WEEKLY NEWS ANALYSIS

Costly Coal Strike Crimps U.S.; Plan Further Feed Reductions To Conserve Grain for Food

Released by Western Newspaper Union.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: When opinions are expressed in these columns, they are those of (Western Newspaper Union's news analysts and not necessarily of this newspaper.)



Ill-fed and ill-clad, people in Italy clamber atop army truck as it arrives at dump and seek to salvage scraps of food, discarded clothing, cigarette butts and even cardboard boxes. Men, women and children climb up even before G.I.s can unload refuse.

COAL STRIKE:
Costly Walkout

Though John L. Lewis ordered his United Mine Workers back to the pits under a two-week truce to relieve the critically low supply of fuel, the 1946 coal strike promises to be long remembered as one of the most costly in history, with the necessity for curbing fuel consumption resulting in serious restricitions on public utilities, industry and transport.

Lewis acted as the widespread effects of the walkout on the nation's economy led Senator Eastland (Dem., Miss.) to rise to his feet in the upper chamber to tell his colleagues that as a result of limiting freight movements to essential commodities ". . . the shipment of embalming fluid has been embargoed and we can't bury the dead."

Most spectacular figure in the strike, of course, was the burly, beetle - browed Lewis, United Mine Worker chieftain, who held out for the operators' consideration of his proposal for a health and welfare fund. Holding fast in face of mounting public opposition and senatorial fury, Lewis received the backing of the American Federation of Labor, to which his UMW is affiliated.

John L.'s acceptance of a truce to discuss the No. 1 issue of a health and welfare fund came after dwindling fuel supplies had led the government to urge coal-burning utilities east of the Mississippi and in Iowa, Minnesota and Missouri to follow Chicago's example in reducing power consumption.

With industrial enterprises limited to 24 hours per week use of coal-burning power and stores and movies opened only several hours per day, Chicago, Ill., remained one of the hardest hit of all the municipalities. Reduction in passenger service and limiting of freight shipments to essential commodities, however, served to bring home the strike to all sections of the country.

CONGRESS:
Busy Solons

With the coal strike crippling the economy, U. S. senators moved to take up restrictive labor legislation in the face of public concern over the prolonged walkout even as they were engaged in heated debate over passage of the $3,750,000,000 loan to Great Britain.

Though Democratic Majority Leader Barkley sought to sidetrack consideration of labor measures while feeling over the coal strike flared at white heat, administration forces were compelled to surrender to congressional pressure for action. Ordinarily pro-labor, Senator Lucas (Dem., Ill.) led the fight for legislation which would give the President power to assure continued operation of essential industries in event of union disputes.

Passage of the $3,750,000,000 British loan was assured with the resounding defeat of amendments which would have limited the size of the advance, provided for expenditure of 90 per cent of the funds in the U. S., and extension of interest-free, unsecured loans to veterans. The solons also rejected the argument of Senator Johnson (Dem., Colo.) that since the bill contemplated the raising of money for the loan only the house, which directly represents the people through individual districts, had the constitutional power to originate such legislation.

Pressed by the labor and loan legislation, the senate voted for temporary extension of the draft until the decks are cleared for full consideration of the question.

GRAIN:
Seek Feed Cut

Following the increase in the price of corn, wheat, oats, barley and rye, government officials contemplated a reduction in the ceiling on heavy hogs and a cut in fall breeding as further steps in the conservation program designed to make more grain available for food.

While initiation of the new price program resulted in cancellation of the 30 cent per bushel bonus payment on corn, a similar premium, plus the higher price, was retained on wheat, which is most vitally needed for foreign relief. As a result of the price changes, corn was boosted 25 cents a bushel, wheat 15 cents, rye 10 cents, barley 9 cents and oats 5 cents.

With grain sales being made more profitable than livestock feeding, liquidation of hogs, cattle and poultry was expected to result in increased supplies in the immediate future but less meat later. Even with reduced livestock production growing out of the new price program and the other contemplated government measures, the total supply of meat, eggs and poultry will be above prewar levels, it was said.

