

News Review of Current Events the World Over

New Tax Program Stirs Hot Debate—Black's Seizure of Telegrams—Norris Dam Is Completed—Italo-Ethiopian Peace Draws Nearer.

By EDWARD W. PICKARD
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CONGRESSMAN SAM B. HILL of Washington and his subcommittee of the house ways and means committee took up



Rep. S. B. Hill

the heavy task of determining how the new revenue of \$1,137,000,000 called for by President Roosevelt should be raised. Treasury officials recommended that an average tax of 3 3/4 per cent should be levied on undivided corporation profits and a tax of 90 per cent on all refunded or unpaid AAA processing taxes. In this the fiscal experts followed the suggestions of Mr. Roosevelt. They told the subcommittee that the proposed corporation surplus tax would yield the government \$620,000,000 annually. The President has estimated that this amount will be needed to finance the new farm program and the soldier bonus.

The so-called "windfall" tax on processors who successfully challenged the AAA in the courts, it was believed, would yield another \$200,000,000. This will be used to reimburse the treasury for losses suffered as a result of the Supreme court's invalidation of AAA. There remains an additional \$317,000,000 which it is proposed to raise through excise taxes on a wide range of farm processors.

Chairman Hill said the experts and the members of the subcommittee were agreed that the tax on undivided surplus should not apply to banks and life insurance companies.

There was wide divergence of opinion concerning this tax among leaders in congress. Senator James Hamilton Lewis of Illinois, Democrat, for instance, declared himself against it as an unnecessary additional burden on business, and indicated he would support, instead, a plan to tax the income from federal securities now exempt. Senator Borah, Republican, said that in principle he endorsed the plan of taxing undistributed earnings, while Senator Hastings of Delaware, also Republican, denounced it as "confiscatory." Senator King of Utah, Democrat, and Representative Knutson of Minnesota, Republican, were moved by the program to demand immediate cutting down of federal expenditures, and in this Mr. Borah concurred. Speaker Joseph W. Byrns and Majority Leader W. B. Bankhead professed to see no difficulties in the way of the proposed measure.

One thing that boosted the chances of the President's tax program was a report from Secretary of Commerce Roper that corporation income in 1935 was 300 per cent higher than in 1932.

IN THE course of his probe into the affairs of enemies of the New Deal, Senator Black of Alabama, chairman of the lobby committee, assumed the right to seize and examine their private telegrams, and thus his investigation was carried into the courts. Silas Strawn, Chicago attorney learned the committee was about to subpoena his telegrams and he obtained a temporary injunction blocking such action. He has asked the District of Columbia Supreme court to make this injunction permanent.

The wholesale examination of telegrams was attacked by Representative Wadsworth of New York, and defended by Senator Black.

"It strikes me," Wadsworth said, "that we have reached a strange stage in the development of democracy when private correspondence can be seized without court procedure or search warrant."

Black said: "Repeatedly it has been held that the senate can call for what it pleases. There appears to have been a concerted effort by those who seek to influence legislation behind the scenes, through subterranean channels, to prevent us from getting evidence."

GOVERNOR LANDON'S boom for the Republican Presidential nomination is progressing in a way that must be pleasing to his supporters. Kansas Republicans in a state convention pledged him the state's 18 delegates to the Cleveland convention, declaring him to be "the best-fitted candidate." That Kansas should support its governor is natural and expected, but he also is garnering a good many delegates elsewhere, and indorsement in some states where the delegates are unattached.

Sentiment favorable to Landon appeared in New Jersey, and Hervey S. Moore of Trenton, a Republican leader, was contemplating starting an active campaign for him in that state.

ON THE third anniversary of his Inauguration President Roosevelt pushed an electric key in the White House which set in motion machinery that closed the sluice gates of the Norris dam in the Tennessee Valley project. This signified the completion of that part of the vast work on the Clinch river.

"I hope as many people as can will go to see the Norris dam in eastern

Tennessee," the President said in a formal statement. "It exemplifies great engineering skill, high construction efficiency, and, above all, it is the key to the carefully worked out control of a great river and its water spread over parts of seven states.

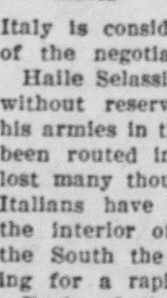
"The Norris dam is a practical symbol of better life and greater opportunity for millions of citizens of our country. The nation has come to realize that national resources must not be wasted and the Norris dam is evidence that our program for conservation of these resources is going forward."

SENATOR BORAH and Senator Van Nuys of Indiana, the latter a Democrat, introduced a bill directed against certain practices of the chain stores. The measure would make it unlawful for any person engaged in commerce to grant any discount, rebate, allowance or advertising service charge to a purchaser over that available to the purchasers' competitors. It also would prohibit sales "at prices lower than those exacted by said person elsewhere in the United States for the purpose of destroying competition or eliminating a competitor."

