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MR. FORD'S NITRATE PLAN OPPOSED BY POWER INTERESTS.

Wall Street Said to Want Control of Muscle Shoals—Manufacturer to Testify on Cutting Ironton Rail Rates.

Washington, D. C.—Action taken by farm organizations in Washington makes it certain that an opportunity will be accorded Henry Ford, Detroit automobile manufacturer and railroad operator, to appear before a committee of Congress to set forth, for the benefit of a legislature immersed and entangled in railroad matters, how he took hold of one of the most run-down railway lines in the country and was able to reduce rates and at the same time increase the wages of his employees.

The farmers, including the American Farm Bureau Federation, the most powerful agricultural body in America, have selected this achievement by Mr. Ford as the text for their demand that the other railroads of the country should show cause why they are not able to reduce rates but must needs have a government subsidy to enable them to carry on.

Anonymous Attacks.

Mr. Ford's railroad activities and his recent offer to take off the hands of the government the nitrate plant at Muscle Shoals, Alabama, have made Mr. Ford the target for daily attacks from interests that are working in secret, refuse to disclose their identity, but which flood the offices of members of Congress and the newspaper offices with literature detracting from Mr. Ford's reputation. This literature is usually sent by first-class mail and is always anonymous.

These anonymous bulletins from the secret forces in the background concentrate on two subjects:

1.—They seek to show that the offer Mr. Ford has made to take over Muscle Shoals is disadvantageous to the government.

2.—They attempt to show that his handling of the Detroit-Toledo and Ironton Railroad affords no helpful commentary on the general railroad situation and that the action of the management in reducing rates and increasing wages simultaneously reflects no efficiency but only the extent to which the owner was able to give it heavy freight movement out of his own large business.

The probability is that Mr. Ford will testify before the Commission on Agricultural Inquiry. It is a liberal and progressive committee, a fact which raises the hope that an effort will be made to compel the secret influences now carrying on a propaganda campaign to come forward and disclose their identity.

Wall Street Concerned.

The committee, it is believed here, will not have far to seek to get at the real facts in this matter of national importance. Mr. Ford is now the only great money power in America that is absolutely independent of the Wall Street interests. Mr. Ford is outside the range of the New York bank. So long as he manufactured "Ford cars" it did not matter so much, but now he is about to invade realms which they have hitherto dominated, namely, the railroads and the electric power monopolies, the situation is different. In branching out into railroad management and in proposing to become a great producer of electric power, Mr. Ford, it will be readily seen, is striking at what are perhaps the two most potential interests in Wall Street. Thereby hangs the tale, the propaganda and the anonymous literature.

For days after Mr. Ford's offer for Muscle Shoals was received the War Department took no action. The expectation was that some interests, the "power group," perhaps, in Wall Street, would make an offer, but none worth considering came. The reason was that while the New York interests had a multitude of investors to consider, Mr. Ford had only himself to convince of the feasibility of the project and he was by himself able to launch on what these interests apparently considered a great industrial gamble.

Rival of Niagara.

But this is not all. These interests regard the Detroit manufacturer as something of an industrial iconoclast. Efforts to bring him into conformity, to apply the financial whip, failed. Under his management, Muscle Shoals, which is second only to Niagara in water power potentiality, might prove a new beginning for the development of water power and water transportation which might well convert into junk billions of dol-

lars worth of steam transportation equipment. The fact that it is "Henry Ford" who seeks to get control of Muscle Shoals is what has provoked the antagonism of the established interests.

There are three features of Mr. Ford's offer that serve to balance in some degree the great investment which the government would still have in the property if the offer were accepted. First, he pledges himself to produce fertilizer for the farmer at a maximum profit of 8 per cent, and practically to turn over the direction of this feature of the plant's operation to a committee of farmers' representatives. Second, he promises to keep one large nitrate plant in readiness for production of materials for manufacture of explosives in case of an emergency. Third, the completion of the project would open the Tennessee River, which winds for many miles through Alabama, Tennessee and Kentucky, to navigation.

