

## LOOKING AT WASHINGTON

By Hugo S. Sims, Washington Correspondent

### Rail Unions Seek Increase Ask 30 Per Cent Raise. Hearings Now Underway.

The demand of five railroad unions for a wage increase of thirty per cent for 400,000 railroad employees is being considered by an emergency board of the National Railway Panel, now holding sessions in New York.

The unions ask that all existing basic daily wage rates be increased thirty per cent., with the minimum increase of \$3 on the minimum day.

The men are represented by Edward J. Flynn, former chairman of the National Democratic Committee, who says that they have no thought of a strike, preferring to follow the American way by relying upon agencies set up to adjust their differences with the carriers.

The contention of the unions is that there has been a lag in equitable readjustments and railroad men have not received increases "even up to those provided by the so-called 'Little Steel formula.'" Moreover, increasingly hard work and longer hours, brought about by the movement of troops and war materials are "almost beyond the limits of human endurance."

The unions make much of the fact that the railroads are enjoying "luscious times and are making greater profits than ever before in their history." They point out that payments of large dividends on railroad securities will probably continue and that the piling up of great profits is just as inflationary as increased wages.

The railroads, through their spokesman, Jacob Aronson, say that the demand of the unions is "neither warranted nor permissible." Admitting that 1942 was a prosperous year and that 1943 will be equally good, the carriers point out that they are using recent profits to reduce bonded and other indebtedness.

The railroads, through their spokesman, now say that employees now are paid "very substantially above the average of other industrial workers."

In addition, the railroads will emerge from the war with greater deferred maintenance expenses than ever before in history and it will be necessary to use large sums of money to catch up on maintenance that is being skipped now because the railroads cannot secure the necessary materials.

Mr. Aronson points out that there are many variations of wage rates paid to railroad men and gives average hourly rates as follows: Engineers, \$1.46; flagmen, \$1.32; conductors, \$1.26; firemen, \$1.12, and brakemen, \$1.08.

The Board conducting the hearing, which is expected to last several weeks, includes: Justice Walter P. Stacey, of the North Carolina Supreme Court, presiding, and Professor I. L. Sharkman, of the University of Michigan, and Frank Swacker, New York attorney.

Invasion A Vast Undertaking Transportation A Problem The invasion of the Continent of

Europe is not a picnic expedition and should not be confused with the relatively simple transportation of troops and supplies to France during the last war.

Conditions are far different from those that existed when the first A. E. F. landed in a friendly France, where many of the supplies that they required were on hand. In this war, the invaders, when they land, will have to carry everything they need with them.

Some idea of the extent of this task is given by Raymond Daniell, who estimates that the invasion of Europe will coincide with a Russian offensive and perhaps an expedition from England against the Channel ports. He believes that at least 1,500,000 men will be required.

To move 1,500,000 soldiers will require 500 to 600 trains for personnel, 200 freight trains for medical supplies, food and other impediments.

It will take 1,890,000 packing cases for shipment of equipment and 121,600 ten-ton trucks to move them. If three-ton trucks are used 416,500 will be required. At the dockside it will be necessary to have approximately 700 10,000-ton ships.

The mere recital of these figures indicates the tremendous problem and explains why it will require some time to assemble the men, accumulate the supplies and provide the necessary transportation.

Every detail of the flow of men, munitions and supplies across the water must be worked out many weeks before the undertaking begins and, regardless of any interference, there must be no let-up in the movement of men and materials.

### Warns Axis About Gas

The fact that President Roosevelt again warns the Axis powers that the use of gas will result in stern retaliation by the United Nations indicates some definite information that the Axis is expected to use gas.

The Nazis and their stooges are not above the use of gas, if they have the idea that it will give them an advantage. They have not hesitated to adopt other forms of ruthless warfare and the world hears no pleas for humane warfare until the weapon is turned against the Axis.

It is quite possible that the Axis, unable to retaliate against the United Nations for their heavy aerial assault will, in desperation, try the use of gas on a large scale. If they do, they should be given the same lesson that the R. A. F. and the U. S. Air Force is dishing out in return for the bombing of helpless cities in the early days of the war.

