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THE RETAIL CODE

NONE of the parties in the long and bitter dispute over the NRA retail code is pleased entirely with the code as finally signed by the President. But it was impossible for the administration to satisfy the conflicting interests. Those conflicts are real—as between the large merchant and small, the chain store and the independent, the merchant and the manufacturer, the city and the rural communities, the seller and the buyer.

Inevitably the resulting code is a compromise. On the surface it appears to be about as fair a compromise as could have been worked out. If not, time will demonstrate its unreliability.

And that is the important thing about this code, which its sundry critics should be fair enough to recognize. It is quite definitely an experiment. It is put forward as a temporary expedient for three months. On or before Feb. 1 a representative and responsible committee will report on its operation and submit recommendations for changes.

Had the President accepted the original code provision banning sales for less than cost plus 10 per cent, it would have put a heavy load on consumers before their purchasing power was restored fully and it also might have destroyed just competition. On the other hand, if the President had subjected rural stores to the same code provisions as the larger establishments, it doubtless would have killed many small businesses almost overnight—four years of depression already have driven 400,000 small merchants out of business.

Such practical considerations explain in large part the code compromise which now merely prohibits retail sale at less than invoice cost plus a portion of wages paid by the retailer except in the case of bona fide clearances, perishable merchandise, damaged goods and discontinued lines. Likewise, it explains the exemption from the code of stores employing fewer than five persons in towns of 2,500 population and less.

Clearly the NRA could have produced a better code if its sole task had been to wipe out maladjustments and inefficiencies in our wasteful distributing system, thus protecting the consumer by encouraging only the most efficient form of retailing. But the immediate practical problem was not so simple—to have bankrupted thousands of stores and to have thrown their employees on the streets would not have solved the problem of re-employment and increased purchasing power.

This retail code and its paradoxes are typical in greater or lesser degree of virtually all of the problems inherent in administration of the new deal, whether represented in a single code or in the general effort to keep wage increases and price increases balancing each other. It is the same conflict which is constantly occurring between the NRA and AAA, and between the interests of producers and consumers within both the NRA and AAA.

Stated another way, it is the inevitable conflict between the needs of long-range planning or basic reform versus emergency demands.

Those who take the trouble to understand the vast complexity of the administration's problems will not be inclined to hunt for petty inconsistencies and imperfections in the provisional retail code.

THE NEW SOCIAL ORDER

THE present crisis calls for both realism and vision. On the one hand, we need to co-operate with whatever may relieve immediate misery and suffering. On the other hand, we should be able to visualize what may lie ahead of us if we have sense enough to apply our intelligence to the thoroughgoing reconstruction of human society.

H. G. Wells is far and away our most productive Utopian. In this, his latest volume, "The Shape of Things to Come," he once more proves that he has no close rival in ability to size up the potential future of man. The present book is his most extensive, complete and thoughtful Utopia.

Tracing the history of the world for 100 years following the outbreak of the World War he arrives at an ideal society in which both capitalism and nationalism are absent. We shall attain the world-state and an economic system devoted to service rather than to profit. Speculative piracy will be a thing of the past.

In the interval, however, we must pass through the ordeal of another terrible World War which breaks out in 1940. It lasts for ten years. Out of the ruins there arises a new civilization which, at last, justifies the life of mankind on this planet.

Though the book will offer little assistance in the way of helping us with the new deal, it will provide encouragement by indicating that something much better may lie ahead of us.

Professor Overstreet has gained an enviable reputation as a facile and effective popularizer of progressive psychological and philosophical conceptions. In his present volume, "We Move in New Directions," he reads the obituary of the capitalistic system, its profit motive and its rugged individualism. With it must go the associated emotions of cupidity, bigotry, greed and oppression.

A new social order must be created which will rest upon five elements, bodily health, education in sane human relations, adequate esthetic and intellectual appreciation, intelligent mastery of the work problem through proper vocational guidance and adequate leisure, and finally, a true understanding of the fundamental purpose of life.

The book is dedicated frankly to the thesis that we have reached a turning point in civilization, but the author holds himself sufficiently to generalities so that he is not likely to get into any trouble with authorities.

Robert Segal has composed an enthusiastic program in *Triopoly*—or *Class War*—to recog-

nize society in such fashion that labor, capital, and the consumer will be safeguarded properly. He is particularly effective in his attack upon finance capitalism.

Mr. Segal indicates his realism and courage by advocating the abolition of political institutions and the establishment of direct government through the new industrial organization of society. There is certainly much to be said for the abolition of a pre-industrial type of social control in an advanced industrial age.

Leon Samson, one of the intellectuals among American Communists, endeavors to prepare the minds of American workers for a communistic age in "Toward a United Front; a Philosophy for American Workers." He believes, perhaps rightly, that communism will be resisted in this country primarily because it is regarded as an alien philosophy. Mr. Samson strives to bring into clear relief what he regards as the substantial socialistic tradition in the history of the United States. He hopes thereby to lessen any opposition to communism which is based upon the assumption that it is made in Germany and Russia.