The fertilizer proposal has aroused the keen interest of the farmers, who at present constitute the most powerful political group in Washington. It is certain that they will not permit the project to die and that they will insist that any other plan for its development shall be at least as favorable in respect to fertilizer production as is that of Mr. Ford.

The practical situation with which the government is now faced has the alternatives either of making some deal with Mr. Ford, securing a better offer from some other private interest, or going ahead with the expenditure of the \$30,000,000 or more money required to complete the works on its own account. The Wall Street financial interests, and the electric power and aluminum producing interests more specifically, are bitterly opposed to the acceptance of Mr. Ford's offer, but they have not yet been able to make a counter proposal which is more favorable to the government and the agriculturists.

Mr. Ford to Testify.

Mr. Ford's activities in the railroad business strike even more directly at the older established financial group. The railroads are at present seeking an advance of \$600,000,000 from the government, and they are contesting every proposal for reduction in freight rates. Even at the present high rates they are unable, they declare, to keep going without a government subsidy. In the face of this situation Mr. Ford has taken one of the weakest and most broken-down railroads and made it pay. He has increased wages above the general railroad level and he is now asking a 20 per cent decrease in freight rates.

Whether it is by one of the regular interstate commerce committees or by the special agricultural commission, which is investigating the transportation situation together with other causes of agricultural depression, it is a practical certainty that Mr. Ford will be called on to explain to Congress just how he has brought about the reduction. His testimony will play an important part in the debate on the \$500,000,000 railroad bill, which will come soon after Congress reconvenes. As in the case of his Muscle Shoals offer, Mr. Ford's railroad activities have played into the hands of the farmers by bolstering their demand for decreased freight rates as a basis for any further payments by the government to the railroads.

Negro Nominated for Governor of Virginia.

Richmond, Va., Sept. 7.—John Mitchell, Jr., president of a negro bank here, was nominated as a candidate for governor by the "Lilly Black" wing of the Republican party at its convention here last night.

A resolution was adopted authorizing J. B. Pollard, state chairman of the "Lilly Black" faction, to arrange with leaders of negro Republicans in other states to call a national conference to be held in Washington to protest against the "Lilly Whiteism" in Republican politics, and to determine what shall be the future relations of the negro voters of the county toward the national Republican organization, and the Harding administration.

Tunnels to Connect Banks

Chicago, Ill.—Tunnels connecting downtown banks with the federal reserve bank are being planned here, it was announced yesterday. The first to be constructed will connect the Illinois Trust and Savings, the Merchants Loan and Trust, and Corn Exchange National Bank, it was said. Bank messengers will use these tunnels instead of carrying funds through the streets.

SURPLUS CORN TO BE FED ON FARMS

Iowa Farmers See Prospect of Larger Profits in This Method Than by Selling at a Price Close to Cost of Production.

Ames, Iowa.—Iowa farmers are counting on swine and beef cattle to make it possible for them to dispose of this year's corn crop, which will take its place as the third or fourth largest crop ever grown in the State, at a price which will be near, and in some cases slightly above, the cost of production.

This policy means, according to experts at Iowa State College, that in all probability less than one-fifth of the yield, which is estimated at about 400,000,000 bushels, will be sold out of the State. With corn selling at 40 cents a bushel on the farm, farmers believe that they can make more from their crop by holding it and feeding it to hogs and cattle, which will bring from \$8 to \$10 a hundred pounds. Further more, the freight rates on corn are a much greater factor than on live stock.

That the big corn crop is a doubtful asset, as far as the producer is concerned, is shown, experts say, by the fact that the cost of producing this corn was considerably in excess of its present market value. A survey of corn production costs made last winter by the farm management department at Iowa State College found the average corn production cost in two typical counties to be 91 and 86 cents per bushel. The cost this year, it is said, was only slightly less. On this basis corn that sells at 40 cents pays only half the cost of production.