### U. S. Builds War Industry. Will We Give Plants Away?

The United States Government has invested many millions of dollars in the construction of plants to produce supplies necessary for the successful prosecution of the war.

The average American might keep these plants in mind, and, if interested, write his Congressman to discover what will happen to the plants when the war ends.

There will be a determined drive,

by selfish interests, to compel the Government to "get out of business" immediately after hostilities end. The main idea in the minds of the gentlemen urging this policy will be to acquire some Government property at a cheap price.

It is not in the interest of the public generally that the Government be forced to sacrifice its investments. The slogan, "Take the Government out of business" sounds all right, but it will be poor compensation for plants which cost millions of dollars.

The discussion is not academic, because, after the last war, the Government literally threw away hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of valuable capital. The disposition of cargo ships and shipping lines is a case in point.

While we have no desire to see the Government enlarge its business activities, we cannot see any wisdom in a policy which compels the Gov-

ernment, after spending billions of dollars to construct various plants, to give them away for little or nothing, just in order to be out of business.

While it would be better perhaps, for private capital to provide the facilities necessary for productive purposes, whenever the Government has to put up the capital, it should insist upon owning the plants. The same observation again applies to Government contributions in the form of subsidies to keep certain essential industries in operation.

### Officials Study Food Outlook. Some Scarcities In 1944

While it is too early to assume that there will be a shortage of food in 1943, the crop reports, as of June 1, indicate the worst prospect for the past three years.

Crop conditions have been damaged by flood and drought which will have their effects on production.



## From where I sit...

by Joe Marsh

Really funny how some little every-day things can affect the course of history. For instance, did you know that one of the main reasons for the Pilgrims landing on Plymouth Rock was because the Mayflower was running out of beer?

Yes, you can read it in an original manuscript of 1622, an account of the settling of Plymouth—where it says: "... we could not now take time for further search or consideration;

our victuals being much spent; especially our beer : : ."

Just goes to show how good beer has been a part of American life right from the beginning. Yes, and it's had a big part in making us a tolerant, moderate people, happy to live and let live. Because beer is a drink of moderation and good fellowship.

Joe Marsh

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The estimated yield of wheat is 26 per cent below the 981,000,000 bushels harvested in 1942, but the large carry-over will be ample to meet all requirements.

The general opinion is that there will be a billion-pound increase in meat production this year, but the mythical average consumer wants 160 pounds, which represents a considerable increase over the 122 pounds that the average consumer ate during the 1935-39 period.

With consumers having more money to spend for food, the family diet is improved, which is another way of saying that the demand increases.

Consequently, we hear that the average consumer wants 55 pounds of food fats, including butter, for the current year, when he will be able to get about 46. This is not so bad when it is compared with the 48.9

pounds the average consumer utilized during the 1935-39 period.

While the production of crops for 1943 is uncertain, especially in view of the absence of an acreage report, conditions during the remainder of the growing season may adversely affect growing prospects. In this case, there will be considerable inconveniences in regard to favored diets for all Americans who depend upon commercial sources for their food supply.

The situation justifies additional stress upon the importance of canning as much food as possible. Farmers and those in urban communities who are able to plant gardens can protect themselves from any food shortage by the simple expedient of growing and canning something to eat. Before next June comes around, there may be many Americans enthused over the meaning of a home garden.

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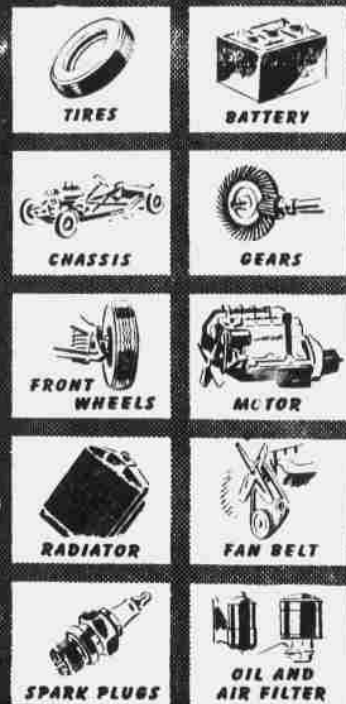
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