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Let George do the Sacrificing While we Dance

Some of the most thought ful Washington observers have been much troubled lately by the power and aggres siveness displayed by certain pressure groups which are hard at work grinding their axes in the capital. Theoretically, the nation is now uni fied, with all citizens determined to do their utmost to help win the war. In actuality, a good many citizens seem more concerned with how they can use the war to serve their own needs, and how they can avoid as much personal sacrifice and inconvenience as possible.

Labor in a number of basic industries is demanding substantial wage increases, despite the obvious fact that higher pay for workers must result in higher costs and higher prices all along the line—thus putting into effect an inflationary spiral that in the long run would hit labor as hard and perhaps har der than any other group.

The heads of some of the big farm organizations, despite their patriotic speeches are fighting tooth and nail for more and bigger subsidies—and they are implacably resisting any and all attempts to place workable ceil ings on farm prices. If these groups win out—and they have tremendous influence in a Congress which is large ly made up of men from agricultural areas—still another inflationary spiral will be underway.

Incidents have been unear thed where certain business interests put their own wish ahead of the needs of the nation. However, it is generally true that the record of industry in this war has been excellent. Furthermore, industry of all kinds is regula ted and controlled to the hilt by the government—which is not true of either labor or agriculture.

Taxpayer groups are also extremely active in Wash ington, and all of them, with a few honorable exceptions, seem to by trying to figure out ways and means to make the other fellow pay for the war. They are all for sacrifice—so long as someone else does the bulk of the sacrificing.

The blackest picture of all in the view of many writers, is found on Capitol Hill itself. Next November, all of the members of the House and a third of the members of the Senate will be up for reelection. There are, of course, congressmen who are not swayed by political consideratios—who are doing their best, and who refuse to play old-fashioned politics-as-usual in attempts to make certain of holding their jobs. Unfortunately for the nation, there are a good many congressmen, in both parties, who seem to be thinking almost exclusively in terms of votes. They don't want to step on the toes of their constituentsThey don't want to awaken them to the unpleasant realities that total war involves. They don't want to vote for bills which will make their constituents have to go without things. They are in short, seeking to please all groups and all interests—and that means that they are doing their best to either dodge difficult issues, or to straddle the fence.

Some of the election campaigns now taking place are in the view of men who grasp the world situation, al most literaly sickening. Political job-seekers are flagrantly pandering to special interests—to labor, agriculture, pension seekers, etc. They treat the war as a sort of side show—in the face of the obvious fact that we and our Allies have as yet not taken a single inch of conquered territory, and the Axis is making tremendous progress on the most vital battlefronts. Every authority is convinced that if we lose this war, we will be subjected to virtual slavery. we will get precisely the same treatment the people of France, Belgium, the Netherlands and other beaten nations have been given. That is the issue which some of the most active seekers after high office are busy dodging now.

It can be argued that such things as this will inevitably happen in a democratic coun try—in a country where any one has a right to speak his mind, no matter how empty and misguided that mind is, and where any one can advance himself as a candidate for almost any office he chooses. It can also be argued that these "democratic weaknesses" could conceivably lead to our defeat in war. About the only cure for this kind of politics is public opinion. Next November,the people will elect a Congress which, in all probability,will run the country until the war is over. This will be one of the most fateful elections in all our history.

NOT TOO HOT NOT TOO COLD

Why Force Needless Restrictions?

It has been proposed that retail stores be forced too drastically curtail their stocks. The order would include commodities which are abundant, no less than those which are scarce.

If, in time, war necessity dictates so stringent an order, it will have to be accepted. But there seems to be no reason why it should be put into effect now. The government, through the priority system, already has complete control over the manufacture and distribution of goods.

There are a multitude of reasons why inventory control should not be imposed. It would force thousands of stores tocancel orders they have placed, thus creating a panic in the commodity market. It would in the long run, cause the closure of many stores—they simply couldn't obtain enough goods to make their continued operation economically possible. And, above all, it would work a definite and unnecessary hardship on the consumer.

By and large, American retailers have been outstanding in cooperating with the government. That applies to great chain systems and independent stores with equal force If, in a few cases, excessive and unjustified inventories have been built up by retailers, corrective steps can and should be taken. But there is no reason for punishing all stores because of the action of a few.

Manufacturers, retailers and consumers will make any necessary sacrifices without grumbling. But they should not be forced to accept destructive restrictions for which there is no current justification.

The Price Situation

The Office of Price Administration recently allowed an increase in the retail ceiling price at which certain fruits and vegetables can be sold. At the time, Price Administrator Henderson said that he regarded the move as inflationary in nature, but that it was necessary as a result of Congress' refusal to grant subsidies to businesses in cases where the original price ceilings were not high enough to permit an adequate return.