Co-operative associations would be exempted from provisions of the measure. Violators would be subject to a \$5,000 fine and a one-year jail sentence.

The so-called Robinson-Patman anti-monopoly bill, also aimed at chain stores, will be passed by the senate before very long, according to a promise made by Senator Robinson to a mass meeting of 1,500 independent merchants who went to Washington to lobby for the measure. This bill legislates against special prices, rebates, advertising allowances and brokerage fees giving sales advantage to chain stores.

THROUGH its committee of thirteen the League of Nations appealed to Benito Mussolini and Emperor Haile Selassie to consent to immediate negotiations for an end to hostilities and a definite re-establishment of Italo-Ethiopian peace. Through consideration of the proposal by his cabinet council was delayed a few days. Mussolini, according to advices from Rome, was disposed to acquiesce provided territory in Ethiopia already occupied by Italy is considered hers and left out of the negotiations.



Giuseppe Motta

Haile Selassie accepted the proposal without reservation. In recent days his armies in the northern sector have been routed in big battles and have lost many thousands of men, and the Italians have penetrated far toward the interior of the country; and in the South the invaders were preparing for a rapid advance.

Back of the league's appeal was the standing threat of extension of sanctions to include an embargo on oil. This suddenly brought about a situation rather disconcerting for the league. Dr. Giuseppe Motta, Swiss foreign minister, gave a warning that if the oil embargo was applied his country might feel it necessary to leave the league in order to preserve its neutrality if the consequent threatened war in Europe resulted. Motta pointed out that if Italy quit the league and hostilities ensued, Switzerland, through her membership in the league, would appear in Italian eyes as a party to a hostile coalition, and would be subject to invasion, by Italy on one side and perhaps by Germany on the other.

BRITAIN'S government evidently believes another war is coming, and intends to be well prepared. It made public a gigantic program for increases in the army, navy and air forces and for swift mobilization of man power and industry. No official cost estimate was given but authorities said the total over a three-year period would be not less than one and a half billion dollars. The program includes these features:

- Army—Four new battalions of Infantry are planned. All units are to be modernized, mechanized, and re-equipped. Especial attention will be paid coastal and anti-aircraft defenses.
- Navy—Two new battleships next year and an increase in cruiser strength from 50 to 70, with five new ones to be laid down this year. Naval personnel also will be increased by 6,000, a new aircraft carrier will be constructed, and the air arm of the navy will be strengthened.

Air Force—About 250 new war planes will be added to the home defense squadrons, bringing the total to 1,750. Twelve new air squadrons for imperial defense—that is, air forces available for transfer to danger areas—will be added, and more pilots will be recruited.

Following this announcement the annual naval estimates were submitted to parliament. They call for \$349,650,000, an increase of \$49,400,000 over the previous year.

JAPAN was calmed down after the amazing revolt and attempted coup d'etat of a thousand soldiers led by a group of young "fascist" officers who thought the Okada government was hampering the military progress of the nation. So far as can be judged at this distance, the net results of the uprising were: Admiral Viscount Makoto Saito, former premier and lord keeper of the privy seal; Koroikiyo Takahashi, minister of finance; and Gen. Jotaro Watanabe, chief of military education, were assassinated by the rebels. Premier Okada escaped death, his brother-in-law being mistaken for him and slain. The mutineers, threatened by loyal troops and the fleet, obeyed an edict by Emperor Hirohito and surrendered. Of their 23 leaders, two committed suicide.

The immediate concern of Emperor Hirohito and his advisers was the selection of a man for premier who could form a new government that would satisfy the various parties. First Prince Fumimaro Konoye, young president of the house of peers, was asked to undertake this task, but he declined on the ground of poor health. Then the choice of the emperor fell upon Koki Hirota, a moderate who is well known in both the United States and Russia. Hirota at once began picking out his ministers, saying: "My cabinet will be composed of young, able statesmen."

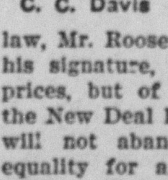
Hirota's selection was taken to mean that the emperor has determined to proceed with the modernization of the country, and to exercise his power to rule instead of permitting himself to be the exalted agent of military overlords.

MAJ. GEN. WILLIAM WEIGEL, retired, one of the army's most reliable commanders, died in the army hospital on Governors Island at the age of seventy-two. He served 44 years, through Indian campaigns, in the Spanish-American war and in the Philippines, and went to France in the World War as a captain. He was rapidly promoted through grades, to brigadier general on August 15, 1917, and to major general on August 8, 1918. When he was given command of the Eighty-eighth division, a new national army unit which he trained and took overseas. Previously he had commanded the Fifty-sixth brigade, Twenty-eighth division, a Pennsylvania outfit, at Chateau-Thierry.