Food Prospects

Though farm production remains high, heavy domestic demand and relief needs abroad will out-balance supply, the bureau of agricultural economics reported. Indicative of continued large output, farm income for 1946 is expected to approach last year's record of nearly 21 billion dollars.

The bureau provided this picture of the 1946 food situation:

- Livestock and meat production will continue close to the 1945 level but fall short of demand, with prices of animals pressing against ceilings.
- Dairy products will remain below demand throughout the year with butter supplies short even during the flush season of milk production from May to August.
- Poultry and eggs will be in plentiful supply through most of the year, with scarcities developing in the last three months of 1946. Prices may be moderately lower.
- Fats and vegetable oils may not be in sufficient domestic supply because of large export requirements of lard, shortening and edible oils.

LEND-LEASE:
Make Returns

Over 10 Allied nations have returned approximately one-quarter billion dollars of lend-lease goods thus far and Turkey has become the first country to settle its lend-lease account in full, the foreign liquidation commission revealed.

Of the total returned by Belgium, Brazil, the British empire, China, Egypt, France, the Netherlands, Russia and Yugoslavia, $796,000 worth was reissued to foreign governments under the lend-lease program and $697,000 was sold as surplus.

The first country to settle its lend-lease obligations in full, Turkey agreed to pay the U. S. $4,500,000 within 30 days.

POLAND:

While many citizens of Poland resent the Russian occupation of their country, the Polish peasants are realizing a life-long ambition to own their own land under the Soviet domination, Dr. C. S. Anderson, professor of agricultural education at the Pennsylvania State college, says. Large estates, many of them 2,000 acres or more, were taken from the wealthy landlords and now are being divided among the peasants.

BASEBALL:
Fight Pasquels

At first laughed off by the powerful major league magnates, the Mexican baseball league finally has been taken seriously with the New York Yankees and Brooklyn Dodgers seeking permanent court injunctions against the Pasquel brothers' solicitations of topnotch American performers to play south of the border.

Both the Yankees and Dodgers have received temporary injunctions against the gay grandees' attempts to get U. S. stars to break their American contracts for lucrative Mexican league offers. Granting of permanent restraining orders against Pasquel's agents in this country would seriously crimp their efforts to lure U. S. talent southward.

In going after the Pasquels, Branch Rickey, president of the Dodgers, sadly proclaimed: " . . . I consider the Pasquel league a temporary nuisance rather than a permanent threat. It is economically unsound. However, this year it could cause irreparable damage to a pennant contender. . . . "

RAILROADS:
Want Higher Rates

Railroad spokesmen pressed for a 25 per cent freight rate increase to cover higher wages and operating costs in hearings before the Interstate Commerce commission in Washington, D. C., while shippers called for a thorough examination of the whole tariff structure before determination of permanent schedules.

Declaring wages have increased $1,300,000,000 since 1941 and the carriers will pay $500,000,000 more for supplies, materials and fuel, Dr. Julius H. Parmelee, railroad economist, averred that the operators will suffer a $345,000,000 deficit this year at present rates.

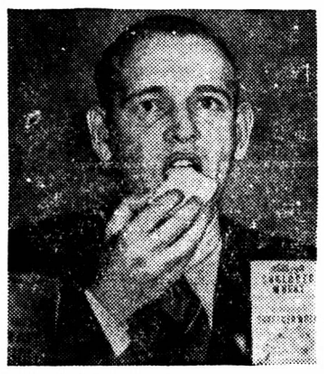
Meeting in Chicago, the National Industrial Traffic league, representing 300,000 shippers, cautioned that higher tariffs may be disastrous to individual industries or discriminatory against them. Asking the ICC to deny the carriers' petition for immediate raises, the organization declared any hearing should provide opportunity for a fair development and examination of facts to determine results.

