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A HALF BILLION DEFICIT

Boise Penrose, H. C. Lodge, Porter J. McCumber, Reed Smoot, Jacob H. Gallinger and Clarence D. Clark, Republican members of the senate committee on finance, a few days ago submitted a little report on the bill to provide increased revenues.

The Republican senators admit that additional revenues are necessary, not withstanding three previous attempts to bolster the Underwood tariff bill by direct taxation.

The American citizen may find the cause of the ever decreasing purchasing value of his hard-earned dollar in Government expenditures for useless objects.

A fruitless Mexican expedition costing nearly \$200,000,000.

Building a railroad in frigid Alaska to cost \$35,000,000.

Construction of an armor plate plant to cost \$11,000,000.

Purchase of ships at exorbitant prices, \$50,000,000.

Thousands of new offices at a yearly cost of \$40,000,000.

Many other experiments of doubtful value, the whole load to be borne by the consumer.

Here is \$356,900,000. Besides, instead of a net balance, as reports show, there is a deficit of over \$50,000,000 in the treasury.

No figure upon which is asked to formulate revenue legislation intelligently even fairly within many millions of remaining authoritatively very long.

The estimates of the amounts to be raised by the additional taxation are merely guesswork.

The pending bill not only disregards the opportunity of raising revenue from imports, which aggregated \$2,391,718,336 in the last year, but it takes no account of the future industrial preparedness of the United States against invasion of European-made goods which is bound to come after the war.

The report concludes: "We believe the estimates of revenue under existing law will be less by \$100,000,000; that the disbursements this fiscal year and for 1918 will exceed the estimates; that the deficit both years will aggregate in excess of \$500,000,000; that this bill, together with existing direct-taxation laws, will be fastened upon the people permanently unless relief be had by restoration of import duties that will yield \$200,000,000 more revenue annually, and at the same time conserve our productive energies, both of capital and labor."

THE SUBMARINE BLOCKADE

The German blockade is a success, and the object of the Germans is being speedily obtained. The object sought was to prevent the shipping of munitions and supplies to the Allies.

That this has been effected we have the word of the English officials, who, to counteract its effect on the war spirit, have stated that it is to be expected that the means that they are devising to meet the "submarine peril" will soon be effective.

Germany reports that since February 1, not one submarine has been lost. Shipping has been lost to the Allies aggregating hundreds of thousands of tons of disbursement.

Food riots have taken place in London and all the Allies feel the effect of the blockade.

Food riots, however, are not confined to European cities. New York and Philadelphia have had rioting, parades and demands that warehouses be opened and the contents placed on sale for the public.

The warehouses, cold storage buildings, and elevators are all filled with goods, but the owners are holding the goods for speculative prices and refused to sell to the people, who are willing to buy, but in most cases the prices asked are beyond the reach of persons who

depend on moderate salaries. With flour at \$12 per barrel, potatoes at \$4 per bushel, coal at \$3 per ton, and all these articles bought up for shipment to war-stricken Europe would indicate that the blockade of the United States by German submarines was a success.

BREAD RIOTS

We have an exhibition of a country with a hundred million people being starved by reason of the excessive prices in the midst of plenty, of people suffering, staying children begging officials to give them relief by procuring them food at reasonable prices.

The crops of 1916 were good. The coal output of the mines never was so large, yet in the midst of all this our people are starving and freezing. Not only surplus crops have been shipped to Europe, but the total output of our mills have been contracted for at excessive prices and are being shipped out as fast as possible, leaving our dealers to buy the little that can be had at the prices paid by the European agents, and when it reaches the retailer it is so high in price that it is prohibitive.

Both New York and Philadelphia have been the scenes of rioting during the past week by reason of this condition.

In the midst of this situation the administration sits supinely by "watchfully waiting," but still goes on with preparations for the inaugural on a magnificent scale next week. Members of Congress have expressed their willingness to take any action suggested by the President that will have an immediate effect.

