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MONDAY, APRIL 10, 1933.

THE SCOTTSBORO VERDICT

THE conviction of Haywood Patterson, first of the Negro defendants in the second trials of the Scottsboro cases, will be appealed. It should be.

Among other things prejudicial to a fair trial, the defense attorney was able to show that the jury law apparently was administered to exclude Negroes from the panel for the case. On more than one occasion during the trial, the state attorneys conducted themselves in such way as to prevent orderly and judicious consideration of evidence by the jury.

In repudiating her testimony at the earlier trial, Ruby Bates last Thursday swore that the other girl in the case, Victoria Price, had framed the Negro youths. Lester Carter, a white friend of the two girls, confirmed the testimony of Ruby Bates.

To execute boys on the discredited evidence of a woman of Victoria Price's character, and following a trial in which racial discrimination seemed to operate in the jury panel, would be unthinkable.

Just as the chief justice of Alabama dissented from the first Scottsboro conviction, and just as the United States supreme court threw out that conviction as a violation of the fourteenth amendment of the Constitution preventing states from depriving "any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law," so the Decatur verdict appears certain to be set aside by a higher court.

THE LAST OF LIFE

TO the seventeen states that had substituted old-age pensions for poorhouses, five more have been added by the legislatures meeting this year. These five—Oregon, North Dakota, Indiana, and Washington—bring the total to twenty-two. At least three more states are expected to join before their legislatures adjourn.

These twenty-five commonwealths are not allowing themselves merely the luxury of being humane; they are showing good, hard sense. Old-age pensions have proved far cheaper than poorhouse maintenance. In times when states, counties and cities must count their pennies, why continue an institution that is both costly and wretchedly cruel?

Pensions also will remove from the glutted labor market competition from elderly folks, whose desperation causes them to work for wages far below standard.

Pending before congress is the Dill-Congrey bill for federal aid to old-age pension states. Its passage now would bring all states into the pension picture and liberate from the fear of want a million aged poor.

President Roosevelt, who has been urged to make this bill subject for a special message, not only advocates the pension plan, but is backed by a party that has made it a party plank.

BANKERS' FORESIGHT

THE New Republic for April 5 contains a little item that compresses a column-length editorial into a few lines.

This item points out that last spring, when the senate committee was just beginning its search for banking abuses, the Harriman National bank in New York decided to voice a protest against such impudence. An advertisement inserted in a New York paper by the bank contained this statement:

Washington is ill-equipped to investigate important matters of commerce and finance affecting the public welfare; and, in the present instance, there is no certainty that it will not uncover things much better left sealed."

It is the Harriman bank, you remember, which was unable to reopen when the bank holiday ended, and whose chairman is now under arrest. . . . Who says our bankers have no foresight?

SELF-SUSTAINING FARMERS

THE department of agriculture predicts that American farmers during the coming year will produce a far higher proportion of their own foodstuffs than has been the case for many years.

An ever-increasing percentage of farmers, the department has found, are grinding their own flour, keeping more eggs and milk for home use, canning and preserving more fruits and vegetables and slaughtering more animals for their own consumption.

Although this development was brought about by hard times, it probably represents a healthy trend. The one-crop farmer, who buys all his food at the village grocery and turns his farm into a kind of factory for the production of one staple commodity, is especially vulnerable to any depression.

The farmer who raises his own food at least is sure that he never will go hungry. And that, in times like those through which we have been passing, is an assurance worth having.

FUTURE OF DIRIGIBLES

THEY won't be any more big airships built," says Congressman Carl Vinson.

"Those things never were safe and they never will be," says the man in the street.

These remarks probably sum up pretty accurately the reaction of the nation following the tragic loss of the Akron. A country which had become one of the two foremost advocates of giant lighter-than-air craft seems now, stunned by an unexpected disaster, to be ready to wash its hands of the dirigible altogether.

Certainly there seems to be plenty of warning for such feeling.

The aviation records of the last decade are with dirigible accidents. In this country we have seen the Shenandoah and the Akron.

England still recalls the loss of the

R-101; going back a little farther we can remember the destruction of the Roma, the ZR-2, and others.

Each ship, when launched, was the "last word" in aerial safety and comfort; each came, inexplicably and suddenly, to disaster.

Is the giant dirigible an invention which can not, in the very nature of things, be made safe and reliable? Is this triumph of the inventor and the engineer a development which, having been experimented with at great cost in lives and money, must be abandoned?

Must the conquest of the air depend henceforth solely on the airplane?

Right now probably most of us would answer all of those questions in the affirmative.

And yet, even now, we might be wise to delay rendering a final verdict. Herr Eckener and the Graf Zeppelin stand as cogent arguments on the other side of the case. Lieutenant-Commander Wiley, fresh from the wreckage of the Akron, urges that development of the dirigible be continued.

The new Macon is yet to be tested, and the navy contains plenty of men ready to stake their lives on her soundness.

Meanwhile, we can only sorrow over the loss of the men who died in the Akron. Their deaths, and not the destruction of the dirigible, constitute our greatest loss.

NATIONAL PLANNING

TWO years ago proposals for national economic planning were pushed rapidly aside by government and business officials, who still believed that things would take care of themselves if let alone.

Today, though economic planning has not been accepted openly as the way out of our difficulties, its philosophy is being incorporated rapidly into our national thought and legislation. And none of the measures proposed for rescuing us from economic chaos has more promise than this.

Several years ago economists pointed out that production could be controlled if the government kept a watchful eye and a firm hand on new investments, preventing over-expansion and over-competition. Business men held up their hands in horror.