The consumers of this country should thoroughly understand the situation. If the original price order had been allowed to stand untouched, thousands of retail stores in all lines would have been forced out of business—simply because they were legally bound to sell some goods at no profit whatsoever, and a few items at an actual loss. And, if these stores are to be kept in business, it will unquestionably be necessary to increase price ceilings on a considerable number of commodities, including manufactured goods as well as food. Gasoline provides an excellent example of the problem. The necessity for shipping gas and other oil products overland, instead of by tanker, has greatly increased the oil companies' costs. That increase can be made up in only one of two ways—by gov ernment subsidies, or by higher retail prices.

There is much to be said for the subsidy suggestion. It would be tem porary, and would automaticaly be dropped as soon as stringent price control is relaxed and goods are again sold on a supply-and-demand basis. It would stabilize prices, and so check inflation. It may, in time ,prove to be the only way to protect the consuming public.

In the meantime, it is the plain duty of theOPA to permit retailers to charge prices which will give them enough profit to keep in business. Widespread retail failures and closures would have a runious effect on this country. This must be prevented.

The Truth About the Airlines

A good many people seem to have gained the impression that the government has taken over the com mercial airlines—and that you can't travel by air unless you are armed with a Federally-issued priority certificate.

Fortunately, for the welfare of the country, there is no truth in that. The fact is that the airlines are still under private ownership and private operation. They have turned over a considerable number of their transports to the military services—but they are still operating 165 airplanes in scheduled service.

If you wish to travel by air you can still do so, precisely as you can send your letters and your express by air. It is obvious that not every plane can be filled to the limit with blueprints, war cargo or big-shot officials. The planes run on strict schedules, and anyone is perfectly free to make a reservation. There may, of course, be instances when all the seats are taken. But that has happened in the past, and the situation is not greatly different now. While some lesser routes have been abandoned for the duration, the transports are still flying their principal routes and will continue to fly.

The fact that transport service is still available to civilians is a tribute to the airlines' efficiency. In a recent 7-day period, for example, it was anticipated that 70 planes would have to perform work for the Army exclusively. In actuality, only 29 planes were so engaged—because those 29 planes were operated with so little delay and waste that they did the entire scheduled job.

Naturally, war needs come first with the airlines, as with all other businesses. But the rumors that the airlines are now a government operation, and can no longer serve civilians, are completely unfounded. America's fine system of private commercial air transport is not ham strung and is serving the nation as never before.

St. Swithians Day

St. Swithians day did not carry out the prophesy of the old legend which says that on that day determines whether there will be rain, or sunshine for the next forty days.

The day dedicated to this old saint's memory is the 15th of July, which comes very soon after harvest If it rains, according to the old legend, there will be rain for forty days or if fair, there will be none for that same period.

St. Swithian, according to the legend, was a holy man who devoted his life to helping his brethern in the old monastery and making the gardens as beautiful as possible.

He was very humbleminded and he chose a very low place in the grounds where he wished to be laid. After he had ben buried sometimes the monks decided that he should be buried in a more suitable place and orders were given to have his body removed, but when ever they tried to remove him it would begin to rain, so after forty days of pouring rain, they decided to let his body rest where he had chosen.

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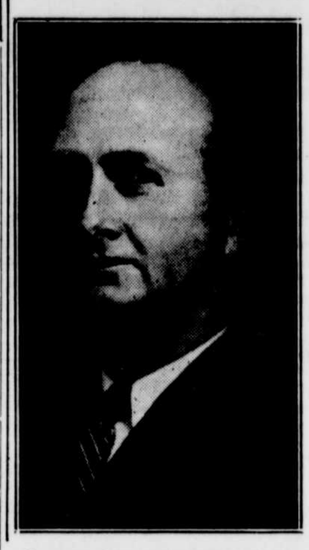

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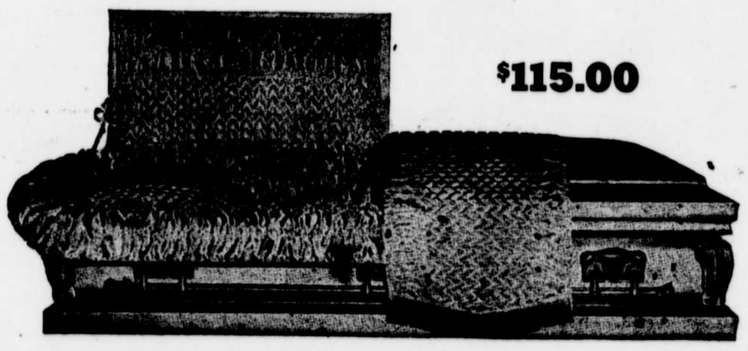

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