NUTS TO CRACK

IF human nature is still human, the administration at Washington must be lying awake nights thinking on liquor real hard. As the post-repeal period nears two problems have a tendency to promote official nightmare.

First, with many of the states "dry" for some time after repeal is voted, prosperity for the bootlegger will be just around the corner, and such prosperity will be stimulated tremendously if the government taxes liquor high enough to yield the income which government badly needs and most eagerly desires. Competition of legitimate trade with the illicit and the latter having \$2 to \$3 advantage a gallon means a sure enough problem. However, it seems as if the government might greatly reduce, if not eliminate, the handicap against it by certification of the quality of the liquor—United States certificate as to quality, backed by heavy penalty for counterfeiting, on every container of liquor.

Secondly, the Democratic party is much set against high tariffs. In its recent national campaign its spokesmen attacked the "Grundy tariff outrage" from every political stump in the country. Yet England, Scotland, France, Italy and practically all the rest of Europe are stocked up mightily with wines and liquors to be dumped upon Uncle Sam when he legally quits the barrenness of the prohibition desert and steps into the soggy mudhole of varied chaotic liquor control; and, naturally, our wine-makers and distillers are going to march an "army" on Democratic Washington to demand real high, if not prohibitory, tariffs on wine and liquor imports.

At this point, too, enters the matter of tax. A tariff on imported drinks high enough to "protect" American distillers and wine-growers will be joyous to American bootleggers, whose tribe seems bound to increase, in accord with what glimpse we now get of future prospects.

However, let us hope for the best. Possibly nothing interferes with President Roosevelt's brain trust thinking up a code for America's illicit liquor traffic.

WE'RE IT

IF there is a European war, it will not be "our war." Thus the conclusion of a Washington editorial which despairs of League of Nations, all peace pacts and present moribund conferences as peacemakers.

Verily, it seems wise to get our war bonnet on straight. The last European war wasn't "our war," but we came mighty near paying for it, having invested some two millions of our best young men and about thirty billions of dollars in it. In final effects, it means small difference whose monogram a war bears. The fallen heroes rot and the money vanishes, just the same.

Experience teaches that it is easy to make a foreign war "our war," to all intents, provided that our past policy toward foreign war is not radically improved upon.

Another Lusitania would make us a war and heaven only knows to what overt act any, or all, of the fighting European nations would resort in order to get us into the war. Villa provoked us to invasion of Mexico. There's Nicaragua. It will be remarkable if, as a final resort, some strong faction doesn't provoke us to gunpowder interference with our god child, Cuba. We had to lick the native Filipinos to preserve the war loot we bought from Spain.

Behind our provocations are trade, or business considerations and there are few spots in our imperialism which ugly foreigners can not use as the fulcrum for an explosion. Thus the foreign potentialities, to say nothing of the jingoes and war profiteers in our midst.

We have tried, in vain, appeal to moral obligation, resort to league covenant, treaties and conferences on disarmament, peace, finance and trade adjustment. All were hopeless failures. For fifteen years, the experts say, Europe has been preparing for another war and the chances are ten to one that, in most essentials, it will be "our war."

But, we have not aimed our peace measures at Europe's pocketbook, a very weak and sore spot.

Suppose, for instance, that we notify Europe that her war is not going to be "our war," for the simple reason that, upon a war's inception, we will suspend all of our export trade with the fighters and prohibit loans of any kind.

Still France has found it possible to cash for Poland, for military campaign.

France is out to work for France, regardless of whose beans are spilled.

She will disarm, provided other nations agree to come to her rescue in case of an emergency.

One is forced to admire her patriotism and singleness of purpose, but that should not involve a wilful misunderstanding of either.

Coupled with her determination to be secure, France suffers from an overpowering fear. In spite of her apparent triumph in 1918, she is scared to death of Germany, because she realizes it was made possible only by the intervention and help of other nations.

France has fixed her heart on the accomplishment of one of two things, either to keep Germany disarmed, or obtain a security pact as the price of her consent to general disarmament.

HOBOS, OLD AND NEW

RALPH DALTON, president of the Hobo Fellowship, says that his is a member of a vanishing tribe. The familiar and picturesque knights itinerant who neither toiled nor did they spin, who spoke a language of symbols as mysterious as that of the birds they seemed to follow, who lived gypsy lives on handouts and jungle fare are disappearing from the roads. The modern pace is too fast for these leisurely parasites.

But the new hobos is here. He is a creature of the mass production age. His army numbers more than 1,500,000. He roams not from wanderlust, but in a vain search for work.

The government estimates that more than 90 per cent of the depression's transients are sincere job hunters. Fully 15 per cent are

der 21 and apparently 10 per cent are women and girls. For four winters their lot has become progressively more hazardous, their morale has sunk to lower levels. The emergency relief administration is determined that the fifth winter will find their condition improved.