Agricultural leaders who are advising farmers to hold their corn for feeding purposes believe that corn prices will fall still lower, perhaps as low as 25 or 30 cents a bushel in December. They believe that the future of the live-stock market is more promising, due to the fact that the number of animals in the state has decreased during the last two years. There are 2,000,000 fewer hogs in the corn belt than last year, and 10,000,000 fewer than two years ago. On the other hand, several hundred thousand bushels of corn have been held over from last year. These facts, it is said, will affect the demand for these products in favor of live stock and at the expense of corn.

In spite of persistent rumors that farmers were planning to use corn for fuel this winter, agricultural authorities here doubt that this will be done to any considerable extent. They point out that even with corn at the present price, it is not economical as a fuel. Tests conducted at the college show that coal which is selling now at \$10 a ton would have to sell at more than \$20 before it would pay to replace it with corn.

English Owners Cut American Rentals.

Lincoln, Ill.—Abatement of 20 per cent of this year's cash rentals for lands of the Scully estate, owned by the Scully family of England, and totaling 210,000 acres in Illinois, Missouri, Kansas and Nebraska, was announced here yesterday by Trapp & Fox, general managers of the property. Over 31,000 acres of the Scully land lies in Lagon County alone, and is tented by 200 farmers.

The estate has been in the family for generations and passed into the hands of two brothers upon the death of their father several years ago. Thomas Scully owns the Illinois and Nebraska lands, while his brother, Fred, owns the acreage in Missouri and Kansas. Similar policies govern all the properties.

Following an uprising of Scully tenants against increased rents several years ago, legislative investigations of "absentee landlordism" were started, but resulted in affecting none of the Scully holdings.

Wage Rates Recommended.

Boston, Mass.—Rates of wages recommended by the wage board of the Massachusetts Minimum Wage Commission for women and girls employed in the manufacture of minor lines of confectionery and food preparations have been provisionally approved by the commission and a public hearing called for September 24. The recommendations are: For those 16 years of age and over with three months' experience, not less than \$12 a week; for beginners 16 years of age and over, not less than \$10 a week; for those under 16 with nine months' experience, not less than \$9 a week; for beginners under 16, not less than \$8.

250 LIVES LOST IN FLOOD

Cloudburst Sent the San Antonio and Other Streams Ragging Through City in Early Hours of Saturday Morning.

San Antonio, Tex., Sept. 10.—With the known list of dead standing at 40 this afternoon, police officials still believe an estimate of 250 lives lost as a result of the disastrous flood which struck this city early Saturday morning to be a conservative one. No attempt has been made to estimate the property damage, but it is certain to run into millions of dollars.

Because of the continued swollen condition of the three streams which caused the flood, the work of recovering the bodies is progressing slowly. Great piles of driftwood which have lodged in trees and against bridges, when removed, it is feared, will reveal additional dead. Many bodies also are believed to have floated down stream and may never be accounted for.

Relief work and sanitary precautions are well under way. A thoroughly organized relief committee has begun caring for flood victims and health officers are engaged in a rigid clean-up of the city.

Worst in City's History.

Reports coming from outlying sections confirm the fear that the flood is the worst in the city's history. Streets in some instances have been swept clean—almost their entire length. Houses in the southern portion of the city were lifted from their foundations and piled one upon another, or in some cases driven entirely through adjoining buildings. Dead animals line the banks of the streams.

The flood waters from the San Antonio river from Alazan creek and small tributaries inundated an area approximately two miles long by one-half mile wide, including the heart of the business section and a portion of the residence section along River avenue and adjacent streets as well as the thickly populated west side, where today thousands of Mexicans are homeless and the dead not yet counted.

These were the things visible to the eye when day dawned, cloudy and gloomy and threatening. But what occurred in the blackness of the night when scores of women, children and men met death in the oil-coated waters of the flood, as houses collapsed, bridges were swept out, trees and electric light and telephone poles crashed is something that will never be known in detail. Countless acts of heroism are current, as civilians and soldiers braved the current and floating debris, to carry women and children to places of safety.

