

Red Tape Costs

By Dick Young

AN attempt of the municipal government to purchase two small items, totaling \$32.50 in cost, is a fair example of the necessity of cutting government red tape in this matter of priorities.

Back in August the City Purchasing Department began inquiries for the purchase of brass corporation stops and brass couplings for use in the Water Department.

The city's general priority ratings, including A-1's for emergencies, A-2 for pumping equipment and A-5 for general maintenance and repairs, were not sufficient for the purchase of these brass items.

It seems to me that saved wads of red tape could be snipped off and much money saved in administrative costs if some general policy could be adopted that generally respected administrative officer of a municipality (let him be mayor, city manager or whate'er) full authority to purchase up to some limit, say \$1,000, any supplies or equipment for maintenance and repairs.

Our City Manager, I am sure, is just as patriotic and just as anxious to hasten war production as any official in WPA, OPA, or any other agency in Washington.

Such a system, I am sure, would hasten instead of impeding the war effort. At any rate, it would help to reduce the cost of the Federal Government, and it would be far more satisfactory for local governmental officials, who now are frequently "burned up" by the delays and unnecessary red tape that come in the effort to make certain purchases.

Side Glances



"Let's look at the old travel folders again, just for fun! This is the year we planned on when you'd retire, the boys take over the business, and we'd go for a world cruise!"

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Platform Of The People

We Are Accused

Editors, The News: I SHOULD like to ask you several questions. Do you hold the good people of Charlotte who have passed a law against murder responsible for the fact that this city has become known as the "murder capital" of the United States?

And you will further assure me that you are back of the new City of Police to remedy this. Your services are at his command. Very well, but why will you blame the good people of Charlotte who have enacted a law against physical and spiritual death for the fact that there are such people as the Ellipards in the community? Why not be logical? Why not offer to back up enforcement of this law which has never been enforced because people like you work against it? At least that is the inference I get from your editorials.

During this newspaper week I notice that you newspaper people are doing a lot of boasting about freedom of the press, wondering if in some cases it is merely freedom to have the pain greased with the filthy lucre of the liquor interests? Merely to say what YOU WANT to say?

And I want to warn you of this: Whatsoever is sown, the same will be reaped. Sow the wind and you reap the whirlwind. Temporary prosperity may result from backing liquor interests but in the long run you reap the whirlwind. "Righteousness exalteth a nation, and sin is a curse to any people." "The wages of sin is death."

You Must Drop In Sometimes, Meet Me, and Call Me. North Wilkesboro Newsweekly and Mrs. Willie Johnson moved in the house near Henry Brooks' fish pond last week.

Everything's Moving Faster These Days

—By Herblock



Money For War Collect It And Waste It

By Paul Mallon

THAT additional \$6,000,000,000 tax touch Treasury Secretary Morgenthau has been talking about vaguely, is the old expenditures tax, to be dusted off, revised, and simplified.

This tax is to be offered atop the \$8,000,000,000 of new taxes in the bill now being passed by Congress, and the \$10,000,000,000 already being collected—for a total levy of \$18,000,000,000, nearly twice as much as at present.

The expenditures tax was laughed out of Congress when it was presented first some weeks ago. The Treasury thought it simple, but no one else did, unless they used the word with another meaning. As straight as anyone could get it, the Treasury wanted to make citizens pay taxes on their total living expenses, which would require everyone to keep books. It probably could not have been efficiently enforced.

Treasury tinkers are working it now into a sales tax form, where they at least would be able to collect it. Details have not been decided, but one form now being considered would require each citizen to hold an over-all rationing card and pay an expenditures (sales) tax on each purchase made above a certain exempted amount.

For instance, you might pay nothing on the first loaf of bread, but a 10 per cent tax if you wanted a second one. Congress is not ripe for this, but the Treasury may hoodlum it up a bill by getting the new economic lid-stiff, Justice Byrnes, to come out for it.