The government is anxious that the states co-operate with the relief administration to furnish adequate and standardized shelter, food, work relief and constructive cultural opportunities for these transients," says Morris Lewis, head of transient relief work in Washington. "So far twenty-four states have met our standards and are slow in complying.

"We must hasten in setting up relief projects before winter sets in. America can not afford to neglect this problem much longer."

THE LAST REQUEST

IT is a little bit hard to see why any one should have objected very strenuously when that condemned murderer in California's San Quentin prison was given a bottle of good whisky to solace his last hours before going to the scaffold.

It isn't, perhaps, exactly pleasant to think of a man going to his death with his brain muddled by the fumes of alcohol. But neither, for that matter, is it pleasant to think of a man being hanged under any circumstances. No civilized person can contemplate a criminal's final hours in a condemned cell without a feeling of revulsion.

Capital punishment still seems to be a necessary feature of our civilization. But if we're going to break a man's neck with a rope, we might at least make his last hours a little more endurable by granting his last request, whatever it may be.

NOT LICKED, YET

IT is good to learn that the federal government has not yet thrown in its hand in connection with the Lindbergh kidnapping.

Attorney-General Cummings says that "the case never will die until we get our men"; and the ordinary citizen undoubtedly will applaud this statement, and hope that the federal investigators will eventually be able to solve that tragic puzzle.

There have been, probably, more "important" crimes in America than the kidnapping of Baby Lindbergh. There never has been any that aroused such a wave of public indignation, or that made people realize so fully the immunity with which some types of criminals can operate. One of the best bits of news we could get would be an announcement that the men who committed this crime had at last been brought to justice.

MARK UP ONE FOR NRA

A STATEMENT issued by George A. Sloan, president of the Cotton Textile Institute, says that employment in the textile industry has returned to predepression levels under the textile code, with wages increased and working hours reduced. The total weekly pay roll has advanced nearly 100 per cent over the pay roll averages for March.

Right here, it would seem, you get a pretty good answer to the question, "What good has the NRA done?"

It hasn't done as much as some of us hoped it would do, to be sure. It hasn't abolished unemployment or ended industrial strife or restored prosperity.

But it does seem to have accomplished some very important results, just the same.

This revival of the textile industry's employment and pay roll figures is an achievement worth all the NRA has cost.

There seems to be less popular sentiment for Uncle Sam's recovery act than for Sally Rand's uncovering act.

We've been bothered by so many sea serpent stories of late, we hardly can wait for repeat.

M. E. Tracy Says:

IN connection with the present crisis, it is interesting to recall that Japan was the first great nation to stalk out of the league.

As a result of that unfortunate scrimmage, the state of Manchukuo sprang into being, full-panoplied from the cogitative brow of Tokyo.

Consistency suggests that France should have been disturbed and should have said some of the things to Japan which she is now saying to Germany.

But, for some reason, France was not disturbed. In fact, she gave a splendid exhibition of that calmness and coolness which M. Daladier declares she is once more trying to teach the world by example.

Meanwhile, certain French capitalists are reported to be putting up 1,000,000 francs for a loan to Manchukuo. It is not an intergovernmental loan, since it will be made by private parties to a railroad corporation, but one finds it hard to believe that such a transaction could take place without the knowledge and consent of the French government.

We have tried, in vain, appeal to moral obligation, resort to league covenant, treaties and conferences on disarmament, peace, finance and trade adjustment. All were hopeless failures. For fifteen years, the experts say, Europe has been preparing for another war and the chances are ten to one that, in most essentials, it will be "our war."

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Another Big Stick!

The Message Center ::

I wholly disapprove of what you say and will defend to the death your right to say it.—Voltaire

Lauds Police

By Buford Cade.

BY FRANK J. WRIGHT, D. C.

Mr. Tracy, who writes so interestingly, marvels that a minority in every community, men live to be 70 or 80 and even 90 without serious illness or major operations.

He wants to know how they do it, what is their secret or their ability to avoid, or resist disease? He adds, "we do not know, and the worst of it is, we are making comparatively little effort to find out."

He suggests that physicians study these men and their health as much as to study disease.

Mr. Tracy has raised a question worth while. One has but to stop for a moment and think and its importance becomes a real vital thing.

A truth found by a single soul will carry conviction to a multitude. The letter suggests that physicians study these men and their health as much as to study disease.

It is a known fact that almost every city in the United States is envious of our police department, its methods and its men. Members of our police force are efficient, capable and honest, with very few exceptions. Our chief is a man of his word. He will stand for no "monkey-shines" or dishonesty.

To answer Mr. Tracy's questions would entail too much space in this paper. However, it is the writer's opinion that he can answer the questions pretty much to the satisfaction of any inquirer giving the questions thought. As a drugless physician for twenty years, he has given study to health as much or more than to disease.

Should one aspire, as I have, to correct or assist nature to repair the human body, he first should understand the workings of the body when operating perfectly. The same logic would hold good in the repair of any machine, one should understand that machine as it runs perfectly. Let Mr. Tracy ask himself this question, what operates the human body.