

News Review of Current Events the World Over

Dirigible Hindenburg Destroyed by Explosion, Two Score Persons Perishing—Economists and Spenders Continue Their Battle in Washington.

By EDWARD W. PICKARD
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ONE of the major tragedies of aeronautical history occurred when the big German dirigible Hindenburg exploded and fell in a blazing mass at the landing field in Lakehurst, N. J. At this writing the exact number of dead is unknown, but it probably is more than forty.

American passengers who in the early reports were unaccounted for and presumably killed were: Burtis Dolan, Chicago; Mr. and Mrs. John Pannes, New York City; Moritz Feibusch, Lincoln, Neb.; Edward Douglas, New York; James Young and Birger Brinck, addresses not given.

The airship, just arrived from Europe on its first transatlantic trip of the year, was about to land when there was an explosion toward the stern. Instantly flames broke out and ran the length of the ship. The tail sagged first, then the nose crashed down and the split sections telescoped as they fell. A few of the 44 passengers and some members of the crew were able to jump to safety, but many of the others aboard hadn't a chance for their lives. The navy men of the ground crew heroically plunged into the flaming wreckage and dragged out those victims who could be reached.

The screams and cries of injured in agony were "terrible," the hardened sailors and marines who did the rescue work reported. The clothing was completely burned off one man. Another, blown through the envelope, was found moaning near the smashed airship.

The survivors and rescue workers told of the terrific heat which followed the explosion and the surge of fire.

An explosion of the No. 2 gas cell toward the stern of the ship was named as the cause of the disaster by State Aviation Commissioner Gill Robb Wilson, who called the blast "strange."

Some authorities scouted the theory that the explosion could have been caused by the ignition of hydrogen inside the gas cells. They said a mixture of 20 per cent free air with hydrogen would be necessary to cause an explosion, indicating the first blast must have occurred outside one of the gas cells.

Aeronautical experts said the only way they could explain an explosion inside the ship would be that free hydrogen had in some way escaped and was lying in the stern of the ship where it was accidentally ignited.

Capt. Ernest Lehmann, who piloted the Hindenburg last year, was aboard it on this fatal trip, but its commander was Capt. William Pruss, just promoted to the post. He is a veteran in working dirigibles.

HOW to economize by cutting down government expenditures, as the President has demanded, and at the same time to continue with such huge expenditures as the billion and a half dollars Mr. Roosevelt asked for relief is a puzzle that congress doesn't know how to solve.



H. L. Hopkins

Harry Hopkins, Works Progress administrator and most accomplished spender of the administration, took a hand in the discussion, telling a house appropriation subcommittee that unemployment is a permanent problem, that the government should be prepared to support seven million jobless persons at all times, and consequently that congress must appropriate the billion and a half for relief instead of cutting the sum down to a billion.

Both Democrats and Republicans on the committee protested, and Chairman Woodrum of Virginia told Hopkins he would use every endeavor to have the appropriation reduced by at least a third. He challenged the figures and arguments submitted by Hopkins, contending that if the extravagance of the work relief principle and the padding of relief rolls with undeserving cases were eliminated and the states required to assume a greater share of the burden the cost to the federal government would not exceed one billion.

Senator William H. King of Utah, Democrat, not only disagrees with Hopkins as to the amount needed for relief, but isn't satisfied with the way the administrator has been conducting the work. He introduced resolutions in the senate calling for an investigation of the works progress administration and taking the future spending of relief money out of Hopkins' hands. King said his purpose was to abolish the WPA.

In the house economy received a wallop on the head when the reforestation bill was passed, 171 to 153. This measure would appropriate \$2,500,000 annually for government aid to farmers who wish to turn part of their farms into woodlands. It was fought by a bloc led by

Representative J. J. Cochran of Missouri, Democrat. "It has a worth while objective, but it is one of those expensive measures which we can defer passing for a while until the budget is in balance," declared Cochran.