Even in more efficient form, it seems to offer an appalling system of rationing—tax regimentation over the lives of the people—and, apparently, only for the purpose of getting around the simpler, but hated, "sales tax" because liberals do not like that term. Nevertheless, the Treasury will press the idea in some form on Congress, immediately after the present bill is passed.

The abandoned federal savings tax—requiring every wage earner to invest a certain amount in Government bonds—will be pushed again at the same time or later. This would raise about \$13,000,000,000 more, to double the amount which the Treasury is now taking in (\$13,000,000,000 a year) in War Savings Bonds.

This voluntary sales system cannot be pushed much higher. The inspiring patriotic campaign of the month prior to the election of September, although the goal for the month was \$75,000,000.

Mr. Morgenthau graciously collected additional last minute returns by telegraph, to swell the totals that we need.

We need copper, not gold. We need zinc, lead, nickel and iron. We need tin. We need what we need. They will buy us airplanes, engines, electric wiring for bombers, armor plate for our tanks and high-alloy steel for our gun barrels. We don't need gold now except for filling teeth. We have 22,000,000,000 dollars' worth of gold, which should be enough to last through the war, so we finally do the sensible thing. We stop wasting the labor of miners who have been digging needless gold and we put them to digging metals that we need.

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Landlubbers

Lewis' Miners See Through The St. Lawrence Seaway

The little reader may have wondered why on earth the United Mines Workers, John L. Lewis' nomads, saw fit to take a trip, much less to have resolved against the proposed St. Lawrence Seaway. This project, long dear to the President's heart, has been represented as a means of giving the Middle West practically an ocean frontage, with great liners stopping up to bustling wharves in Cleveland, Chicago, Milwaukee and points west as far as Duluth.

To these docks the Mid-Western farmers would, in time, bring their grain and dump it down the holds of ships, whence it would be wended through the Great Lakes and the proposed canals to connect them, out into the stream of the St. Lawrence and on over the seven seas.

Surely, John L. Lewis has enough on his mind left in his nature, and the United Mines Workers a fellow-feeling for the Mid-West growers of grain, to be carried away by this vast down-the-sea undertaking. Nope?

The explanation of the coal miners' opposition is simple. They have spotted the St. Lawrence Seaway for what it is—primarily a vast and expensive waterpower project for New York State and Canada, and secondarily a sea-lane of dubious value. And wherever the country turns to water for its power, displacing steam, the market for coal is by so much contracted.

Counter-Attack

Congress Puts Delayed Draft Blame on Army, Navy and SS

In the basis of the latest evidence, you decide to accept it at face value, would appear that Congress, but not the Army, Navy and SS, are to be blamed for delaying the draft of the 18- and 19-year-old boys to service. All the while, as action was held up, it looked very much like a political maneuver to the nation.

No, says the House Military Committee, it wasn't Congress at all. That bill, presented by Representative Widaworth of New York, has been waiting for over a month, because Chairman May can get no recommendations from the military or draft agencies. Thus far, there has been no answer to the Myl letter.

Congress, doubtless eager to rub off its own stigma, suspects that there will be no answer. He has already brought his own current drive to enlist the youngsters as volunteers.

That's what the House says, and not what Army, Navy and Selective Service officials have said from time to time, with increasing force. It has remained for Washington correspondents and the people themselves to accuse Congress of cooling off the hot issue until after elections. We would hasten to make no such charge; neither would we accept readily the fact that the armed services are not ready for action on the youngsters.

Lissen, Warden

Lightning Bugs in Blackout Stand Up for Rights, by Gum

Millions, too many millions, are learning the facts of war as they go. Struggling won't help, we're afraid. The simple way is best. Rather than try to read some mystic meaning into the communications, Americans may as well accept the fact that the war has come home. It here to stay for a while, and is going to become more and more an untractable guest.

