

The Transylvania Times

Published Every Thursday by
TIMES PUBLISHING COMPANY
Brevard, N. C.

THE NEWS Estab. 1896 THE TIMES Estab. 1931
Consolidated 1932

Entered as second class matter, October 29, 1931, at the Post Office in Brevard, N. C., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

ED M. ANDERSON.....Publisher
HENRY HENDERSON.....Ass't. Publisher
MISS ALMA TROWBRIDGE.....Associate
IRA B. ARMFIELD.....Business Manager

SUBSCRIPTION RATES, PER YEAR
In the County, \$1.50 Out of the County, \$2.00

MEMBER OF NATIONAL EDITORIAL ASSOCIATION

PRIZES AWARDED TO THE TIMES
Winner of 1943 Awards for Best Large Non-Daily in North Carolina and Second Best in Nation.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 13, 1944

Those 1944 Farm Goals

The farmers of Transylvania county know now what is expected of them this year to hasten victory. This information was supplied by County Agent Glazener at a meeting in his office Saturday morning.

A hasty calculation shows that around 1,800 additional acres will be required, assuming the same yields as last year. More of certain crops are needed, not so much of others.

We were particularly gratified to note that only seven acres more of Victory Gardens were requested. This, to our mind, is conclusive proof of the success of the program last year. It also represents the triumph of many people over a host of obstacles and is a heartening augury for the coming year. We need scarcely any more acreage, the farm experts say. Let's accept their fiat and make our 1944 gardens better.

The tenor of the discussions at the meeting last Saturday was encouraging. There was note of buoyant optimism in all that was said. The enlarged goals were accepted without quibbling; all seemed concerned about the best methods of attaining them. From this meeting we feel sure there will go out an impulse that will enable the county to reach or exceed the goals assigned.

Congratulations, Ecusta!

The Times offers sincere congratulations to the Ecusta Paper corporation and its nearly 1,100 patriotic employees who for their success with their wartime gardens last year have been given the highest award of the National Victory Gardens institute. The decision, it is also worthy of note, was by unanimous vote of the judges. The award reflects great credit not only on Ecusta people, but upon the county and the entire state.

This is an achievement of huge proportions. Ecusta people were in competition with groups in all parts of the United States. Great stress was laid on planting and cultivating Victory gardens and Americans were exhorted to raise everything they possibly could. It is a safe assumption that all over the country groups of people realized the gravity of the situation—the real possibility that they would want for essential foodstuffs—and did their very best. And Ecusta won! It is a notable triumph which gains additional significance from the fact that the gardens were projected as an aid to the war effort. The award reveals Ecusta people to the nation both as top-notch gardeners and ardent patriots.

The Times applauds the cooperative spirit of the Ecusta management and the untiring efforts of its gardeners. Special credit, we feel, should be given to the garden committee at the plant.

Why Alarm Us?

Wouldn't it be better if Washington would discontinue the practice of alarming us? It would be interesting to study the statements and appeals by our leaders since 1940. Some university man might try for his doctorate by preparing a study on "Government by ignorance, misinformation and alarm," or something like that. We were told that not an American boy would

be sent to fight in a foreign country; then we were alarmed over many things.

Today we are told to prepare our minds and hearts for 600,000 casualties in the next few weeks. Why any one should terrify the people in that manner is incredible. It is worse than the frequent statements of a few months ago that "the people do not realize the seriousness of the situation," or some such twaddle and tomfoolery.

How could the people fail to realize "the seriousness of the situation?" Were not young men leaving home for camp? From stores, offices, factories, farms, schools, colleges—and from the homes—came millions of our youth and manhood, changing from peaceful pursuits to regimentation and drill. Was not every home deeply aware of all this? Were not the enlisted men aware of it? Were not the draftees impressed?