MORE than 150,000 workers in 11,000 buildings in New York City were called out on strike by James J. Bambrick, president of the Building Service Employees' International union, and the sky-scrapers from the Battery to Washington Heights were badly crippled. Elevator men stopped their cars, furnace men banked their fires and scrubwomen threw down their mops, and all marched out of the buildings and formed picket lines. There was some scattered fighting between the pickets and men hastily hired to take their places.

Since the strike affected not only office buildings but innumerable apartment buildings also, the occupants of the latter were deprived of heat and telephone connections, and in many cases sick persons were marooned without food supplies. This led Mayor La Guardia to call the city health officials into conference, and to declare a civic emergency and order Health Commissioner Rice to see that fires were stoked and that trips necessary to health of the tenants and care of the sick were made in all residence buildings of more than six floors.

IMMEDIATELY after President Roosevelt signed the new soil conservation farm relief act passed to take the place of the invalidated AAA, Administrator Chester C. Davis began planning ways to spend the \$500,000,000 authorized. Under his orders more than five thousand more employees of the AAA who had been waiting since January 6 for something to do got busy placing the new program into effect.



C. C. Davis

The goal of the new law, Mr. Roosevelt said in announcing his signature, is parity, not of farm prices, but of farm income. He said the New Deal has "not abandoned and will not abandon" the principle of equality for agriculture.

Davis planned, as the first move, a series of four conferences with agricultural leaders in Memphis, Chicago, New York and Salt Lake City to formulate plans to take 30,000,000 acres out of commercial production this year and place them in legumes and other soil conserving crops.

The new law provides benefit payments to farmers who co-operate in federal suggestions for conservation of soil fertility in 1936 and 1937. It provides, also, for federal subsidies to states setting up permanent state programs in 1938 and thereafter.

"REMEMBER the Alamo," the battle cry of Texas, was heard all over the state as its centennial celebration opened at the village of Washington-on-the-Brazos, where the declaration of independence from Mexico was signed. The old "charter of empire" was taken there from its place in the state capitol rotunda in Austin, and Gov. James V. Allred of Texas and Gov. Philip LaFollette of Wisconsin went along to take part in the ceremonies. The party then went to Huntsville, where Gen. Sam Houston gathered an army of Texans to fight the Mexicans, and there Gov. Hill McAlister of Tennessee made the address. San Antonio and other cities followed on the program, and the celebrations will continue for months, reaching a climax in the opening on June 6 of the centennial exposition at Dallas.



Railroad Building in Nicaragua.

Prepared by the National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.—WNU Service.

NICARAGUA has an area of some 50,000 square miles, about equal to that of New York state, and a population of approximately 650,000, close to that of the city of Buffalo. It is the largest of the Central American republics; many consider it the most beautiful. Much of the interior is mountainous; the coasts are generally flat. It faces the Pacific, with its back door to the Atlantic. Most of its people live in the western part of the republic, for the rainfall here is moderate as compared with that of the eastern coast; the climate, although tropical, is agreeable, and the land is fertile.

The cities of Chinandega, Leon, Managua, Masaya and Granada are located near the west coast and along the one line of railroad, extending from the port of Corinto, on the Pacific, to Granada, the main port on Lake Nicaragua. Managua, the capital, is the largest, and, although badly set back by the earthquake and fire that almost destroyed the city in the spring of 1931, will in time again become the most important business center of the country. Leon and Chinandega, cities of artisans and small proprietors, are located among very fertile farming lands and are the centers of the sugar trade. Masaya is an Indian town and owes its importance to the coffee-growing district on the Sierras, located between the lakes and the Pacific.

Granada owes her early growth to the fact that she was the chief port for the trade between Central America and Spain, by way of Lake Nicaragua and the San Juan river. Her leading citizens are not only landed proprietors, but merchants who sell goods in person over the counters of their stores.

Matagalpa, the largest town off the railroad, is the center of an important coffee-growing district. Because of its altitude, it has a more agreeable climate than the cities located in the plains; but the absence of a railroad, or even a good highway connection with the outside world, has thwarted its growth.

East and West Are Divided.

Eastern and western Nicaragua are divided by mountains and jungle covered country, which have effectively prevented intercommunication except to a very minor degree. The physical separation has operated to prevent close political union and a common national outlook; to hamper trade and commerce; and to obstruct a desirable interchange of people and ideas.

In addition, the lack of a practicable route to its east coast has forced virtually all of Nicaragua's foreign commerce to seek a longer and more roundabout route via the west coast and the Panama canal. For these reasons it has been the desire of the government of Nicaragua for many years to open a means of communication between the west and east, either by the canalization of the San Juan river or by the construction of a highway or a railroad. A highway has been under construction from Managua through Tipitapa to Rama, on the Bluefields river, where boat connections can be made with the Caribbean.