BEWILDERED members of congress were still further dazed when they learned that the administration was moving to obtain approval of the Florida ship canal project which will call for \$197,000,000. This was revealed when Secretary of the Navy Swanson sent to the house rivers and harbors committee a letter urging that the canal scheme be approved. It was assumed he would not have done this without the approval of the President. Mr. Swanson argued that the canal would be of value during war for the shipment of materials.

Testimony labeled "confidential" was also heard by the committee from Gen. Charles P. Summerall, retired chief of staff of the army, and Rear Admiral Frederic B. Bassett, retired. Both declared that the canal would serve as "a most important element of the national defense in time of war."

Representative Beiter of New York, Democrat, called upon the budget bureau to make known its stand on the Florida canal question.

FREQUENT reports have been heard in Washington that government employees, including some high officials, took advantage of their "inside" knowledge that the attorney general was going to file suit to dissolve the Aluminum Company of America by selling the common stock short, thereby making immense profits. Just the day before the suit was filed President Roosevelt issued his order against stock speculation by employees of the government, but it came too late.



Rep. Rogers

Attention of congress was called to the matter when Representative Edith Nourse Rogers of Massachusetts, Republican, demanded an investigation.

"I hold no brief for the Aluminum Company of America," Mrs. Rogers told the house. "I know nothing about the institution, but I am very anxious to know why the common stock of this huge enterprising corporation should decline over 300 per cent more than similar industrial stocks in the period just prior to announcement of the government's suit."

"To the 825,000 employees of the government the President's announcement was a most czaristic order," Mrs. Rogers declared. "I believe the money paid to federal employees is just as much their money to do with as they please as is the money paid to any employee working at any job in any place in the United States."

But government employees, she added, certainly ought not to have the advantage of knowledge withheld from the public.

TWELVE American women reached what some people consider a social climax when they were received by King George and Queen Elizabeth of Great Britain at the first court of the new reign. These favored matrons and debutantes had been carefully coached at the American embassy and were presented by Mrs. Robert W. Bingham, wife of the American ambassador. They were:

Eleanora Bowdoin of Aiken, S. C.; Mrs. George Temple Bowdoin of New York City; Catherine M. Maher of Lincoln, Neb.; Mrs. George W. Norton Jr., of Louisville; Mrs. John Perrin of Boston; Anne Schenk of New York City; Vesta Putnam Culberson of Chicago; Mrs. F. Vernon Foster of West Orange, N. J.; Lydia Fuller of Boston; Mrs. Dozier L. Gardner of Philadelphia; Mrs. Byron Hilliard of Louisville, and Mrs. Julia Henry of Philadelphia.

PRIME MINISTER STANLEY BALDWIN, soon to retire, made an eloquent plea to the people of Great Britain not to mar the coronation festivities and endanger the safety of democracy by engaging in industrial strife. He was moved to this by a threatened strike in the coal fields and by the danger that the trolley employees of London would go out in sympathy with the striking bus men. Said Mr. Baldwin:

"I appeal to the handful of men on whom rests the responsibility of peace or war to give the best present to the country that could be given at this moment, to do the one thing that would rejoice the hearts of all who love this country, and that is to rend and dissipate this dark cloud gathered over us and show the people of the world that this democracy at least can still practice the art of peace in world strife."

FOR three days Premier Mussolini of Italy conferred in Rome with Baron Konstantin von Neurath, foreign minister of Germany. Then an official communique was issued indicating that the two countries were determined to prevent the creation of a communist state in western Europe, holding "a complete parallelism of views" on this and other subjects. It was added that the Italian and German governments will "continue to follow a concordant policy on all major questions."

It was understood in Rome that, though Mussolini and Hitler were eager to work for peace with Britain and France, they were prepared to take open part in the Spanish war if other means fail to prevent the establishment of a regime sympathetic to soviet Russia.

The Italian parliament passed Mussolini's national defense budget carrying \$289,300,000 for 1937-38. Admiral Cavnagari, undersecretary for the navy, told the deputies the Italian navy "from now on must be an ocean going navy" rather than one confined to the Mediterranean. General Pariani, for the war department, said Italy was taking no chances concerning protection of her frontiers. The government, he said, intended to build up in the Italian peninsula an army which would be able to paralyze an enemy's advances and "win the war in the shortest possible time."