THE GOAL CAR SHORTAGE

Somerset county coal operators say that car allotments have fallen so short that the supply is only about one-sixth of the allotments. Plants supposed to receive 35 cars a day are lucky to get 35 cars a week.

There has been so much public discussion of car shortages in this section that most miners understand what has happened to reduce their earnings. They know that they can make as high as \$5 and \$6 a day digging coal whenever there are any cars to load.

They know that, quite frequently there are no cars. If the cost of living were normal, or near normal, many miners would declare many extra holidays. But even the 35-day man cannot afford to loaf in these times.

The practical effect of car shortage on labor is to create a condition which labor knows from experience as "hard times" is to turn the laborer's thoughts back to Europe whence he came. Continued failure of car supply, then, would mean a stampede to Europe upon the restoration of peace.

It may also stimulate migration to Canada, Australia and South America, especially since car shortage at the mines is being closely associated with freight blockades and embargoes bringing insufficient and inferior food supplies at excessive prices.

At the bottom of the trouble lies more than paralysis of shipping. The railroads need new equipment. When it pays to unload and reload coal, or to load cars by hand, tonnage is at too high a premium. There is not enough of it. The situation cannot be relieved until there are more cars.

Cars cost money, contract prices are extraordinarily high, railroad earnings have left no great surplus funds on hand, and though money is cheap the borrowing capacity of carriers is closely restricted and the government attitude toward railroads is depressingly uncertain.

We have a highly artificial depression limiting the earning capacity of our miners. The depression will last and grow worse, unless Washington develops some capacity for regulation and management of industrial conditions.

To talk about being in a state of railroad and industrial preparedness for war when we are in a state of general demoralization for peace is one of the finest bits of nonsense with which we have been wasting a lot of good newspaper space.

Condensed milk 5 and 10c cans, standard corn 10c can, extra standard tomatoes 12 1/2c per can at Habel & Phillips.

Children Cry FOR FLETCHER'S CASTORIA

STATE REQUIRES MORE REVENUES

Committee on Ways and Means Hard at Work.

WANT SOMETHING TO TAX

Many Suggestions Made But Nothing Definite Has Been Agreed Upon. Bread Must Weigh One Pound Per Loaf, According to Bill in Legislature—Automobile Measure.

Harrisburg, Pa., Feb. 27.—With charities demanding more appropriations than ever before and the expense of maintaining great departments of state government constantly piling up, the legislature is confronted with the big problem of raising more revenues.

A committee specially named for this purpose recently organized and discussed the probable ways and means of getting additional funds by means of taxation.

Following the conference, a statement was issued setting forth the various plans presented to the committee, with the announcement that no final agreement had been reached upon any particular measure. It was the sense of the gathering, however, that not less than \$5,000,000 a year increase must be had.

Among the suggestions made was one for a horizontal increase of one mill upon all of the present subjects of taxation, but objection was raised to this upon the score that it might work injustice in many ways, and the idea will probably be modified.

A tax of one mill to be levied by the state upon all real estate and corporate property was proposed, but in view of the fact that Pennsylvania has had no direct taxation upon real estate for many years, there was opposition to this feature.

Some advocates of a one mill capital stock tax upon manufacturing companies. This, it was stated, would yield over \$2,000,000 annually.

A plan to increase the minimum automobile license fee from \$5 to \$10, making no changes in the other classes, it was declared, would net \$500,000 additional revenue for state highway maintenance.

Other suggestions included an increase in the bonus on charters taken out in Pennsylvania from one-third of one per cent to one-half of one per cent upon the authorized capital stock.

This was estimated as yielding about \$1,000,000 a year. Addition to the tax on corporate income and gross receipts were also proposed and will probably be favorably considered.

BREAD MUST WEIGH ONE POUND

No loaf of bread weighing less than one pound can be sold in this state, under an amendment to the state pur loaf act of July 14, 1913, introduced by Senator Endsley of Somerset county. The amendment would establish one pound and two pounds as standard weights for a loaf of bread, but would permit a loaf weighing more than two pounds to be sold.

