

Washington Digest

National Topics Interpreted
By WILLIAM BRUCKART
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Washington—Throughout history, unsound economic policies have had a way of demonstrating their unsoundness by the results that eventually become understandable to the rank and file of the people. Likewise, throughout history the rank and file of the people have learned their lesson each time and have avoided burning their fingers a second time. That is, fingers were not burned a second time until a new generation came along and refused to examine and take into account the lessons of experience.

Lately, we have seen another such demonstration. We have seen both the results and the refusal of current leaders to profit by experiences of the past.

I refer particularly to conditions involving United States bonds. Those who have followed market quotations must recognize that United States bonds and other securities issued by the treasury have suffered from fluctuations in prices that portend, if, indeed, they do not prove that federal financial policies of the last four years were unsound. There was propaganda from official quarters during one of the periods of sagging prices that the condition resulted from market manipulations and the activities of "tipsters." Stories to this effect came directly out of the treasury although they did not carry the identity of the official who made the statements.

The whole circumstance must be considered together, however, if one is to arrive at any sort of a conclusion concerning the true state of affairs. One must think of the total amount of government securities outstanding—something like thirty-four billions—and one must recognize as well what is going on in commerce and industry. In addition to these factors, attention must be given to conditions of the last several years when the Roosevelt administration was engaged—and still is engaged—in the greatest orgy of spending that our nation ever has known. When you add up these various factors, you get an answer which seems to me to be irrefutable.

In the first place, no nation nor any of its individuals can go on indefinitely spending money when it does not have that money. That is, it cannot spend more than its income over any extended period without suffering bad results. Our nation did that. It made up the difference between its income and its spending by borrowing. It gave government bonds to those from whom it borrowed, evidence of its debt. The immediate result of this condition was that there are millions upon millions of government bonds held by banks, corporations and individuals. These bonds bear an exceedingly low rate of interest.

It is only natural that anyone with money to lend will look for the highest interest rate they can get. If they happen to hold government bonds, those bonds will be dumped in favor of securities paying higher returns. That has happened to some extent already.

It is to be remembered as well that these bonds were issued in the currency of the devalued dollar, the fifty-nine cent dollar as measured by the value of gold.

Now, the law of supply and demand that has always operated and which always will operate places a basic value upon commodities, upon the services of labor. It is operating again and has brought about a greater demand for commodities, the things we need to eat or to wear and the countless items of modern day living. The prices of these, measured in present currency, are higher because it takes almost two of the present day dollars to buy the same quantity as formerly could be purchased with the dollar that was good for one-hundred cents in gold. The answer to this is that most of us can not help regarding gold as a commodity having a stable value. So, we see a result in this direction.

Labor, too, is demanding more of the fifty-nine cent dollars for its share of production. It has a right to do so. If you measure wages as you measure commodity values, and it seems to me there can be only one yardstick, then labor is justified in asking for higher pay. Again, a result of tinkering with the currency becomes evident because labor is forced to pay more for what it buys as a result of the reduction in the dollar's gold value.

Then, finally, I am quite convinced that in addition to the factors I have discussed as having weight in causing fluctuation of government bond prices, no one can deny the influence that is being exerted by the radical labor element throughout the strikes that have been promoted.

These strikes have done more than just violate law by unjustified and unwarranted seizure of the prop-

erty of other persons. They have developed among the strikers themselves a resentment against everyone who owns a farm or a home or a business.

The tragedy of this condition, to leave the subject of currency for a moment, is that the strikers show how little respect for law and order exists among a segment of our population. It is not only a tragedy. It is a dangerous sign and unless somewhere in our nation, government asserts its authority and protects rights, we may possibly be faced with a circumstance in which our nation will be held together again only by use of army guns.

To get back then to the bond market it seems to me there is a closely knit skein of conditions that prove where our government has gone into unsound ground. It can be pointed out how the tinkering with the currency has carried through to the ultimate consumer and the wage worker. It can be shown how the national government has disregarded the rights of part of the population and in doing so has created a class hatred which is liable to cause trouble in the nation for the next fifty years.