MR. WALLIS SIMPSON was granted an absolute decree of divorce in London, and within a few hours Edward, duke of Windsor, was on his way from St. Wolfgang, Austria, to visit his fiancée at the Chateau de Candé near Tours, France. The former king of Great Britain had been waiting impatiently, baggage packed, for word that Wallis was entirely free, and he lost no time when his solicitors telephoned him from London.



Mrs. Simpson

It took only 25 seconds to make absolute the decree nisi which Mrs. Simpson obtained last October 27. The king's proctor had been satisfied with the lady's behavior in the interval, and Sir Boyd Merriman, president of the divorce court, personally granted the decree along with a lot of others.

The date for the wedding of the duke of Windsor and Mrs. Simpson has not yet been announced, but it probably will be in the week beginning May 24. Edward was willing to wait until all the coronation hullabaloo was over for he did not wish to annoy his royal brother in any way.

REICHSFUHRER ADOLF HITLER was informed by Pope Pius XI that the Roman Catholic church must be free to fulfill its mission in Germany. This reply to the German church note, which itself was a reply to the pope's pre-Easter encyclical accusing the German government of violating the 1933 church-state concordat, was delivered by Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli to the German ambassador to the holy see, Diego von Bergen.

The note was rather moderate in tone, but insisted that economic pressure must not be brought to bear against Catholics in Germany; that Catholic schools and the Catholic press should not be hampered.

ELEVEN unions of the Federated Motion Picture Crafts, with about 6,000 members, went on strike in Hollywood, Calif., and the great film industry there was in serious difficulties. The strikers counted heavily on co-operation by the Screen Actors' guild, but that body, which has 5,600 members, delayed action until it could confer with the producers. The guild already had presented a number of demands regarding working conditions and hours and overtime pay.

Fifteen of the largest hotels in San Francisco were practically tied up by a strike of 3,500 employees. The strikers were given the active support of 13 unions. They insisted that hotel owners had refused to agree to preferential hiring and a five day week for clerks, although other groups of hotel employees had been awarded such conditions.

SOME of the most desperate fighting of the Spanish civil war was taking place in the struggle for Bilbao between the sturdy Basques and Gen. Emilio Mola's veterans, reputedly mostly Italians and Germans. The insurgents had promised not to bomb the center of the city but bombarded its environs heavily from the land and the air. By fierce attacks they broke through the Basque lines on the Bay of Biscay coast, reaching Bilbao's seaports at the mouth of the Nervion river.

Disregarding the protests of General Franco, Fascist chieftain, the British and French governments undertook to remove from Bilbao a large number of women and children.

RESISTING all efforts of the would-be economists, the majority in the house passed the War department appropriation bill carrying \$416,400,000 for the fiscal year 1938. This is the largest army bill ever passed in times of peace.

As passed the measure carries increases in the pay of the army totaling \$5,861,000; clothing and equipage, \$5,500,000; military post construction, \$5,400,000; ordnance service and supplies, \$5,800,000, and National Guard, \$1,600,000.

Washington Digest

National Topics Interpreted
by William Bruckart
National Press Building Washington, D. C.

Washington.—Congress lately has passed and President Roosevelt has just signed the Guffey-Vinson coal bill. It is, therefore, a law. And presently, as a result of the passage of this legislation, you and I and every other person who uses soft coal will be paying higher prices.

The increase in price that will result, however, is not the only phase of the Guffey-Vinson law that seems to be open to criticism. There are many who believe that in passing the Guffey-Vinson bill (and it was done under the lash of administration leaders) our government has taken a step which is very close to, even actually a step toward, fascism in America. It is an action so near to the policies of fascism in Italy that close students of the Mussolini plan say they can hardly discern any distinction.