"In no case, however," it reads, "shall any bread be sold unwrapped, unless the weight thereof is plainly and conspicuously marked or branded thereon, nor shall any bread be sold in wrapped packages unless the contents thereof shall be plainly and conspicuously marked on the outside in terms of weight."

Another section of the act would be amended by the bill offered by Senator Endsley so that no dry commodity for which a standard weight is provided by law, shall be sold except by weight, and poultry must be sold by weight. All meats sold in wrapped packages, the bill says, shall be considered commodities and no such wrapped packages of meats shall be sold unless the contents are plainly and conspicuously marked on the outside in terms of weight.

Affects Motorists.

Senator Buckman, of Bucks county, will introduce into the legislature a bill providing for the appointment by the state highway commissioner of inspectors at bridges over the Delaware river to impose the same restrictions upon automobiles bearing New Jersey licenses entering this state as are now imposed upon Pennsylvania cars going into that state.

The automobile act of 1913, sponsored by Senator Buckman contained a reciprocity clause by which the same privileges are accorded automobiles coming from other states as are accorded to those commonwealths licensed in Pennsylvania.

In the case of New Jersey automobiles from there are permitted to enter Pennsylvania at any time and remain for any period up to fifteen days.

At present, however, according to Senator Buckman, Commissioner of Motor Vehicles DDL of New Jersey, who evidently construes the law in that state to mean that no car from Pennsylvania can be in New Jersey more than fifteen days in any one year, has inspectors stationed at the bridge taking the numbers of Pennsylvania automobiles entering that state and notifying owners they must take out a New Jersey license after it has been shown their cars have been in that state fifteen days in any one year.

At present any car from New Jersey may enter Pennsylvania, remain here for fourteen days, return to New Jersey for a day, and again come back to Pennsylvania for fourteen days.

Most sessions of the legislature have ended in March or April, the latter however, being the favorite month, as the majority of sessions have terminated before the beginning of May. The 1913 session terminated on June 27.

So Many Evils Attend Constant Shifting of Text-Books That Contemplated Law Would Mean Vast Saving to Taxpayers and Prove Beneficial to Public School Pupils.

Harrisburg, Pa., Feb. 27.—It looks as if Pennsylvania is going to fall into line this year with other states and enact a law for uniformity in text-books. A number of members are preparing bills to bring about this reform, which agriculture legislators have been seeking for many years past.

Suggestions as to how the uniformity should be brought about differ greatly, but it is believed all those in favor of the change will be able to agree upon a method satisfactory to everybody but the school book companies. The latter want no uniformity, for every letter of that word spells disaster to their interests.

National educators are constantly criticizing the lack of uniformity in the text-books of the Pennsylvania public schools. They say for one thing, to adopt one grammar, spelling, arithmetic, reader and other text-books and the adjoining district is a different set of books on the same subject is wrong and a grave injustice to children whose parents may move across the line during the school year.

What is perhaps the most serious objection to the present system is the likelihood of certain districts not getting the most modern text-books, and oftentimes books greatly inferior to those adopted in places where unusual care is taken in making selection. In other words, there are text-books and text-books. Some are written by fresh high school graduates and others are the production of high-class teachers in the leading universities and colleges. Without uniformity, a district school board is just as likely to adopt the poor book as the good one, with the result that the children who attend the schools are sufferers.

Then there is the economy reason, and many members will be for the bill because of the saving to the school district. School directors are disposed to change books every year and in certain sections this proves a great extravagance.

The uniformity plan in greatest favor is to have a committee in each county to designate text-books. This committee would consist of the county superintendent and two school men to be appointed by the superintendent of public instruction. This committee would have nothing to do with the purchasing of books and no negotiations with book companies as to price. Their work would simply consist in selecting a list of books to be used in the different grades of the public schools of the county.

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Bill Proposed to Bring About Important Change.

POPULAR IN FARMING COUNTIES

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