We're thinking now of those rebellious little people, the deliers of air raid wardens. A blackout is not for them. They will carry on as ever. We note in Maryland recent reports of persons who found guilty of violating blackout regulations, and called to accounts.

The list, if you remember that those are indicted, if U. S. citizens, sounds a little foolish: A pharmacist showed a light in his home when he opened his refrigerator to procure medicine for his wife. He was caught as saying, "Wardens can't see what we want to do." The judge told him: A war-plum workers' lights glowed. He told wardens he was "looking" and got "breakdown" in the dock.

These little things be hard to understand, though the war is far away.

Of Another Day

Gold Is Passing Out

By Raymond Clapper

WHAT strange reading McKinley and his gold-standard generation would have found in the newspaper this week. WPI has decided to close all the latest gold news of the country.

Note the reason for that action. It would have made no sense whatever a few years ago. WPI is shutting down on gold mining because the miners are more valuable at work other.

We need copper, not gold. We need zinc, lead, nickel and iron. We need tin. We need what we need. They will buy us airplanes, engines, electric wiring for bombers, armor plate for our tanks and high-alloy steel for our gun barrels. We don't need gold now except for filling teeth. We have 22,000,000,000 dollars' worth of gold, which should be enough to last through the war, so we finally do the sensible thing. We stop wasting the labor of miners who have been digging needless gold and we put them to digging metals that we need.

This is the prosaic end to something that has been second only to love in the hunger of the human race. The string of gold has saturated history and fabled throughout the age of man, from Midas to the Kluge, from the quest of the Golden Fleece to Columbus' bright yellow gold which first meant to attract the eye of early man. It has been the obsession of human dreams, the common medium of exchange, the parastock of civilization, down to the time when the Hoover Administration tried to control all prices by manipulating the purchase price of the metals that we need.

We were slow to see that gold had lost its place in the scheme of things. After the last World War, some of our penetrating thinkers recognized that production of useful things, not the pursuit to make useful things, was what counted. That was pointed out in 1919 by Sir Halford J.

month's total above \$75,000,000 in order that the movie people (some of whom worked themselves into nervous breakdowns) would not feel their efforts lacked success. But this experience in voluntary sales would have brought the Treasury closer to the forced savings idea.

If all the tax and bond plans of the Treasury are adopted, Government would take next year about \$56,000,000,000 from its people, nearly half the national income.

When these plans go forward grumbling is growing in Congress and elsewhere about the waste of money in Washington. One of the few tangible examples has been offered by Representative Engle of Michigan, in a study he made of the \$70,000,000 new War Department Building across the Potomac River.

Congress appropriated only \$35,000,000 for this building, was told it would be built for that amount. It did not fit out, until Engle spoke the other day, that the building cost twice that much, with no appreciable increase in floor space.

Next to the new War Department Building is a Government-built commercial airfield which cost around \$13,000,000, three or four times what it was supposed to be. Another example is the bridge from them is the colossal new Jefferson Memorial, supposed to cost \$2,350,000, useless for any war purpose, but no surplus.

Attaction of Congress, newspapers, or citizen organizations, will not do any good toward diminishing waste.

They never learn the facts until the money has been spent, as in the case of the war building, the airfield and as in a notable case last year of the Bureau of Information, facetiously known as Mellett's Madhouse. That expensive structure was constructed to tell foot-weary business men where to go in the Government, but is now of use only as recruiting headquarters for the WACCS and WAVES and other services.

Waste, the inevitable byproduct of war, will never be eliminated until realistic decisions are made. It only can exert the authority, or designate an authority, to save the money before it is gone.

Shifting gold miners to copper miners is another attempt at realistic economy. Another realistic attempt is price-fixing. Ordinary balance of supply and demand has broken up to ruins, and the prices can't regulate prices under war conditions.

We must break away from dead languages, dead prices, dead rates, and apply this same kind of gold-mining realism to military strategy, to foreign policy and to postwar world relationships.