Let us see what the Guffey-Vinson law does. It permits all soft coal producers in the United States to organize as in a monopoly under government control. True, the government is supposed under the law to fix the price of soft coal but actually the law is going to work out so that the producers and the mine unions will establish the prices, subject to the approval of a government commission. It will work out this way because the law has actually legalized the right of the producers to agree on the prices they will charge by virtue of the fact that those prices are based on the production costs in regional areas.

It is provided in the law that the United States shall be divided into 23 regions or sections. The United States coal commission is empowered to prescribe the prices, both minimum and maximum, to which coal from each of these areas or regions may be sold. In that manner, the law guarantees that the soft coal producers shall gain an acceptable rate on their investments. Since labor costs enter directly into production costs—indeed, they constitute a major factor—it becomes plain that whatever wages labor demands and obtains influences the level of the production costs and the result is a change in the selling price to the consuming public.

Thus, when John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers of America and head of the C. I. O., determines that the mine workers are not being paid sufficiently high wages, he demands an increase from the mine owners. The mine owners or producers, now that the Guffey-Vinson monopoly law has passed, simply submit the new costs to the coal commission and it has no alternative but to approve an increase in the selling price. In consequence, therefore, every bucketful of coal going into your stove and every shovelful that goes into the furnace of a home or the fire box of a factory carries an additional tax that has been legalized by law.

So, we see the bulk of the coal industry pass from the field of free competition into the form of a monopoly under government control. If that can be described otherwise than as fascism, I am ignorant of what constitutes fascism.

There remains the question whether the law promoted by Senator Guffey of Pennsylvania and Representative Vinson of Kentucky is constitutional.

It will be remembered that the Supreme court once threw out the original Guffey-Vinson law. It threw out that law because it held that the original legislation attempted to fix hours and wages for workers and that, in accordance with the unanimous decision of the court when it invalidated the NRA, was an illegal act by congress. The labor provisions alone were discussed in the litigation at that time. But in the current Guffey-Vinson law, those objectionable factors have been omitted. There is no way to discover whether the Supreme court will find the monopolistic practice authorized in the current legislation to be improper except the hunch that such a declaration of policy by the congress is not in conflict with the constitution directly.

Some members of the congress opposed the Guffey-Vinson bill because they believed it to be unconstitutional. There were so few of those, however, that the house of representatives debated the bill only a day and a half and the senate debated it only a few hours.

Some sections of the soft coal industry objected to the bill but they were quickly re-signed to the intangible fact that it would become a law because of the power that John L. Lewis wielded over congressional leadership. The chief reason for the division of sentiment among the coal producers was that there is a wide range of costs among the producers. There are many mines which have low production costs and consequently they are able, or were

able under open competition, to sell at lower prices than many of their competitors. There is another section of the mining industry where production costs are high and in consequence that section of the industry was barely able to scrape out a living return. Under the new law, the high cost mines will be assured of a reasonable return and that means that the low cost mines will gain exorbitant profit.

On the face of things, it would seem that the low cost mines would be all for this law because of the heavy returns they can make. Such, however, is not the case. Thus mine owners pretty generally, would prefer taking their chances in open competition because they can make a larger profit through a heavy volume of sales at lower prices than under the new scheme whereby the high cost mines are bound to get a share of the business.

Proponents of the law contend that there is an obligation to the owners of the high cost mine or to the workers they employ. But what, I ask, is the user of coal going to do about it? What has he to say and how can he say it?

Again, sponsors of the legislation explain that interests of the consuming public are to be protected through the office of a consumers' council. That is, there is a government official who is supposed to look after and protect your rights and mine against excessive prices. It may work out satisfactorily. I believe, however, that the odds are heavy against any of us receiving any benefits in this direction.

A few days after President Roosevelt signed the Guffey-Vinson law, Attorney General Cummings came forth with a letter urging congress to revise and tighten the anti-trust law. He said that monopoly was growing in the United States and that small businesses were being driven to the wall by the inroads of great masses of capital.