Yes, the people were impressed; we needed to impress those in authority with the seriousness of the situation; we needed to persuade them to quit playing politics and to rise to the heights of personal dedication as would evoke the vast spiritual fervor of America and lead the nation in a crusade for freedom and the opportunity to enjoy a quiet and peaceful life. The saddest feature of this war is the spiritual emptiness of our leadership, a failure to rise to the supreme opportunity of statesmanship. Instead of that we've had wise-cracks, smart-alexisms, political manipulation, the enthronement of selfish groups and petty interests.

O tempora, O mores! (Out of date, of course.)

Under The Lash

Coal Administrator Harold L. Ickes has complained of non-cooperation on the part of some Southern coal mine owners in negotiations to draft a labor-management contract within the framework of the government agreement between Ickes and U. M. W. President John L. Lewis. What is there to cooperate about?

As the news reports indicate, it is simply a matter of a contract within a contract. Mr. Lewis walked into the coal administrator's office and, under the threat of stopping coal production during a critical war emergency, secured an "agreement" to be written into a so-called collective bargaining contract between the government-seized mines and the coal miners. Incidentally, the mine seizure was also carried out through the "persuasion" of Lewis.

Forcing the mine owners to accept a contract to which they were not parties, is the final step in the subjugation of the mines. To apply the word "cooperation" to such a deal is a bitter farce—it is on par with the term "protective custody" which the Germans apply to a subjugated people. The mine owners were born and raised as free thinking, independent American citizens. That they are slow to kneel as slaves under the last of arbitrary force, is certainly not surprising.

An Old Art

Counterfeiting, it would appear, is an art older than conventional money itself. In an article in Carl Goerch's THE STATE on "North Carolina Currency," Edgar Abernethy tells about the "state of Franklin," in 1784 a part of this state but later taken into Tennessee. It lasted but three years and its citizens used pelts of fur-bearing animals for currency.

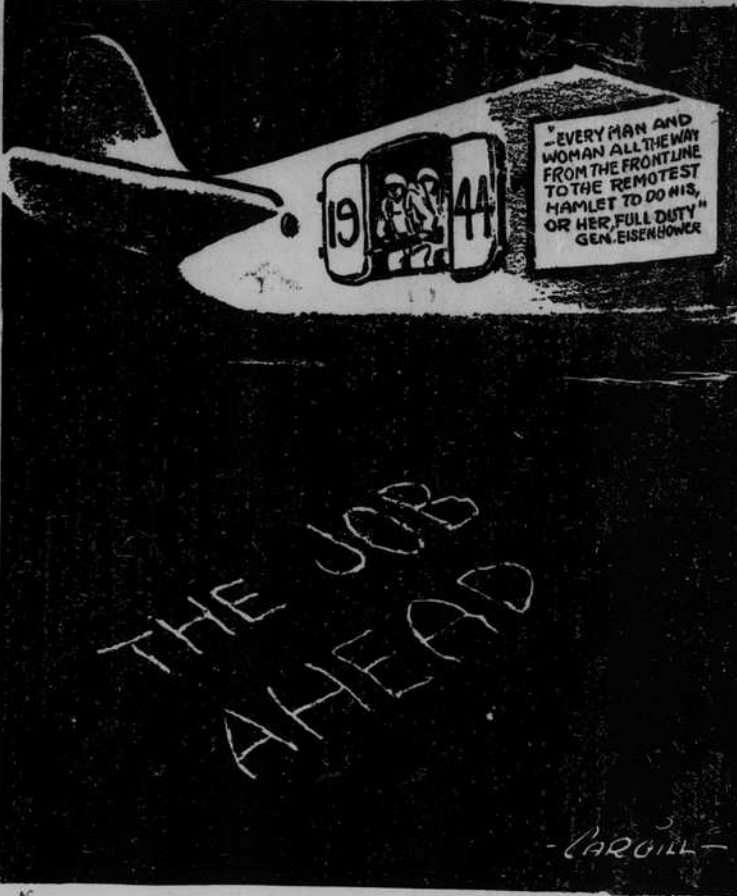
The value of the skins was reckoned in shillings. Opossum skins were worthless, but raccoon skins were valued at three shillings six pence. The hardy citizens of Franklin were an ingenious people and the more unscrupulous among them began to sew raccoon tails to opossum skins. Where the surplus tails came from the author confesses he doesn't know, but he makes a naive guess as to their origin: "Maybe raccoons had two tails in those days."

