harder struggle in the senate for, as has already been stated, it required the vote of the vice president, as presiding officer over that body, to break the deadlock and concur in the action of the house. However, in order to get the measure passed an amendment had to be tacked on that, if peace terms with the Algerines could be arranged, "no farther proceeding be had under this act."

On March 27, 1794, President Washington signed the act providing for the building of six frigates—the President, the United States, the Chesapeake, the Congress, the Constellation, and the Constitution. However, before they could be completed a treaty of peace was concluded with Algiers in September, 1795, under the terms of which we paid Algiers a total of \$642,500 for the ransom of captives, for tribute and for presents to officials. Besides that we agreed to build a frigate for the Algerine navy and also supply naval stores, bringing the total cost of the treaty up to \$992,463.25.

By the terms of the amendment to the navy act, we had to stop building vessels for protection of our commerce. Of the five frigates authorized, work on three, the United States, the Constellation and the Constitution, was already under way and eventually they were completed. The timber for the others was sold, except for the ship which was to

be presented to the Algerines.

Although the navy act of March 27, 1794, was emasculated by the amendment, nevertheless it marked the real beginning of the American navy and, as such, should be a red letter day on our national calendar. In 1793, France and England were at war again and America soon found itself trying desperately to maintain its neutrality in the conflict. Jay's treaty with England in 1794 put an end to most of the disputes between England and America which grew out of the Revolution and which brought us close to another war with Britain. But the next year the British Orders-in-Council against neutral trade with France raised the war fever in this country again and France, angered by Jay's treaty, did all she could to fan that flame.

But eventually France overplayed her hand and when her blackmailing schemes were exposed, American sentiment approved the strong stand taken by the new President, John Adams, against our former ally. Not only did congress agree to complete three of the frigates authorized in 1794 at a cost of \$1,141,160 but on April 20, 1798, it voted \$950,000 for the purchase and equipment of an additional naval force. On April 30 a separate navy department was established (heretofore naval affairs had been administered as a part of the war department) and Benjamin Stoddert was appointed the first secretary of the navy.

A Naval Program.
 By this time America was definitely committed to a naval program and on May 4 President Adams was authorized to procure cannon and build foundries and armories. This act was soon followed by an appropriation of \$80,000 for galleys to be used "as porcupine quills in punishing enemy attacks." With what was already appropriated, the President was authorized to accept, if offered by private citizens, six frigates and six sloops of war, and to pay for them with government bonds.

Meanwhile France had substituted force for Talleyrand's devious diplomacy and it had seized nearly a thousand American ships. As a result, our alliance with that country, formed during our fight for liberty, was abrogated and in June, 1798, congress authorized the President to use our navy to "subdue, seize, and take any armed French vessel which shall be found within the jurisdictional limits of the United States or elsewhere on the high seas." This was an important step because it said, in effect, that if we were to compel an enemy to do us justice we must no longer depend upon harbor galleys but must send ships swift enough to search out the enemy vessels in their own waters and strong enough to overcome them.

The result was our "undeclared war" with France which continued for two and a half years during which time one of the new frigates, the Constellation, won two brilliant victories over French men-of-war and our little navy captured 85 armed French vessels, nearly all privateers and lost only one war vessel, which had been originally a captured French ship. But despite the lessons learned in this conflict it required two more of them—the War with the Barbary Pirates of 1803-04 and the War of 1812 with England—to teach us the necessity of maintaining an adequate naval establishment if we were, as Washington said, to "secure respect" for our flag and to save it "from insult or aggression."

Although the name of Commodore Thomas Truxton is but little known to most Americans, yet two victories which he won during our "undeclared war" with France entitle him to a place alongside John Paul Jones, Stephen Decatur, Isaac Hull, James Lawrence, and Oliver Hazard Perry in our galaxy of naval heroes. Early in 1799 Truxton was placed in command of the Constellation, flagship of a squadron of five vessels which were sent to the West Indies.

At noon on February 9 while the Constellation was cruising off the island of Nevis, a large ship was discovered away to the south. Truxton immediately gave chase and by the middle of the afternoon he had overhauled the fleeing ship and was engaged in a hot battle with her. Within an hour and a quarter the swift and accurate fire of the American gunners had so shattered the enemy ship that her captain struck his colors.

She proved to be the famous French frigate, *La Insurgente*, whose loss was 70 men killed and wounded, whereas the only casualties on the Constellation were three wounded.

The captured French ship was put in charge of a prize crew commanded by Lieutenant (later Commodore) John Rodgers and taken to St. Kitt's. When news of Truxton's victory reached the United States it sent a thrill of joy through the country such as it had not known since the days of John Paul Jones. Truxton was eulogized in the newspapers, sent "congratulatory addresses" by groups of citizens and received from the merchants of Lloyd's coffee house in London a handsome service of plate worth more than \$3,000.

