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FIRE PREVENTION AND DEFENSE

Today, all important American industry is cooperating in an effort to expedite the defense program. And the service industries, no less than the manufacturing industries, are doing their part. A particularly salient example of this is provided by the National Board of Fire Underwriters, representative organization of the country's principal stock fire insurance companies.

In 1917, the National Board conducted a nation-wide conservation campaign for the reduction of fire loss in American industry. Grain, cotton and other vital commodities were safeguarded from destruction. Plans were developed for the swift and efficient installation of fire fighting facilities for army cantonments, the Navy Department, the Emergency Fleet Corporation, and other departments. A fire prevention bureau was established by the Board in the War Department at Washington, which inspected all buildings turned to military use, and submited recommendations for lessening hazards. On top of that, a widespread campaign to instruct the public in fire prevention was carried on.

Now the National Board has again offered its services to the government. It will provide its facilities to help reduce fire loss during the present emergency.

MOTOR TRUCK OPERATORS BACK SAFETY EFFORTS

One of the most pleasing reactions received by Governor Herbert R. O'Conor's Maryland Traffic Safety Committee in its efforts to reduce traffic accidents has been from the major motor truck fleet operators who, practically unamimously, have endorsed the Committee's selective Enforcement Program, and promised their complete cooperation.

This program provides for a stricter policy of supervision over the roads and during the hours when records show serious accidents have been occurring. In connection with this new program, the Maryland Traffic Safety Committee has recommended an increase in the personnel of the Maryland State police, as well as the Traffic Division of the Baltimore City Police Department. Suspension and revocation of licenses of repeating offenders is one of the objectives of the Committee.

While in number of actual fatalities, the first half of the year 1940 showed an increase of 26 deaths, over the like period in 1939, the comparison is softened by the fact that for the same period in 1940 nearly 18,000 more automobiles were licensed and using the highways. Nevertheless, the committee is far from satisfied, and is exerting every effort in the matter of law enforcement, public education and better engineering to bring about a continually lessening number of deaths.

STATE DEFENSE COUNCIL

All sections of the State are represented on the Maryland Council of Defense and Resources, annoucement of the creation of which was made by Governor Herbert O'Conor, to serve as an Advisory Body in problems that might arise in connection withe any emergency.

The non-political group of nineteen outstanding citizens, representing mostly non-military groups, man-power, health, transportation, etc., in case the country be faced with the necessity of armed defense, and to coordinate the state's activities with those of the Federal government.

Governor O'Conor will call a meeting of the group to discuss conditions in the State this month, and will invite members of the Council to attend with him the joint conference on law enforcement problems of National Defense to be held in Washington early in August.

Japan is reliably estimated to be spending $15 every 60 seconds in the U. S. promoting tourist trade to Japan and creating good will.

Canada spends a dollar every minute importing serums and antitoxins for animals from the U. S.

WASHINGTON IS ALSO MUDDLED

By J. E. Jones

Washington, D. C., July—The political packs and newshawks in the National Capitol usually have a lot of "inside-dope" about public affairs, but the exciting political events of July find Washington folks about as muddle-headed as the arguing-citizens of any other village, or city. Franklin D. Roosevelt has been the Nation's most popular citizen for many years. The visit for a day of Wendell Wilkie to Washington was an astonishing event, inasmuch as it was the occasion of more enthusiasm than has been shown for a Republican leader since those times when Herbert Hoover was in the White House.

The only contribution I am able to add to what you already know, or may read in your home-town paper, or hear about in the next radio broadcast is that authentic polls and "snooping-search" shows that the country as a whole is very closely divided in its support of the Democratic versus Republication party, and vice versa. We learn here in the District of Columbia, which is the dividing line between North and South, that Republicans actually expect to carry Southern States. That would be strange.

Naturally, muddle-headed and excited individuals and leaders are alike, no matter where you find them--but there are cool-headed calculators and analysts everywhere. This latter class tell us that it is too early to forecast results of the November elections--but they do agree that it is likely to be a hard, tough, and close fight, in which there is plenty of good reason for both parties to expect victory when the votes are counted.

* * * *

NO POLITICS IN THIS

The National Labor Relations Board was created as an independent agency by Congress in July, 1935. Therefore it is five years old.

The principal power of this Board concerns the rights of employes to organize and select their representatives for collective bargaining. The Board was given ample authority to protect the rights of employes and employers.

One of the purposes of the Board was stated in the Federal law as follows: "To decide whether the unit appropriate for the purposes of collective bargaining shall be the employer unit, craft unit, plant unit, or subdivision thereof." The Board also was given full authority to conduct hearings and to issue orders, and to prescribe rules and regulations to carry out its obligations to workers and employers in the public interests.

It is a matter of common knowledge that this Board was regarded as the first step in a system that would prevent open conflicts and settle disputes between employes and employers. The people were promised amendments of the law after it was tried out and when necessary changes were apparent.

The sit-down strikes afforded the first great test. The CIO and John L. Lewis were responsible for those strikes. The American public was outraged by the brutal performances, and Mr. Lewis' organization made no attempts to perpetuate the sit-downs. Amendments to the law were plainly needed but Congress neglected to act.

