Proposed Income Tax Boost Hits Middle Class Hardest

By CHARLES P. STEWART
Central Press Columnist

Washington, April 24.—Income taxation was heavy enough to make the average individual sore severely when he handed in his last March return and forked over his check. True he could do it in quarterly installments, but that simply was to prolong the agony.

Gosh, though, it wasn't a circumstance in comparison with what next year's experience is going to be, if congress follows Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau's suggestion to raise rates by about 30 per cent.

Henry Morgenthau

The boost will mainly sock just fair-to-middling incomes, too.

Cracking big guys already pay at such figures that their recipients will tend to quit making any more money. What'll be their inducement to make any more, only to surrender it to Uncle Sam? They'll prefer to live on their capital instead. It'll be an application of the well-known economic law of diminishing returns.

Exemptions will be lowered, in order to catch a large class of small income earners who, hitherto, have not been taxed at all.

Still, a small income receiver generally hasn't enough style to maintain in his family's way of living. He'll be peeved, but he'll holler, but he can't organize a bit and stand the gaff. It's the bird in the merely comfortable class who'll have a hell of a time. His household has to scrimp, and with the Joneses! And he literally can't trim his expenses much. He'll have to dip into his savings or, if he hasn't got any, run into the hole.

Middle Class Bears Load

It didn't take any phenomenal income to be nailed $100 last March. Next March it promises to be $150. Maybe it will be more than that. The upper brackets being squeezed pretty close to the limit now, while the very low bracketers' contributions will be relatively small. If so, the middle bracketers will have to bear the bulk of the load of the 30 per cent increase.

Secretary Morgenthau also proposes various excise taxes—revenue is ups on all sorts of stuff. Consumers naturally will have to foot the bill for that. Well, the head of a family can more or less discount such levies, by yowling like fury to his wife and children to buy less. It may put 'em (and him) on short rations, but theoretically it can be done. He can't economize a cent's worth on an income tax collector's requisition, though.

All hands recognize that Secretary Morgenthau's sound in his argument that it's imperative for us to meet current national expenditures by current taxation, as far as we can. If we run indefinitely into debt, as Henry truthfully remarks, we'll run [illegible] inflation. That is, our [illegible] get to be worthless and less.

Germany did it during the last war, and its currency got to be so valueless that it had to be abandoned and a new kind adopted.

I saw a more pronounced case of it, though, in Paraguay, while living in the little republic's neighborhood some years ago. Just reflecting now recalls conflict in the United States, the Paraguayans, under President Lopez, got into fracas with Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay, all at once. They were outnumbered almost 20 to 1, but they fought, on credit, for four years. I spy time in South America until it is half a century later, they haven't any money except counterfeit, and changes in government are almost as frequent as changes in the moon.

Speaking of Age Limits.

And, speaking of Paraguay:

There's talk in congress of cutting down the conscription age from 21 to 18, and perhaps extending it from 45 or 50, but it's unlikely to go above 21 to 35. There are critics, however, who contend that a kid of 18 is too young.

Now to get back to Paraguay:

President Lopez's conscription limits, in the war between Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay combined, were 12 to 70.

And, between these two ages, Paraguay's able population practically was exterminated. President Lopez was indicted. He was killed, too. As long afterward as my day in the vicinity Paraguay hadn't any old men. A total generation was wiped out in that war.

Churchill Delays Talk

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I have been very cautious to make sure whether I said so. I did say, I should not be treating the house with any disrespect when I suggest that debate on the matter should be postponed until a later occasion.

"If I could say anything helpful on the matter in the interval, not of course in the controversial aspect, I feel the house would perhaps give me this opportunity."

Truths must be used to become true, for truths are meant to be used and not rules of action; and

Stocks Climb Hesitantly

New York, April 24.—(AP)—Climbing stocks of Wednesday frequently halted to catch their breath in today's market.

The list got off to a hesitant start and mixed prices ruled until near the fourth hour when carrier shares led a mild revival. Volume was under that of the day before.

Quotations at 2 p. m.:

American Radiator	6 3-8
American Telephone	155 1-2
American Tobacco B	67 3-4
Anaconda	23 7-8
Atlantic Coast Line	19 5-8
Bendix Aviation	33 5-8
Bethlehem Steel	71
Chrysler	59
Columbia Gas & Elec Co	2 3-4
Commercial Solvents	9 7-8
Consolidated Oil Co	5 3-8
Curtiss Wright	7 3-4
DuPont	141
Electric Power Light	1 7-8
General Electric	30
General Motors	38 1-2
Liggett & Myers B	83 7-8
Montgomery Ward & Co	33 3-4
Reynolds Tobacco B	30 1-8
Southern Railway	13
Standard Oil Co N J	35 3-8
U S Steel	52 3-4

Johnson Reports Improved Prison Conditions During His Four-Year Regime

(Continued From Page One)

the present time the system is running absolutely on a normal basis."