But today the administration securities bill proposes to give the Federal Trade Commission power to bar from interstate commerce securities of any enterprise which it finds "is not based upon sound principles" or to bar any securities "in the interest of public welfare."

There is no way in which this authority could be exercised intelligently except by means of economic planning.

The bogey which business always has waved in front of economic planning—price fixing—emerges even more plainly as part of the administration's plan to restore agricultural purchasing power.

With agricultural prices fixed, the need for control of some sort over the prices of other commodities will stand forth in glaring relief.

It already is being discussed in connection with the short work week legislation now before congress. If minimum wage legislation, now for the first time seriously proposed, should be enacted, some form of regulating prices probably would follow.

National planning appears frankly in the recommendations of Secretary of Agriculture Wallace for preservation of the nation's forest lands, and even the United States supreme court, last stronghold against social change, recognized the need for planning and control of industry when it invoked the welfare clause of the Constitution to find a trade agreement legal in spite of the anti-trust laws, in the Appalachian Coals case.

The change in sentiment was forecast a few months ago by the Hoover committee on social trends.

"It seems inevitable that the varied economic interests of the country will find themselves invoking more and more the help of the government to meet emergencies, to safeguard them against threatened dangers, to establish standards and to aid them in extending or defending markets," said the committee.

These changes the committee viewed without alarm. "Our property rights remain, but they undergo a change," it pointed out. "We continue to exercise an initial initiative, but that initiative has larger possibilities, affects others more intimately, and therefore is subject to more public control."

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

DECLINES

THE remarkable start made by President Roosevelt indicates the great value to the nation of a cultivated, trained, and alert statesman. It certainly is true that Mr. Roosevelt is entitled to the highest credit for his notable achievements to date.

But he stands out in the nation not only because of what he has done, but also on account of the lamentable absence of many men of similar qualities in our national government.

Apparently, this so-called man of iron has very little in mind except to supply his followers with excitement. This is logical enough, since it was the method by which he attained popularity and power, but it is far from being statesmanship.

Heaven only knows where it would have landed Germany but for the obstacle which Hindenburg represented.

But this striking and challenging fact has been set forth admirably by the "American Observer," journal for the current information of teachers of history and the social sciences:

"A well-known American historian has made a study the results of which surely must be disquieting to those who care greatly for American democracy.

This historian read hundreds of addresses delivered by American statesmen during the first forty years of the republic. He examined these speeches to see how many of them gave evidence of a knowledge of history and economics.

He then read a like number of addresses delivered by American statesmen of first rank during the last forty years and these, too, he subjected to the test to see what evidence they gave that those who delivered them were students of history, economics, and government.

"He found between three and four times as many evidences of historical and economic scholarship in the earlier addresses as he found in those recently delivered.

"Studies such as these—and they will occasion no surprise to those who have followed closely the course of American politics—are genuinely alarming. They indicate that something has been happening during the last century or so that has caused a deterioration in politics.

Certainly there seems to be plenty of warning for such feeling.

The aviation records of the last decade are with dirigible accidents. In this country we have seen the Shenandoah and the Akron.

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proof that from some cause or causes it has come about that leadership of a poor quality is coming to the top.

"There surely has been a vast increase in scholarship in America during these years. But the thinking and reflecting people are exerting a smaller influence in the determination of public affairs.

"The coarser elements, despite all the educational advantages that people have had, are being thrown into positions of power.

"This is no small matter. If the tendency which has been at work continues to operate, it surely must mean the eventual failure of the American experiment. There have been moments of inspiration. From time to time great leaders have appeared.

"But year by year, decade by decade, the direction of affairs has been slipping from the hands of the well trained and the thoughtful.

"We need not, however, admit defeat. We may turn back the tide and set it going in the other direction by heroic action. The responsibility here rests with the schools."

TOO TECHNICAL

MEMBERS of the house of representatives, including the leaders, have done a good deal of grumbling about deflationary recommendations of the new administration. They have, nevertheless, been "regular" in their support of them.

Now, however, an important inflationary measure has been laid before the house—the emergency relief bill. Instead of greeting it with open arms, the leaders have permitted it to slumber in committee.

Concerning the President's recommendation that \$500,000,000 be granted the states to relieve human suffering, there has been no sign of "regularity" among house leaders of his party.

Delay is being excused in the house by dispute over a technical point—whether a bill such as this legally could originate in the senate. The dispute is an interesting one and may be contested for weeks.

But there is not one valid reason why it should prevent immediate passage of the relief bill. A substitute measure has been introduced in the house. If it is passed, it will be accepted promptly by the senate, which cares more about helping suffering people than quarreling over precedents.

The house has demonstrated how quickly it can act when it desires. The difference in its behavior now will not escape the attention of the country.

"We would have better government if fewer people voted," says Professor Raymond Moley. Certain Republican congressmen buried in November's Democratic landslide probably will agree.

Hollywood chorus girls, though beautiful, are not dumb, reports a California professor of psychology who tested fifty-four of them.

Perhaps the girls did best in the tests where figures were involved.

The gemsbok, a newspaper cartoonist informs a breathless world, can exist without drinking water. Some talk of making the gemsbok the national mascot instead of the eagle.

Forty nudists attended a basketball game at Kilian, Mexico, says a news dispatch. Tough for the pickpockets if this sort of thing takes on.

Prussia restores student dueling. Possibly they hope to produce a successor to Scarface Al Capone.

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