A year later Truxton gave his fellow-countrymen even more cause for rejoicing. Early on the morning of February 1, 1800, while cruising off Guadeloupe seeking the large French frigate, *La Vengeance*, which was believed to be in those waters, he discovered a sail to the south



which he took to be that of an English merchantman. So he ran up the English colors, but, upon receiving no response, gave chase. The stranger began piling on sail and for 15 hours succeeded in keeping out of range of the Constellation's guns. Then the American ship came within hailing distance and Truxton discovered that the stranger was the very ship he was seeking—*La Vengeance*. At eight o'clock in the evening the Americans opened fire and from that time until one o'clock in the morning the two ships carried on a running fight, sometimes coming within pistol shot of each other.

Suddenly the French frigate ceased firing and disappeared so completely in the gloom that Truxton believed she had sunk. But at that moment he discovered that nearly all the Constellation's shrouds had been cut away by the fire of the enemy and that her mainmast was about to fall. Soon afterwards a heavy squall came up and the mast went overboard. Although badly crippled, the French ship managed to reach the safety of a harbor on the coast of South America. There her commander, Captain Pitot, acknowledged that twice during the engagement he had struck his colors but in the gloom of night this signal of surrender was not seen by the Americans.

Once more Truxton's victory over a superior foe—although *La Vengeance* carried 54 guns and 400 men, as compared to the Constellation's 32 guns and 300 men, the French loss was 162 killed and wounded while the Americans' was only 14 killed and 25 wounded—sent his name ringing through the United States. Two months later congress authorized the President to present him with a gold medal "emblematical of the late action" with the thanks of the nation, the second time in our history that such an honor was bestowed upon a naval officer.

Two years later Truxton was ordered to command a squadron destined for service in the Mediterranean. His request for a captain to command his flagship being denied, he declined the service and President Jefferson construed this action as a resignation, which was accepted. Thus the navy lost the services of one of the best officers in its history. Truxton retired to a farm near Philadelphia and died there May 5, 1822.

Lights of New York

by L. L. STEVENSON

Tragedy: When he was a very small boy his talent became apparent. His father, a musician, gave up thoughts of a career and his mother went into business that expensive teachers might be engaged. The lad justified the faith of his parents. His piano became his life. His fingers flew over the keys like butterflies and wonderful melodies came forth. Instead of baseball it was Bach and Brahms, with Brahms his favorite. In his early teens he reached such a point that he appeared in a children's concert with the symphony at Carnegie hall. Then something happened. Gradually it grew more and more difficult for him to walk. His interest in music also waned. Now he's helpless in a hospital. At 19 he has given up hope and ceased to fight. And his father and mother hold that there are worse things than death.

Manhattan Intelligence: Babe Ruth, who recently celebrated his forty-sixth birthday, carefully saved all flashlight bulbs left behind by press photographers. . . He uses them as ammunition for cats that serenade him in the court beneath his windows. . . As he lives 15 floors up, he gets results. . . That was Dorothy Lamour who let out a loud "Pshaw," when she knocked off a heel getting into a cab. . . Bea Wain didn't wear pajamas into a theater the other night. . . It was a slick evening ensemble. . . Mark Warnow, whose orchestra plays hit tunes every Saturday night, likes to listen to hits of yesterday played by hurdy-gurdies. . . There's the street photographer who never tires of snapping Dinah Shore, comely blues singer.

Sights: Dave Elman, who brings an average of five persons a week from here and there to New York for his radio program, holds that the automats are what most out-of-towners want to visit first. They have seen them on the screen and are eager to poke nickels in slots for food. A ride in the subway is attraction No. 2 with Radio City and the Statue of Liberty third and fourth. At least that's his conclusion after steering around some five hundred men, women and children in the last two years.

Source: Read in "What's Your Allergy," by Dr. Laurence Farmer and George Hexter, of a young fellow who suffered with asthma once a week. The chap was a night clerk in a drug store. Thursday was his evening off and he was in the habit of spending it with his best girl. One of Dr. Farmer's colleagues found a clue in the girl's face powder. So she switched to a non-scented talcum and her swain was asthma free seven nights a week. Dr. Farmer, chief of the allergy clinic of Lenox Hill hospital, holds that hay and not goldenrod causes hay fever. An interesting book written in language understandable to a layman.

Service: The other day a woman guest at the Biltmore reported that the bathroom was out of order. A plumber was sent up with his kit of tools and after a thorough inspection could find nothing wrong. So he asked the lady about it. She said everything was wrong, that the tub should be on the other side, the washbowl in a different place and so on indicating changes that would take at least a week and cost several hundred dollars. The plumber reported to Joseph Liggett, assistant manager. Within an hour, the guest had what she wanted. Mr. Liggett simply shifted her to another suite with a bathroom layout similar to the one she had suggested.

End Piece: George Jessell, an aerial commuter between New York and Miami, on the hottest day the Florida city has known this season encountered a movie producer nattily and heavily swathed in a blue overcoat.

"Say," inquired Jessell, "what's the idea of a blue overcoat on a day like this?"

"Because," responded the producer with a shoulder shrug, "I look terrible in brown."
 (Bell Syndicate—WNU Service.)