Heroic Acts and Tragedies.

Thousands of families along the river were rescued before daybreak by men who worked the long hours, often neck-deep in water, risking their lives almost every minute of that time to save others.

And in keeping with such heroic acts were the tragedies. Babies were swept from other arms and lost, mothers were carried away and the children rescued. Fathers were lost saving little ones, and today there are widows and orphans in San Antonio who shudder at the thought of last night.

San Antonio was caught without warning. The rain which caused the flood fell after 3 o'clock Friday evening in the hills along the Olmos creek.

The electric display accompanying the storm was the most vivid ever seen here as lightning flashed almost continually and the thunder boomed and reverberated through the heavens. While torrents of rain were still falling in the streets of San Antonio and the residents, unable to get out because of the downpour, went early to bed, a roar was heard, subdued, but ominous as the flood waters broke upon the town.

"It was impossible to stand on your feet against the swift current," said one man, who escaped from his home before the force of the flood struck. "I got away early as the first waters rose, and even then I was compelled to cling to buildings, trees, fences and wreckage to get out. I could not stand upright against the water. When the crest came a few minutes later, I do not believe any human being could have withstood it."

Large houses were swept about in the flood's crest as though they were paper boxes.

Somewhere in every person's heart a spirit of fairness is tucked away. The trouble is that too many people have forgotten how to unstick it.

MINERS NOT ALIEN IN WEST VIRGINIA.

Returned Investigator Says That Mountaineers Have Entire Confidence in Government—Peace Will Hold Till Spring.

Washington, D. C., Sept. 10.—There will probably be no more trouble in the West Virginia mining district until next April, it was said by an investigator who has just returned from that State, who has been there during the disturbances and who is exceptionally well informed on conditions there, which are difficult for the outsider to understand.

The miners of West Virginia are not an alien element. It is said that a larger proportion of them could qualify for membership in the Sons of the American Revolution than in any large American city and probably a larger percentage than in Lexington and Concord. They have their own code and they have, not only from choice held apart from the march of progress in the United States, but they have of necessity, been thrown back on themselves by the attitude of the operators who have so long dominated them.

One of the characteristics which stood out with great vividness to the visitor to West Virginia during the last week was the distrust of the state or county official contrasted with the almost childlike confidence in the federal authorities. There was never for a moment any thought of resisting the troops ordered to the scene of the alleged insurrection or of disobedience to Brig.-Gen. H. H. Bandholtz or to any one representing the government at Washington. As soon as it was known that the federal government was in charge the "insurrection" faded away, the armed miners returned to their homes and they are not at work.

Cause of Distrust.

What is the reason for the distrust of the state and county officers of all degrees? One explanation is to be found in incidents such as that which happened after the first visit of General Bandholtz, when the miners were dispersing in accordance with his request and that of local union leaders. State constables fired upon miners with fatal results and, as soon as this was known, excitement blazed among the hills and the men started again on their hostile march. Another happening was that of the arrest of 123 men, who were thrust into jail with no adequate charges against them, released and again arrested and put into jail, whereupon the miners started to deliver them.

Spokesmen for the operators allege that the sheriffs, constables and other local officers are not "thugs," as the miners term them, in the pay of the operators. Literally, that may be the truth, but the best information obtainable from unprejudiced outsiders who have studied the situation is that, indirectly, the mine operators, the railroads, bankers and manufacturers with whom they are associated control all the officials of the state and county.

The charge has been made that candidates are chosen and elected through the money and influence of this clique, and the fact that an officer's commission bears a state or county seal is no warrant of his independence of the operators' domination.

Responsibility for Disorder.

In seeking an unbiased opinion on the responsibility of the efforts to unionize the mines for recent and past disturbances and disorder, it is almost impossible to get a clear-cut statement placing the blame, or even to obtain an adequate explanation. The operators have declared flatly that the unions endeavored to "force" Logan miners to unionize against their will. The answer to that is that if the Logan miners were unwilling to consider unionization, why did the operators make such stupendous efforts to prevent the union men from finding out what the Logan miners wanted to do?