Notwithstanding the lessons to be learned from these experiences we observe how the same mistake is being made in another way. I refer now to the attitude of administration leaders who are supporting President Roosevelt's program to add six justices of his own choosing to the Supreme court of the United States. Throughout the argument that has come from proponents of the President's packing plan there runs a constant and recurring appeal that if we can only have six new justices in the Supreme court we can do all of the things that are necessary to bring about labor peace and complete business recovery.

Disregarding the merit or demerit of this argument, it seems to me one cannot help looking somewhat into the future and determining on the basis of experience of the past what may happen if the Supreme court is emasculated as the President proposes.

I said earlier in this article that there has grown up a tremendous disrespect for law. The continued prattle about the necessity for "new blood" in the Supreme court is simply and frankly another step in the direction of a government by men and not a government by law.

It is to be recalled that Mr. Roosevelt was given by his rubber stamp congress more power than any President of the United States ever has exercised before. I do not make the charge that the difficulties that I have attempted to analyze above resulted directly from according the Chief Executive so much power. But history surely teaches the lesson that where one man has so much power available he always makes more mistakes than where that power is exercised by the properly appointed or elected representatives of the masses of the people.

I recall a homely saying, often heard in my youth, that two heads are better than one even though one may be a cabbage head. I am quite convinced that the 435 members of the house of representatives and the 96 members of the senate have more wisdom collectively than one man.

Advertising again to the questions of currency and prices, we have only to look across the Atlantic ocean and see what happened in Italy, in Russia and in Germany where one man attempted to establish his own ideas on the currency. From what I have heard from official sources, it must be true that in those three countries I mentioned, there are billions of pieces of paper money that are worth altogether little more than the cash value of the paper on your walls. It always has worked out that way.

Some of the business interests of the country apparently are taking time by the forelock and adjusting themselves to conditions where the government is by men and not by law. A few days ago the distilled spirits institute announced that it had elected W. Forbes Morgan as its president. Mr. Morgan, an uncle by marriage of Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, resigned as treasurer of the Democratic National committee to enter the employment of the liquor interests. While there was no official announcement concerning Mr. Morgan's salary, the gossip persists that he is to be paid something like five-hundred-thousand dollars for five years' work in his new job.

His election raises two questions: What can Mr. Morgan do for the liquor industry that is worth so much money and, secondly, whether the selection of Mr. Morgan does not show how stupid business interests can be.

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STAR DUST

Movie • Radio

By VIRGINIA VALE

JUST as motion picture theater managers all over the country are planning to abandon Bank night and lamenting that the custom ever was started, a radio sponsor is said to be figuring on a way to adopt it. Certain legal, or rather illegal, aspects of the case have to be ironed out before it can be definitely announced, but present plans call for the weekly award of one thousand dollars to some listener holding the lucky number. Numbers will be printed on the package containing the sponsor's product, purchasers will mail them to the broadcast studio, and there the drawing will be held which selects the winner.

Hollywood studios have always flattered themselves that they paid their performers the highest salaries in the world, but now it appears that Mae West, Marlene Dietrich, and Greta Garbo are just poor working girls in comparison to Gracie Fields, who is England's favorite star. Twentieth Century-Fox could not let the British studios get away with a monopoly on the best of anything, so they have put Miss Fields under contract to make four pictures in Hollywood. None of the pictures she has made in England have been shown here, because in them Miss Fields spoke the Lancashire dialect which might as well be Czechoslovakian for all Americans can make of it. Over here she will deliver her lines and songs in plain English.



Marlene Dietrich

From New York to Hollywood Gloria Swanson's loyal friends gave parties celebrating the end of her too-long retirement from the screen, when Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer announced recently that she was to star in "Maisie Kenyon." Now it appears that the celebrating was a little premature, because neither Gloria nor the studio is satisfied with the story, and her plans are all up in the air again.

The most exciting and beautiful picture ever made in Technicolor comes from England and will soon be seen in theaters throughout the country. It is "Wings of the Morning" a United Artists picture. Harold Shuster went over from Hollywood to direct it, our own Henry Fonda plays the lead, and John McCormack, the Irish tenor who is adored wherever there is a phonograph, radio, or concert hall sings in it. As if that weren't enough, they have tossed in for good measure authentic views of the running of the English Derby.