Opportunities on Farm Held Higher for Bride

INDIANAPOLIS.—If you want opportunities, marry a farm youth, Mrs. Charles W. Sewell, administrative director of the Associated Women of the American Farm Bureau Federation, advises girls in a matrimonial mood.

"Opportunities are greater on the farm than in a small city apartment," she contends. "Individual effort counts a lot more there."

A farmer's wife, she says, has advantages that a professional man's mate does not have.

U. S. Census Bureau Has Sound Reasons For 'Nose-Counting'

(Because the once-in-ten-year census is the government activity that comes most directly home to each of the 132,000,000 of us, the census bureau here explains the vital inquiries to be made. This is one of a series of articles on this subject.)

WHOEVER would bake a cake for Charlie, grow a patch of spinach, or drive his car to Kokomo, must have in mind a number of facts. The bigger the task in hand the greater the need of information. Take, for example, an undertaking like that of governing the richest and most active nation in the world. It is a tougher job than teaching a one-room country school. It calls for great numbers of facts.

At all times the government of the United States faces a multitude of problems, many of them so large that they spread from ocean to ocean. None of them can very well be faced unless the facts are known. Since this is a democracy, its being well governed depends largely on the information which its people possess. The citizen must have the facts that he may properly share in the direction of the course of government.

It is because of this need of facts that the census is taken. If we count the unemployed we will have a measure of the task of finding work for them to do. If we count the children now two years old we can figure how many we will have to take care of in the second grade in 1945. If we count the houses that are showing their age we can estimate the building problem of the near future.

Compares With Inventory
 Whoever runs a business, of course, takes an inventory every once in a while. If he has a grocery store he is likely to have been finding out lately that buckwheat flour is not moving as fast as it used to, and that the sale of tomato juice, on the contrary, has greatly increased. That same fact, since it is true nationally, should be a tip to the farmer that tomatoes are a better crop to grow than buckwheat.

The latest figures the Census Bureau has shown that jobs for lumbermen, coal miners, farm hands, blacksmiths, glass blowers, tailors, locomotive firemen, are on the decrease. But there is increasing work for floorwalkers, undertakers, machinists, cooks, waiters, accountants. Naturally it is important for every young man, at the age of choosing his life work, to know which callings are going into eclipse and which are shining brightly. Similar guidance may be given young women. The figures show that opportunity practically has disappeared for the village milliner and the home dressmaker. On the contrary it is shown that there are growing demands for teachers, trained nurses, beauty parlor workers, stenographers. Obviously young people should give concentrated attention to the figures on occupations that will be produced by the next census.

Population Increase Rate.
 Nothing could be more fundamental as a national fact than the rate at which the population is increasing. When a nation was young, and up to the time of the Civil war, the increase in population between censuses amounted to about 35 per cent. Then, up to 1900, it was above 20 per cent. Between 1920 and 1930 it was 16 per cent. The estimates are that for the 1930s there will be no more than 8 per cent increase. There has been a slump in the rate at which babies were being born. In 1915, 25 babies were being born each year to each group of 1,000 people. In 1937, only 17 babies were coming to each such group. Is this still going on? When will it come to pass that Americans are dying faster than they are being born?

It will not be long, the experts figure. They estimate that we now have 132,000,000. The latest forecast is that we will never have more than 145,000,000. The course of business, the value of real estate, many fundamentals, have in the past been based on a continuing increase in the population. Without it we face a future that will be different.

The change in the position of the farm in the national economy is revolutionary. In 1870 more than half (53 per cent) of the people of the nation who were gainfully employed worked on farms. By 1900 this figure had dropped to 37 per cent, in 1930 to 21 per cent. In the 20 years between 1910 and 1930 the number of hired hands on the farm decreased 40 per cent. Farm workers were driven to the cities. There, however, they found that labor saving machinery was doing away with jobs. What to do about these people out of work? If we had more facts we might work more intelligently toward solutions.

This census will dig deeper than ever before in massing information about employment and unemployment. This is a gathering of facts that reveals the state of the nation as an examination by an auditor shows the condition of a business. A wise citizen will study the facts that he may contribute his modicum of people rule. Careful analysis and study of the facts gathered is highly important to the general well-being of every citizen. The census information is gathered with care and should be studied with care.

Strange Facts

Continuous Growth Versatile Products Mail Must Go On!

Although most creatures have a definite growth limit, others continue to increase in size as long as they live, among them being trees, fish, oysters, clams, shrimps, crabs and lobsters.

Products of the farm have more than 400 nonfood uses in industry. For example, corn is used in making adhesives, potatoes in laundry starch, soybeans in plastics, cattle grease in antifreeze mixtures, grape-seed oil in soaps, buttermilk in paints, and eggs in leather-dressing processes.

In many Japanese bedrooms the compass points are painted on the floor. Few Japanese will sleep with the head pointing north, the position in which they are buried.

Although the transatlantic clipper are built to carry 3,000 pounds of mail, they have transported 4,300 pounds, or 140,000 letters and packages. Incidentally, a clipper must carry all mail given to it by the post office department, even if it has to cancel all passenger bookings.—Collier's.

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