Corn Borer Hungry Pest

It cost the American farmer nearly $37,000,000 last year to feed the hungry mouths of the European corn borer, but because the estimates are considered conservative in view of the increased acreage and higher yields during the past few years, losses may be even higher.

Losses caused by the borer in 1944 were considered to be about $22,700,000.

Eats Meal From Dump



Seated in the house restaurant in Washington, D. C., Representative Norblad (Rep., Ore.) munched on canned meat and cranberry sauce and drank lemon juice which he said the navy had dumped as garbage in Astoria, Ore. While none of his colleagues or newsmen had the stomach to join him in his repast, Norblad said friends of his had also eaten the food without ill effects and some Astorians had done a brisk business selling some of the discarded fare to restaurants. On the spot, navy officials declared that the food had been thrown away after some personnel had contracted dysentery after eating it.

MURDER:
Town Agog

If traveling through Texarkana, Texas, one would have seen porch lights burning all night, twinkling bulbs hung out in back yards, watchdogs all over town, and the streets deserted. Further, one would have found residents ready to pull a deadly trigger with any false move.

All Texarkana was on the alert against the phantom killer who had slain two couples at night and killed one and wounded another of a pair. Four of the victims were young couples and the two others were elderly married people who had been fired upon through the window of their farm home. All were shot in the head.

While the authorities told Texarkanans to keep their guns at their side and shoot to kill if assaulted, the famed Texas rangers, state highway patrolmen, sheriff's deputies, city policemen and the FBI threw out a dragnet for the murderer. They were joined by thousands of amateur detectives in the search.

U. S. TREASURY:

With receipts for the first nine months of this year already $33,148,000,000 the treasury department estimates receipts for the current fiscal year ending June 30, 1946, will exceed the budget estimate of $38,609,000,000, made in January. Because of income tax returns, receipts in March were the highest of any month during the current year.

At the same time estimated expenditures of $64,654,000,000 are now expected to be lower than the figure projected in January.



Legs and Inflation

Milady's legs have a bearing on inflation, reconversion, prosperity and economics. Those "gams," it seems, are definitely related to the state of the union.

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By being a little skimpy on clothes a girl may be helping America over the crest and hastening a more stable economic order. The less she wears the more she may be lessening the burdens of the President, his cabinet, OPA, the Democratic National committee and perhaps the Big Three.

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All of which is apparent from the news that the subject of one inch more or less of the female knee has been causing huddles and debates in Washington. Whether or not to lengthen skirts has been agitating the Civilian Price Control administration and its advisory committees no end.

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The advisory committee have suggested that Washington permit skirts to be an inch longer, but CPA has been extra cautious. Even a half inch more of leg may mean millions of yards of skirt material. Hence the committee sessions, administration conferences, policy makers' huddles and frantic debates among national leaders, lobbyists, congressmen, etc.

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President Truman's "Hold the Line!" ultimatum may be taken as applying to the kneecap of American womanhood. (Harry has not personally made any public announcement of his convictions on knees. But unofficially he is said to believe them a good thing for the nation.—Ed. note.)

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But the news that they figure in OPA ceilings, inflation problems, etc., and that OPA and CPA are in fact right in milady's boudoir, and that Chet Bowles thinks the legs of our women are definitely involved in the war to stop runaway inflation comes as news to most people.

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The United States Agricultural Department's Division of Marketing and Transportation Research incidentally reports that the length of skirts is a barometer for depressions and prosperity. Possibly along this line:

Full length skirts . . . Hard times.
Two inches above ankles . . . Things picking up.
Four inches above . . . Carloadings improve. Bankruptcies decline.
Six inches . . . Stock market rallies.
Eight inches . . . Splitups and extra dividends. Republicans see chance to get back into power.
Ten inches . . . Barney Baruch suspends park bench deliberations.
Up to knee . . . Dangerous boom. Golf club membership rise to $2,500 a head. War clouds in Europe.
One inch above knee . . . War. Reconversion. Inflation.

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RHYMES FOR A FOOD SHORTAGE

Jack Spratt could eat no fat,
His wife no lean would touch;
They also cut their bread a lot;
We ought to do as much!