There is evidence that capital is massing. We need not look any further for proof of this than the Guffey-Vinson law itself which permits capital to work together—the only hindrance being that which is subjected somewhat to the influence of organized labor under the Guffey-Vinson law. The result is exactly the same whether the massing of capital takes place under private arrangement or under government supervision such as is legalized in the Guffey-Vinson law.

This situation impresses me as being a bit incongruous. It seems to be a circumstance where the administration is trying to run in two directions at one and the same time. It is further exaggerated by the fact that the President lately has spoken with emphasis about the rapid increase in retail prices. Yet, besides raising wages for labor, the only tangible result that I can see under the Guffey-Vinson law is higher prices for all of us to pay.

Surely, monopoly has a tendency always to increase prices. It has been the chief subject of harrange against monopoly and the Attorney General adverted to this fact in his recent appeal for legislation to prevent monopoly. But why is it bad for monopoly, privately arranged, to force higher prices and good for monopoly, legalized by congress, to force higher prices?

President Roosevelt has sent word around through all government departments to the effect that no government worker may engage in stock market speculation. He has told the civil service commission that "among the matters to be considered" when passing upon an employee's qualifications for retention or advancement, the commission may consider whether that employee has engaged in speculation in securities or commodities.

At first blush, this did seem to be a sound order. I have heard much discussion of the matter, however, that gives rise to other thoughts about it. I think there can be nothing more reprehensible than for a public official or employee to use the confidential information which he obtains officially as the basis for stock speculation. On the other hand, is it not questionable whether a government should try to tell any of its employees that they cannot invest their surplus earnings in securities as a means of increasing their income? The President said that "bona fide investments" are all right but the question for which I have not been able to find an answer is "how can it be determined whether the purchase of a few shares of stock is speculation or bona fide investment?"

That brings up of necessity the difficulties of enforcement. It also brings to the forefront a real danger. That danger is not as remote as it seems. I refer to the use of power in the hands of the Chief Executive to take away individual liberty of action.

Strike at Trusts

No Stock Gambling

Question Validity

Backed by Lewis

Question Validity

Backed by Lewis

Question Validity

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Question Validity

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Question Validity

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Question Validity

Household Questions

Soaking Salt Fish—When soaking salt fish add a small glass of vinegar to the soaking water and it will draw out more of the salt.

Tomato and Lima Bean Casserole—Drain the liquid from a No. 2 can of green baby lima beans and combine the beans with a can of tomatoes. Add a little butter and seasoning, then mix. Place in buttered casserole. Cover.

Outer Leaves of Lettuce—The outer leaves of lettuce, often trimmed off and thrown away, are more than 30 times as rich in vitamin A as the inside leaves.

Boiled Whitefish—Clean a whitefish. To sufficient water to cover add salt and vinegar and a bunch of parsley and a quartered onion. Cook until the flesh separates easily from the bones. Drain and place on a hot platter, garnished with parsley and serve with a sauce.

Removing Mustard Stains—Mustard stains can be removed from table linen by washing in hot water an dsoap and rinsing in warm water.

Beef Juice—To make beef juice add 1 pound of fresh, raw, finely chopped round steak without fat to 6 ounces of cold water. Add a pinch of salt, put the beef and water in a glass jar and stand it on ice, over night. Shake and strain it through coarse muslin, squeezing hard to obtain all the juice.

Washing Windows—Add a little starch to the water used for washing windows. It not only helps remove the dirt, but gives a lasting polish.

Foreign Words and Phrases

Pioupou. (F.) A private soldier; the French "Tommy Atkins."

Rus in urbe. (L.) The country in town.

Sub judice. (L.) Under consideration.

Sturm und drang. (Ger.) Storm and stress.

Villegiatura. (It.) A summer vacation.

Belles-lettres. (F.) Refined literature.

Cause celebre. (F.) A court trial of wide popular interest.

Creme de la creme. (F.) The pink of perfection.

Dies infaustus. (L.) An unlucky day.

Filius nullius. (L.) The son of nobody; illegitimate.

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