Earnings Depend On Production

A few facts have come out of the controversy over coal miners' wages, which are startling. The record shows that 453,245,000 tons of bituminous coal were produced during 1940, and that the sale of that coal at the mine was \$861,000,000. In that year, 413,000 men were employed at the coal mines.

From this it is plain that if the whole of the sales value of the coal had been paid to the employees, there was only \$2,000 a year available to each of them. After deduction of operating costs, the amount would be materially lower.

LEAP YEAR!



NEWS BEHIND THE NEWS BY PAUL MALLON

Washington, Jan. 12—No one has risen to question my assertion January 3 that Russia has no war debt such as will burden the economies of Britain and the United States for generations. The reason is more significant than the assertion. Only one man in the United States has ever made a study of Soviet finance, a Chicago university professor, who wrote a pamphlet three or four years ago. He discovered what few international bankers know today, that Russia has a small debt, then estimated at about 40 billion rubles.

My own inquisitiveness on this officially hidden subject, an understanding of which is essential to development of amicable economic and political relations with Russia in post-war, has adduced private estimates from government authorities that the debt is probably 60,000,000,000 rubles today—but no one will estimate how much that is. Real worth of the ruble against the dollar is probably best estimated by the value in the free black market, the one almost officially conducted on the side for the benefit of visiting diplomats and newspapermen. There, the ruble has run 50 to 1 against the dollar, making it worth approximately two cents, although the seldom used banking rate is 5 to 1, and the official diplomatic rate 12 to 1. If you take the black market rate, the Russian debt is \$1,200,000,000, banking rate \$12,000,000,000, while ours is 135 times as much under the first calculation and 14 times as much under the second (Lend-lease is not a financial debt, as it will be repaid in goods).

This debt represents two kinds of bonds sold to her people, one being a lottery prize bond. Orthodox American liberals may shudder to hear much government funds are raised by a terrific sales tax or turn-over tax sometime amounting to 200 percent of the price, and an income tax. Seventy percent of the normal budget has been contributed in taxes by the workers, the other 30 percent by the peasant farmers. Since German invasion unified Russia, the peasants have contributed more, turning any leftover money in to Moscow. One collectivist farm turned in 1,000,000 rubles.

But debt or taxes do not matter much, because the government merely prints more rubles when it needs more money. There is no backing for the currency, only a central government bank. Stalingrad and the great rebuilding jobs were done largely by the local communities without much Moscow assistance. Only the local people knew where they had hidden supplies from the invaders. Trained rebuilding commissariats were sent in to take charge at first, but the local people furnished superior initiative and ability to command supplies and eventually the commissariats faded.

Where the government really controls the economy is through rationing. Prices have greatly increased (no statistics), but prices matter less than whether you can obtain the desired articles (something like the United States, only more so). The government not only does the rationing there, but owns the stores, establishing them in factories largely and allocating goods to each factory store in such a way as to encourage work. They even pay workers in kind,

that is, with goods rather than rubles for especially good work, the only other way to obtain advantageous living articles being through political pull to obtain ration slips, black markets, etc., with which we also are somewhat familiar since the war. The government now is furnishing money to open shops and build homes, ventures in which this government is also less deeply involved.

The whole set-up, while occasionally outwardly similar to ours, is precisely opposite because it is based solely on the directive authority of a federal force, with nothing else behind it (gold, reserves, stock debts, promises to pay, banking system, mortgages, etc.). It is a surface facsimile in a financial way but with only totalitarian authority requiring a belief of its citizenry that it is authentic.

Some authorities here say it required 20 years of successive 5 and 10 year plans to build the productive system destroyed by the Germans, and it will take at least 5 years to rebuild. Harry Hopkins says they will require \$750,000,000 of machines annually from us for this purpose. But when I measure the numbers of guns, tanks and planes they are using now against the Germans, I think it is reasonable to stick to the conclusion that Russian productive capacity now is larger than when the war started.