Sing a song of six peace,
A pocket full of rye;
Four and twenty blackbirds
Baked within a pie;
When the pie was opened
The birds began to sneeze
"We're terribly embarrassed
By pie in times like these!"

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The state of New York now has a law requiring that all new barbers take out a license. To get it they must submit two photographs, evidence of good moral character, a certificate of health and evidence of an elementary education. We await the first revocation for careless shaving. Or taking too sharp a turn around the ears.

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Yale is opening courses in civilization. The question whether "Boola Boola" is a jungle cry will be gone into thoroughly.

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Add similes: As embarrassed as a fellow who asks for French pastry openly.

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Latest version of a bewhiskered gag: "If I had some butter I'd have some bread and butter if I had some bread."

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Our idea of a completely happy hour in the great American home (1946 model) is the one when the handsome and flawlessly groomed gentleman who poses for the whisky ads learns that his daughter has just been chosen Miss Somebody's Beer.

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If G-Man Hoover ever writes his memoirs a swell title would be "The Yegg and I."

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WONDERMAN OF 1946

A super guy
Is Chester Groater:
He got a brand
New outboard motor!

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CAN YOU REMEMBER—
Away back when it was necessary for a doctor to say "Cut out the bread and all rich pastries?"

OPA IN EFFORT FOR MORE MEAT

The state OPA office this week explained efforts being made to get more meat to consumers.

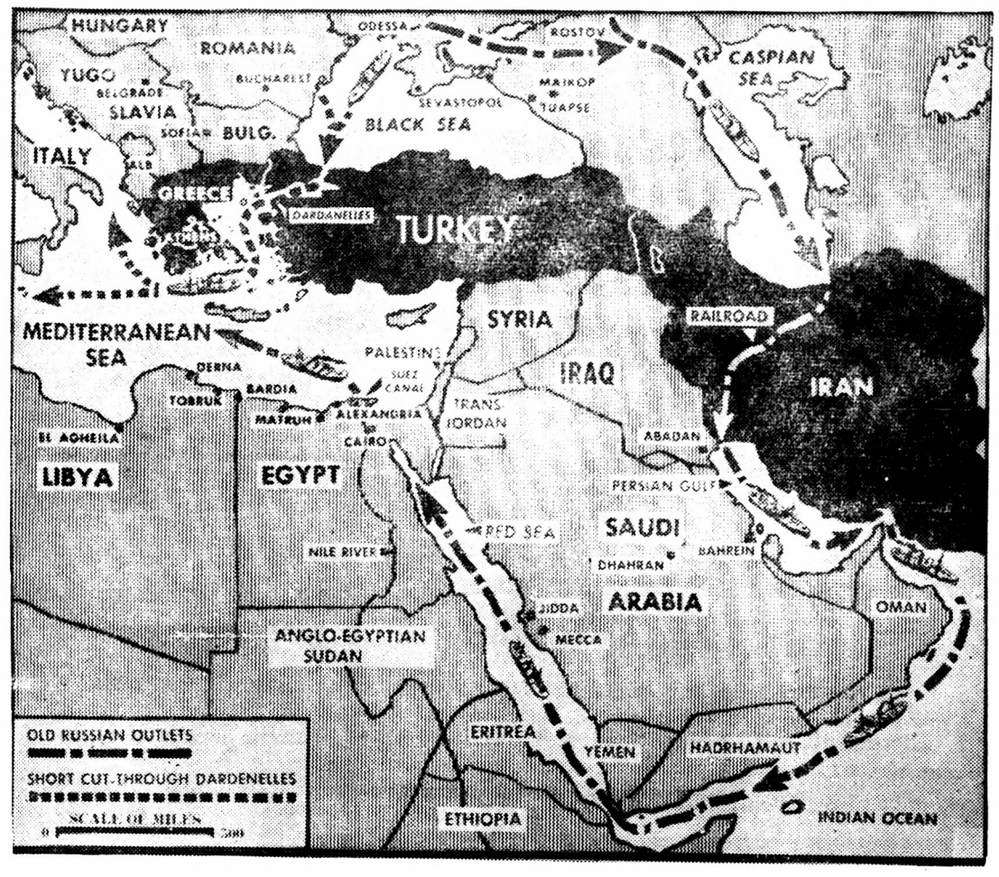
A reinforced staff of OPA meat investigators is engaged in checking activities of the nation's livestock slaughterers in a concerted effort to enforce compliance with the new slaughter control order. Investigations will be made at all pre-retail levels of the industry to check legal permission to slaughter and to see if meat is properly graded, it was stated.