The report shows that the prison population of North Carolina is still increasing constantly, with every year of the last seven showing a higher average number of prisoners confined in all prison units than the year before it.

The Johnson statistics cover the fiscal years between 1933-34 and 1939-40 and reveal an increase in average number of prisoners from 7,-431 to 9,750—a jump of 2,100, or about 27 1-2 per cent. In order, figures for the intervening years were: 8,111; 8,575; 8,922; 9,128; and 9,553.

Per capita daily cost of maintaining the prison population rose from 48.58 cents in 1933-34 to a peak of 73.42 cents in 1936-7 and has since fluctuated within rather narrow limits. The 1939-40 figure was 70.35 cents.

Previous to 1939-40 there was a deficit in maintenance (as figured against labor supplied for highway work) in every year except 1935-36 (surplus of $2,690.29) which ran as high as $273,645.56 in 1937-38. There was a $19,217.95 surplus for 1939-40 and Director Johnson estimated there will be "small profit" at the end of 1940-41, "even though we had approximately $100,000 loss at the Caledonia Farm caused by flood, in addition to loss of the dyke."

Escapes and Recaptures.

The report shows that there has been a tremendous decrease in the number of escapes, until the 1939-40 year showed but 298 against the 887 recorded for 1934-35.

Through March 31, 1941 there were but 189 escapes, indicating that this year will likely be better even than last year's low figures.

Over the period the figures on escapes and recaptures were: 1933-34, 528 and 656; 1934-35, 887 and 740; 1935-36, 523 and 535; 1936-37, 349 and 362; 1937-38, 351 and 379; 1938-39, 341 and 407; 1939-40, 298 and 317; 1940-March 31, 1941, 189 and 219.

It is noticeable that in every year since 1934-35 recaptures have exceeded escapes; indicating that officers are not only nabbing those who currently make their getaway but are active in retaking those who have been at liberty for a year or more.

Identification.

All records of the prison bureau of identification have been reclassified with last four years and the practice of employing prisoners as assistants (a practice which made the unit, says the report, "an information bureau for prisoners") has been abandoned.

"At the present time we have approximately 160,000 finger print cards on file, together with descriptions of prisoners' records, which are invaluable to the parole commission and to prosecuting officers of this state."

Education.

Since 1937 a full-time education director has been employed. During the year ended June 30, 1940, this director organized and conducted 28 schools in 38 prison units of the state prison system.

For these schools the WPA adult education program supplied 62 teachers. Enrollment in the prison school reached 1,048 in all; and approximately 100 prisoners are now taking courses in vocational training. Many others probably would take such courses were it not for their lack of "primary" education and the resultant necessity for overcoming their illiteracy.

Along with educational activities a recreational program has been worked out, including such sports as baseball, volley ball, football, soft ball, tennis, table tennis, horseshoe pitching, boxing and wrestling.

Camps, Canning, etc.

In the last three and a half years 32 new prison camps have been constructed in addition to numerous outbuildings.

There should be approximately ten more camps built, Director Johnson recommended, to replace old ones.

Of the camps 28 have been given landscape treatment for the grounds, and "we believe our camp grounds to be the prettiest grounds in the

A refrigeration unit has been installed in practically every prison camp, which "I believe is one of the greatest additions ever made to any camp," Johnson said.

Feeding the prisoners has been made easier by a canning program which has resulted in putting up a greater volume of vegetables and fruits every year.

Figures (in No. 10 cans) for fruits and vegetables are: 1934—51,851; 1935—60,057; 1936—86,550; 1937—[illegible]; 1938—260,167; and 1940—356,831.

Industries have not been in operation long enough for a financial statement, Johnson reported, "however, I am satisfied that they will prove very profitable to the prison department and to the state of North Carolina. They are doing a lot toward rehabilitation of prisoners as they give employment to many for whom we would not otherwise have employment."

Prisoners and Personnel.

I was convinced a long time ago that if a prisoner were given plenty of good, wholesome food, sanitary living conditions, a good bed to sleep on and plenty of work, he was easily controlled and much better satisfied. We are trying to do this and find it has paid dividends. The attitude of most of our prisoners are better than they have ever been.

"During the four years we have increased the average salary of our employees but I am still in the opinion that those in the lower brackets should receive substantial increases in salaries, especially our guards and stewards."

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