Sylvia Sidney gets the week's award for being the best talent scout. Some time ago Marc Connelly told her about a play he was going to produce in New York and she said that she knew just the girl to play the lead in it. She had seen a girl named Katherine Locke in a very small part in a play and she was sure Miss Locke would be wonderful if given a real chance. Sylvia didn't wait for Mr. Connelly to send for Miss Locke. She located her and she got the part.

Eleanor Powell would like to form an alumni association of her old dancing school, but all the people who are eligible for membership in Hollywood are much too busy making pictures to be bothered with attending meetings. There is Ginger Rogers, Buddy Ebsen, Ruby Keeler, and Miriam Hopkins—and they are among the busiest people out here.

Eleanor herself has a little time on her hands only because she turned her ankle and has to stay at home for a few days to rest before she can go into a strenuous number for "Broadway Melody."

ODDS AND ENDS—Marlene Dietrich thinks that she and Carole Lombard look alike and both girls are delighted. . . . Miriam Hopkins has bought the late John Gilbert's house and is redecorating it in lovely pastel colors that best set off her blond beauty. . . . Paul Muni has no lurking ambition to cut in on Jack Benny's comic honors, but he did play "The Bee" on the violin for a few friends. . . . About half of the beautiful girls in Hollywood tried out for the part of Flavia in "The Prisoner of Zenda." Madeline Carroll got it. . . . Bert Wheeler is so unwilling to leave the sunshine and warmth of Palm Springs that he is commuting to Hollywood by airplane. . . .

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UNCOMMON AMERICANS

By Elmo Scott Watson

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Christmas Flower

WHEN you buy one of those scarlet-petaled flowers called the poinsettia to add to the festive appearance of your home at Christmas time, you are helping perpetuate the fame of an American who little realized that his name would become associated with one of the symbols of the Yuletide. For Joel R. Poinsett had so many other claims to distinction that it seems curious he is best remembered because a flower bears his name!

Born in South Carolina in 1779, he studied both medicine and military science abroad but his father induced him to abandon his intention of entering the army and to become a student of law. Poor health forced him to give that up and he asked President Madison for a commission in the army. He was about to be appointed quartermaster-general when the secretary of war objected.

Instead he was sent on a diplomatic mission to South America where he mixed in the politics of Chile, and fomented revolution until he became known as "the scourge of the American continent" and was recalled. Next he was sent to Mexico. Always interested in botany, he brought back from that country the flower which was given the scientific name of "Poinsettia Pulcherrima."

Just as he had been a stormy petrel in international politics, so he was a disturbing element in the politics of his native land. During the Nullification controversy in South Carolina he organized and led the Unionist forces. By doing that he won the esteem of the national government and President Van Buren made him secretary of war. Poinsett improved and enlarged the army, organized a general staff, built up the artillery, directed the Seminole war and managed the removal of some 40,000 Indians to Indian Territory. In the midst of this activity his scientific interests were not neglected. He experimented with scientific agriculture, sent out the Wilkes expedition into the Antarctic and was largely instrumental in founding the National Institute for the Promotion of Science and the Useful Arts which later was merged with the Smithsonian Institution. His busy career came to an end in 1851 while he was living in retirement as a plantation owner in his native state.

Brooklyn Bridge Jumper

BACK in the eighties the Brooklyn bridge was one of the wonders of the modern world. Its dedication on May 24, 1883 was an event of nation-wide interest but three years later it was even more in the news because of a man with whose name that great span has been linked in popular memory ever since.

He was Steve Brodie, bootblack, street car conductor, sailor and worker around the docks who became a professional walker as a means of earning some easy money. But he was never better than a second-rater and none of his walking matches ever benefited him greatly. In the summer of 1886 he was nearly "broke."

One day in July he heard some of his friends talking about the latest casualty among the men who had tried for fame and fortune by diving from the Brooklyn bridge to the river, 135 feet below. Seven of them had tried it and all of them had been killed.

"Huh, I bet you I could do it and not be killed," boasted Brodie. "Bet you \$100 you can't!" replied a friend. "You're on!" was Brodie's answer. But he was evidently none too confident that he could make good on his boast for he took out a life insurance policy for \$1,000 as a protection for his wife, just in case . . .

On July 23, 1886 Brodie jumped off the bridge and came up without a scratch. Officials of the life insurance company were furious because he had risked \$1,000 of their money to win \$100. They returned his premium and cancelled his policy—which was foolish, for he lived to a ripe old age!