The overall intensive enforcement program by OPA and the Department of Agriculture is aimed against black market operations and will have the cooperation of the FBI on fraudulent claims or subsidies.

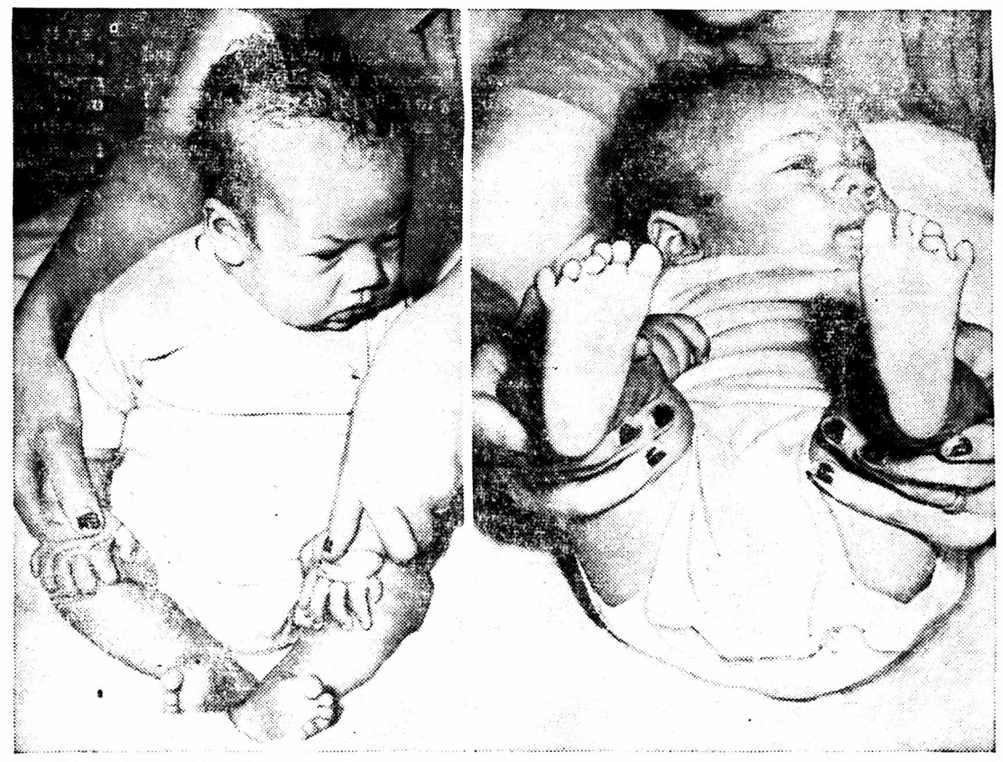
Meat production is higher than ever before in peacetime, OPA said. Production in 1946 is expected to be more than five billion pounds more than in 1939. Ten per cent of the production will be shipped abroad for famine relief. The armed forces take another 10 per cent of the two highest grades of meat.

One cause of the shortage, it was pointed out, is that since 1939, consumer spendable income has doubled. In 1946, the meat available for civilian use is estimated to be about 145 pounds per person, but civilian demand is for 180 pounds.