To the extent that the West Virginia miners have passed the boundary of peaceably trying to bring unionization they are guilty; where they have been forcibly prevented, the operators are responsible for the results. Where the miners do not want to be unionized, as in certain counties in Pennsylvania, the Mine Workers of America have labored in vain and have had to give up the attempt. In West Virginia, it is claimed, there will be no cessation from efforts to turn the message through until it is turned down by the men themselves.

When it is said that there will be only temporary peace, it means that the men have had their fling for the time being, the federal government's participation has appeased them and they will probably wait until spring before undertaking a new campaign. Meanwhile, will the government seek a remedy which may preclude a fresh outbreak? It has been suggested that a commission containing representatives of the operators and miners, railroads, manufacturers and picnic citizens, supposed to represent the general public, with no desire except the preservation of order and the insurance of a fair deal all around, should be appointed to study the whole subject of coal production and to make recommendations, beginning with the West Virginia fields.

BACK DEBTS OF FARMER FAST BEING TAKEN UP

New Crop Now Being Marketed and Economy on the Farm Will Put Planter on His Feet.

Kinston, Sept. 10.—Hundreds of thousands of dollars in back debts, created for the most part after last fall's tobacco disaster, will be "taken up" by farmers in the eastern "wood" belt this fall, according to leading planters and "time" merchants here. The sum may mount into the millions. Profit on the new crop now being marketed and increased economy on the farm, is responsible for the general determination to "straighten up."

The "time men" have been consistently considerate of the embarrassed farmers, according to many of the latter. They will continue to "stick to them" until matters have improved, according to the merchants. This confidence in the had-hit farmer is universal.

The situation is generally agreed to have improved as the result of a number of things. The farming population this year reduced its fertilizer bills, worked longer hours to curtail expenditures for labor, and grew more corn and foodstuffs, while it has given more attention than ever before to the home meat supply. It has cut its expenditures for luxuries and automobiles. From present prospects both cotton and tobacco will bring reasonable profits. Many farmers, according to observers here, will pay off last year's indebtedness this fall. Numbers who plunged in land and other investments will not be able to "dig out" in a single season, however.

TOBACCO AVERAGE \$13.84 ON FAIRMONT'S MARKET

Season Ends, With Total of 6,470,321 Pounds—Slightly Less Than Last Year's Total.

Fairmont, Sept. 10.—Tobacco sales here this season totaled 6,470,321 pounds, for a total amount of \$895,815.68, an average of \$13.84 per hundred. The season closed yesterday.

Last season this market sold 6,941,576 pounds for \$1,785,378.06 an average of \$25.72 per hundred pounds. During the month of July this market sold 1,027,139 pounds for \$84,061.17. During the month of August 4,866,631 pounds of the weed were sold for \$776,363.44.

The week of August 8 to 12, inclusive, was the greatest week during the market for pounds and dollars, 1,330,560 pounds being sold for \$285,781.44. Three days of this week the sales continued from 9 a. m. until 5 p. m. and left one house unsold.

The biggest day during the season was August 8, when the market sold 365,297 pounds for \$97,566.29, an average of \$26.71. Only two houses were sold and the other house had over 150,000 pounds on the floor.

25 to 30 People Drowned When Bridge Collapses

Chester, Pa., Sept. 10.—Between 25 and 30 persons were drowned or crushed to death and more than a score of others injured here tonight when the footpath of the Third street bridge over Chester river collapsed. The dead and injured were part of a crowd of approximately 75 persons that had gathered on the structure to watch the efforts of police in grappling for the body of a five-year-old boy who was drowned but a half hour before. Many of the dead are women and children.

The bridge was an old-fashioned structure 90 feet long and cleared the water by about 20 feet. It carried two trolley tracks across the stream and had one footpath. The river is about 15 feet deep where the accident occurred.