REASON

A young man had just been drafted and was being examined. The psychiatrist's assistant asked the routine question: "Do you go out with girls?" The draftee shook his head and answered firmly: "No." The assistant called the chief psychiatrist, who repeated the question. Again the draftee answered firmly: "No!" "Why don't you go out with girls?" the doctor asked. "Because," answered the draftee, "my wife won't let me."

When your doctor asks where you prefer to have your prescription filled, say: VARNER'S, because: Filled only by registered pharmacist, as written and at reasonable prices. (Adv't.) tfe



WATCH REPAIRS

Time is important these days. If your watch hasn't been keeping correct time—we'll fix it.

C. R. RIDDLE -AT- Carlton's Jewelry

You're Telling Me By WILLIAM RITT Central Press Writer

IN A WRECKED enemy ship, an Allied force found thousands and thousands of medals. Among other things the Axis leadership has overestimated, is its number of heroes.

A writer suggests that the silent E be abolished from our language. The noisy I could also stand a little curtailment.

F. D. R. and Churchill have conferred seven times. That ought to be a lucky number—for the Allies.

Returning from a tour of a big store, Grandpappy Jenkins complains he couldn't find any collar

buttons. He should have gone up to the furniture department and looked under the bureaus.

An Indianapolis grocer talked a burglar into giving himself up. We ought to let that fellow work on the Germans for a while.

Those Yugoslav patriots may call themselves guerillas but it is they who are making monkeys out of the Nazis.

Mussolini shouldn't feel that he is entirely forgotten. Emperor Haile Selassie would gladly ransom him from the Germans if assured Benito would be delivered to Ethiopia.

WHAT OTHER EDITORS SAY

WE SALUTE MR. STRAUS

The publication of this "Sixtieth Birthday Anniversary" edition of The Echo has been a real labor of love because it concerns and is dedicated to a man whom we all greatly admire and respect and for whom we have profound appreciation and gratitude.

This man is not only "Our Boss" but he is also more or less like a father. He is indeed the father of our industry and he always takes a genuine "fatherly" interest in all employees and in their welfare.

Many are the times that we have written about what he has done for us and now we are delighted to have the opportunity of writing about how the employees are honoring him on his sixtieth birthday.

It has been aptly stated that Mr. Harry H. Straus is one of America's greatest industrial geniuses. He did something that everybody said could not be done, but before he succeeded there were many heart-breaks that would have caused most men to give up. He had the vision, the courage and the determination, however, to make his dream come true.

American cigarette manufacturer

ers were dependent upon cigarette paper from Europe and dark war clouds were gathering over there. This paper in Europe was made from linen rags and linen was made from flax. Flax was grown in this country, but not the right kind. Many experiments were tried and failed, until finally the problem was solved and the most modern of all paper mills was erected here on the Davidson River at Pisgah Forest.

On the very day Hitler marched into Poland, quality cigarette paper was made in our plant, thus establishing a new industry in the United States that made our cigarette manufacturers independent of one more foreign source of supply and assuring them of being able to continue production throughout the war. In addition to that, this new industry created a market for seed flax fibre that the farmers of two large western states had been paying money to get rid of.

So on his sixtieth anniversary, we salute a real industrial genius. We salute also an outstanding executive, a dynamic personality, and a real man—a man who has not lost the common touch. We salute a man young in mind and spirit; a man full of energy and enthusiasm and a man who is a great American and who believes in progress and in the American way of life.

Happy birthday, to you, Mr. Straus and many, many more of them!—The Echo.

TRY TIMES WANT ADS

OPA

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One large group of shoes that we are going to sell

FROM

Monday, Jan. 17

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These shoes formerly sold from \$3.98 to \$6.95. During the period indicated we are offering them at—

\$2.98

WHILE THEY LAST

SCHULMANS

"One Week Nearer To Victory"