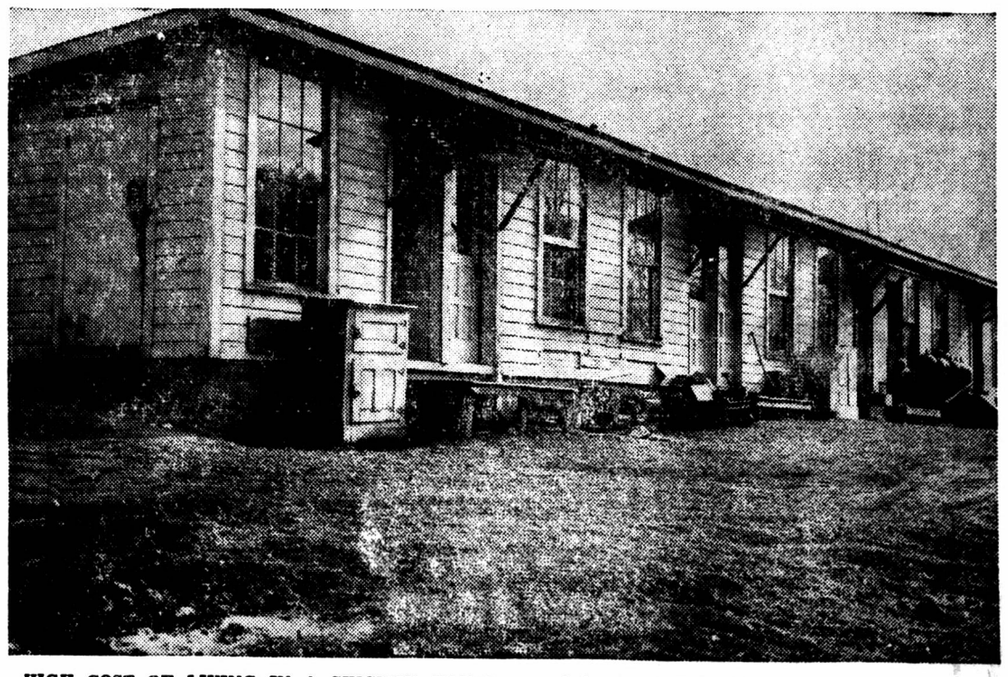
Buy U. S. Savings Bonds



COMPLICATIONS FOR BIG FOUR . . . While the Big Four conference in Paris faces many difficult problems involving treaties and claims and boundaries, the Turkish situation presents future complications. In the dark areas shown are the three buffer states of the Near East and Middle East. Here the strategic and economic interests of Russia and the western powers meet. Control of the Dardanelles is a vital issue and Russia has sought to press claims on Turkey's eastern frontiers. Arrows on the map show how use of the straits cuts 3,000 miles from the supply line to Russia. At the opening sessions the Big Four sidestepped the troublesome Trieste and Italian colonial questions and began the consideration of the Italian-French frontier, the size of Italy's future armed strength and disposal of her surplus shipping. France's proposal to add internationalization of the Ruhr and detachment of the Rhineland from Germany to the agenda, added further complications. British Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin caused another upset by insisting that Belgian, Dutch and Luxembourg representatives be permitted to sit in on such negotiations as spokesmen for nations which suffered heavily through German aggression.



TWELVE BABY FINGERS AND TWELVE BABY TOES . . . When Mrs. Jeanne Diaz, 20, plays "this little piggy" with her three-months-old son, Michael, she has to figure on a few extra porkers. Michael, born March 10, is shown here in two poses in which his mother displays his six fingers on each hand, and six toes on each foot. Physicians in Chicago, where the child lives, are unable to recall similar babies in their experiences. The baby is reported normal in every other way.



HIGH COST OF LIVING IN A CHICKEN HOUSE . . . A few weeks ago this was a chicken coop on the farm of Herbert Studebaker, Waterloo, Iowa. Today it is converted into eight one-room kitchenette apartments, with a utility room for use of all tenants. There were more takers at $52.50 a room per month, than the Studebakers could handle on their poultry farm. More revenue from renting than raising chickens!