His successful jump was widely publicized. It won him an engagement in a melodrama called "Blackmail" in which he had to dive off a great height into a net—a feat which, he declared, was even more dangerous than his jump from the bridge—and his performance in this (at \$100 a week) made "Brodie, the Brooklyn Bridge-Jumper" famous all over the country. His achievement encouraged imitators and during the next few years no less than 11 others tackled the nation's most spectacular high dive. Although the first seven had perished in their attempts, Brodie seemed to have broken the jinx, for every one of the 11 survived. By that time the novelty of such a feat had somewhat worn off. But Brodie's fame as the first to make a successful jump was secure. Moreover, he contributed another picturesque phrase to the American language, for "doing a Brodie" is still a synonym for a spectacular jump or plunge from a height.

AROUND the HOUSE

Items of Interest to the Housewife

Cooking Vegetables—A small piece of butter added to the water in which vegetables are to be cooked will prevent them from boiling over.

Flavoring Gravy—Half milk and half water makes the best colored and best flavored gravy.

Suede Shoes—Rain spots can be removed from suede shoes by rubbing with fine emery board.

Boiling Cabbage—When you cook cabbage, put a small handful of breadcrumbs tied in muslin into the pan. The bread absorbs all the bitter juices and makes the vegetable more digestible.

Worn Socks—Children very often get enormous holes in the heels of their socks. This is often due to the lining of the shoe which has worn rough. If the ragged bits are cut off and the inside of the shoe covered with adhesive tape, many a large "hole" will be prevented.

Sausage and Fried Apples—Pan broil the required number of small sausages or cakes of sausage meat and as soon as the fat collects, add as many halved, cored and unpeeled apples as re-

quired, first dipping them in flour to which a little sugar has been added. Saute slowly until soft and browned. Place on a serving dish, with two small sausages on each half.

Ironing Shirts—Soft collars attached to shirts should be ironed on the right side first, then on the wrong side. This prevents wrinkling the collar.

Baking Potatoes—Before putting potatoes in the baking-tin, stand them in boiling water for a few minutes, then drain on a clean cloth. They will cook more quickly and taste better.

Making a Footstool—Do you know that you can make unique footstools out of the single spring seats of an old automobile? Cover the old seat with upholstery and attach castors at the four corners. This will give you a comfortable seat or footstool for your summer cottage.

Cocoa Egg Cake Filling—White of one egg; one cup icing sugar; two teaspoons cold water; four tablespoons cocoa; half teaspoon vanilla. Beat white of egg until stiff and dry. Mix cocoa and sugar, add cold water. Add gradually to egg white until thick enough to spread.

Washing Embroidery—Do not wring embroidery after washing. Press out as much moisture as possible between the folds of a towel, then spread on a towel or blotter to dry, face up.

Ask Me Another

A General Quiz

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1. Who are the Pariahs?
2. What measure does "dm." indicate?
3. Where was Libby prison?
4. Why are some trees called deciduous?
5. What was the origin of saluting?
6. When was the first wireless distress signal used at sea?
7. Which is the world's longest railway tunnel used by passenger trains?
8. When is a person taller, when lying down or standing up?
9. Is it illegal for a United States' President to take the oath of office on Sunday?
10. When was the first silver dollar coined?
11. What is the meaning of cover charge?
12. From where does Troy weight get its name?

- Answers
1. Members of an aboriginal non-Brahmanic race of India; hence "outcasts."
 2. Decimeter.
 3. Richmond, Virginia.
 4. Trees which are not evergreens are called deciduous. It is derived from the Latin "de," meaning down, and "cadere," meaning fall; and refers to the falling of the leaves.
 5. It is said to date back to the Borgias, when inferiors, coming into the presence of their superiors, raised their hands to show no dagger was concealed.
 6. January 23, 1909, when White Star liner "Republic" collided with the "Florida." It was not SOS but CQD.
 7. Golders Green to South Wimbeldon, London. Total length 16 1/2 miles.
 8. When lying down. As much as an inch has been noted.
 9. No. President Wilson did so in 1794.
 11. A charge made for the privilege of occupying a place at a cafe or restaurant. It does not include the cost of the food consumed.
 12. From Troyes, France, where the weights were used in the Middle ages.

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