The population of the country is overwhelmingly of mixed Spanish and Indian blood, with Spanish the universal language, although one finds in Granada and the other large towns many families of pure Spanish blood. Perhaps 10 per cent of the population is pure Indian, found mostly in the area around Masaya and Matagalpa and in the thinly settled cattle-raising sections of the province of Chontales, east of Lake Nicaragua.

Still farther to the east, along the rivers that drain into the Caribbean north of Greytown, the Sumo Indians have their homes. They are a wild and timid race and have resisted all Spanish influence.

The Mosquito Coast.

Part of Nicaragua's Caribbean coast has the world's worst real estate title—"The Mosquito Coast." It gets its name not from the prevalence of mosquitoes, but from the Misquito Indians. Here there is decided evidence of the cargo of a slave ship that was wrecked on the coast years ago. These blacks, or mixed Indians and blacks, called "Sambos" or "Zambos," were augmented by escaped slaves from the plantations that sparsely dotted the coast in later years, and by renegade slaves from Jamaica and other islands of the West Indies.

The Mosquito coast was also a refuge for buccaners and pirates and

was visited by many trading ships seeking turtle shells. As a result, the blood of the inhabitants became badly mixed, and characteristics of many races can be detected in the present-day population.

San Juan del Norte (Greytown), at the mouth of the San Juan river, has an English-speaking negro population. Long ago the port had an excellent harbor and was a thriving community, but drifting sands have closed the entrance from the sea, and now only an occasional schooner calls.

In the boom days, when the Maritime Canal company undertook the construction of a canal, Greytown had visions of being a metropolis; now it is only a dreary community of rusted tin and frame shacks, with a population of 250 people.

In spite of the financial difficulties that have been general throughout the world and have been particularly trying in Nicaragua, the president of the republic has improved the public schools and built new roads and railroads.

Along the country's roads you will occasionally meet a high-powered car snorting its way over ruts and bumps, carrying some government official or landed proprietor on business best known to himself. The car has a number of occupants, usually half a dozen in excess of its normal capacity, for the government official travels with his guards, his friends, and perhaps a large part of his family, while the usual car-owner always has his entire family in the car and baggage and other impedimenta strapped on the running board and anywhere else that it can be suspended or attached.

Cars Nearly All American.

Practically all cars are of American make, and it is a tribute to their sturdiness that they can stand the usage to which they are subjected. New cars are frequently equipped with extra spring leaves, as spare parts are hard to get, and for service on Nicaraguan roads springs have to be strong.

The cars on the roads are few and far between, but they add the touch which shows that you are traveling in a civilized country. The creaky ox-cart is the usual means of locomotion. Small but sturdy animals, with yokes or pulling bars lashed just behind the horns, draw these carts creaking and groaning over the trails, but they get through mud that will stop a strong pony.

It is not necessary to ask for road directions; there is never more than one road or trail in the direction you want to go. A question as to distance is futile, for no one has any conception of time or distance. A league may actually be any length from one to six miles. The usual answer to the question, "How far is it to any place?" is "No hay mas," the Nicaraguan equivalent of the answer, "Not fur," which one so frequently gets from the small darky on our southern roads.

Coffee is the Main Crop.

The prosperity of the country depends upon the coffee crop and its price. Crops have been good in recent years, but the price has been very low. For its future Nicaragua looks to the building of the canal linking the Pacific and the Caribbean. A prosperous Nicaragua will no doubt mean a quiet Nicaragua, for prosperity will mean roads, railroads, and other public improvements. A hungry man in Nicaragua is a prospective recruit for one of the bandit gangs. Banditry probably will cease when any man seeking work can get it and when every man can boast of the few dollars rattling around in his pocket.

Gold in small quantities has been produced in Nicaragua for hundreds of years. The richest mines are in the province of Chontales. This area is also bandit-infested, and the mines are a favorite field for bandit activities. The situation has prevented the installation of modern machinery or the development of the properties on a large scale.

The Babonia mine at La Libertad has the distinction of having had a young mining engineer named Herbert Hoover connected at one time with its management. Here only the richest strikes are now worked, the ore being brought to the mill by pack mule. The Javali mine at Santo Domingo is worked on a larger scale and at considerable profit to its owners.

Putting a canal across Nicaragua is a matter of utilizing some geographic features and overcoming others. Of outstanding importance physically are the country's mountains and its two great fresh-water lakes in its central basin, "The Great Lakes of Central America."

WISH TO BE HEARD
Were we as eloquent as angels, we should please some more by listening than by talking.—Colton.

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