For the past five years the war between the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations has continued, dispite the Wagner Act. The appeals of the President and his Administration for peace and harmony among the two big labor organizations has fallen on deaf ears. Still there have been no amendments to the National Labor Relations Act.

* * * *

DO YOU BELIEVE IN FAIRIES?

If you believe in fairies you may be able to do something with the latest suggestion from Washington that there will be "a balanced budget in the near future." You can't look into the future with starry-eyes, through a telescope, and find anything in space that resembles a budget.

* * * *

NOT DEBATABLE

Long-winded statements concerning possibilities of Japan and Germany setting up "their own imitation Monroe Doctrines" seem to answer none of the questions.

Secretary of State Hull took the short cut when he advised Hitler that the American Monroe Doctrine is not open to discussion--that it means just exactly what it says! That was a straight shot, because the Monroe Doctrine is a chip on Uncle Sam's shoulder which Europe and Asia are warned they must not attempt to knock-off.

FOOD STAMPS

The food-stamp plan, which began as a cautious experiment 14 months ago in Rochester, N. Y., has mushroomed into a major attempt to solve the paradox of an overabundance of farm products and hunger in the cities.

Extending the plan to 20 new areas during the past fortnight, the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation announced that food stamps are in use in 83 areas and in every state except Delaware and West Virginia.

Though it now costs upwards of three million dollars a month, and is expected to cost between seven and eight millions by fall when it may be spread over 150 communities, the expanded food-stamp plan is esentially the same as the original experiment. Relief clients are permitted to exchange their allowances, up to $1 a week for each person in the family, a dollar's worth of general foods from any cooperative grocer. In addition they receive a stamp which can be traded for 50 cents worth of foods officially designated as "surplus"—mostly butter, eggs, pork, etc.

The phenomental growth of the plan is attributed to two reasons: (1) The troublous events abroad have cut off many markets for farm products normally exported, thus piling up bigger surpluses over here; (2) no important group opposes the plan. Business men like it because it works through grocers and is thus within the profit system; farmers like it because it provides them with a fair-price market for their otherwise unsaleable surpluses; relief clients like it because it expands their food budget; the public likes it because it prevents disaffection among farmers and reliefers and because destruction of the food would be silly.

HAY FEVER PATIENTS EAT CURE

A new treatment for hay fever said to be as simple as eating bread is disclosed in a patent (No. 2,207,-415) awarded in Washington, D. C., to Kurt Rosenwald of New York. The treatment is claimed to eliminate the injection method and would in effect permit sufferers to eat their way out of their affliction.

Tests carried out on patients in the midst of severe attacks of hay fever, which merely involved eating several slices of a specially prepared bread, gave relief within several hours, the patentee asserts.

According to the conventional method of hay fever therapy, the resistance of the patient is built up by injection of extracts obtained from the particular pollen to which the victim is sensitive.

According to the new treatment, the pollen is fermented with yeast. The composition product thus formed may be then incorporated in flour, grape juice or any type of food. Flour is mixed with one one-hundredths per cent of the pollen to be baked into bread.

For the relief of hay fever, one need eat only a few slices of this bread, the patent asserts.

Likewise, pollen may be added to unfermented grape juice or the mash of which beer is made and yeast then mixed in. After fermentation resulting grape juice or beer is also said to relieve hay fever when imbibed. —New York Times.

ALMSHOUSES TO BE ABOLISHED

Governor O'Conor has appointed a commission to draw up plans looking to the abolishment of county almshouses, which he brands "a blot on the good name of Maryland."

"Conditions surrounding these institutions have been described as deplorable and I intend to exert every effort to bring about their abandonment," the Governor said.

"At the same time," he added, "it is my desire to insure the proper care of dependent aged and infirm persons in our State."

A little more than two months ago Governor O'Conor announced he would ask the next Legislature to appropriate money for the erection of State hospitals to care for the indigent.

Because of the fact that "careful attention must be given to the financial aspects of the situation," he said he appointed Walter N. Kirkman, director of the Bureau of budget and Procuremtnt, as chairman of the commission.

"The question of cost will be a primary one," he added.

Leaders of medical, welfare and labor organizations are included in the twelve men and women named by the Governor.

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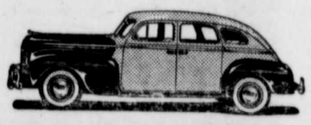

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A 10-point program designed to promote improvement of motoring conditions throughout the State was unamimously adopted by the recently organized Maryland Advisory Board of the Keystone Automobile Club.

The program embraces recommendations for revision and simplification of the State motor vehicle laws, uniformity in traffic signs and signals, designation of more one-way streets in Baltimore and year-round availability of public playgrounds in the interest of highway safety.

Misery loves the kind of company that will listen to a hard-luck story.

Benefit payments made by the Maryland Unemployment Compensation Board now exceed $20,000,-000, with more than $18,000,000 remaining in the reserve fund available for future demands.

Original claims for unemployment benefits filed in June numbered 7,913, a reduction of nearly twenty-five per cent from the month of May, which means that payments are going down.

It seems to work in baseball as in war. When errors put men on the bases, they usually account for a lost game.

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The United States imports five pounds of deer skin every minute.