

Even Crystal Gazers Can't See Major Cut In Cost of Living

Experts Convinced There'll Be No Return
To the Old 'Normalcy' in Our Time

By S. BURTON HEATH, NEA Staff Correspondent

NEW YORK, Sept. 22.—The cost of living is up to stay. The current crisis in food prices will pass—some time—and the cost of steaks and eggs and tomatoes will settle back.

But living costs "never, in our time, will return to what the American consumer likes to think of as 'normalcy.'

That is the almost unanimous opinion of a variety of experts consulted in an attempt to find out why the cost of living—and particularly the cost of food—is skyrocketing so fast that it already has broken through all previous ceilings.

Even the brashest expert admits that he cannot give a clearcut explanation of what is happening to prices, or put the finger on any villain who is even principally responsible.

But most of those consulted agree that certain factors are very important. These—not necessarily in order of their importance—are:

ONE: THE TREMENDOUSLY HIGH LEVEL OF CONSUMER DEMAND.

During and since the war the incomes of workers have been built to levels that, not long before, would have been considered fantastic. Even with wartime rationing and shortages, workers' families learned to use and want, regularly, food items that used to be rare luxuries.

Output of many food items is at record high level. But it has not risen enough to satisfy the increased demand bred by full employment at high wages.

TWO: THE FOREIGN SITUATION.

As the only nation with even relative plenty, we are called upon to help feed the distressed peoples of the Old World. We already have shipped quite a lot, but probably not enough to fight such a fire under domestic prices.

THREE: THE FARMER'S NEW PROSPERITY.

For the first time in years the American farmer is sitting on top of the world. The prices he is getting have risen more, by all



Mr. Heath

than the prices he is paying—more than the prices the city folk are paying for farm products.

That extent, he is to blame for at least part of the high cost of food. But even city economists agree that the level from which he started was below that from which urban workers started. Thus, while the farmer never was so prosperous in history, he still is no more prosperous than the factory workers.

FOUR: THE SUMMER'S DROUGHT. A cold, wet spring delayed corn planting. Then floods washed out a lot of the rooting crop and forced a second, late planting. Before this late crop could mature, it was hit by the worst drought since dust-bowl days.

As a result, the government corn estimate made Sept. 10 predicted only 2,404,000,000 bushels, a drop of 874,000,000 bushels, or about 27 per cent from last year's crop.

Corn is close to 75 per cent of the grain fed to farm animals. When corn is scarce or high priced, this directly affects the cost of meat, fats, milk, butter, eggs, poultry, cheese.

Neither animals nor humans yet are eating the 1947 corn crop. Theoretically, its shortage should not be felt until later.

The principal elements of the picture can be summarized in this way:

Black Market Meat

A good deal of the meat, he said, was being butchered in the country and sold in town through the black market. He was sure the regular dealers weren't getting it all.

One of the butchers said more meat would soon be coming in as farmers felt the feed shortage.

The editor said the farmers were not actually holding out much produce for higher prices but were feeding all they could to their cattle.

It is caused by full employment, high wages, an improved standard of living in cities and on farms. It will fluctuate, perhaps, considerably, but in our time at least it won't go away.

French Farmer Is Well Off, Highly Envied

Rich Not in Money, But in Livestock

By JOHN W. LOVE

Scipps-Howard Staff Writer
PARIS, France, Sept. 22.—The farmers are the rich people today," a priest said to me in Orleans.

"They are the best buyers," said a merchant in Chartres. "Such goods as bedding and household supplies, and men's and women's clothing from Paris. We could sell them much more merchandise if we could get it."

"The farmers are better off than they have ever been," said the editor of a paper.

Enviable Prosperity

The prosperity of the French farmers is the envy and admiration of people in a dozen communities in which I inquired while on two automobile trips out of Paris.

These journeys of about 75 miles were in two directions, southwest and northeast. In that area wheat is ordinarily the chief crop, sugar beets and potatoes next.

Signs of the drought were everywhere evident, in wilted gardens and dusty fields. But on the whole it was still a green and pleasant country.

Savings in Cattle

The townspersons say the farmer is rich; but he is rich not in money but in livestock.

The traveler can readily learn why bread and potatoes are scarce everywhere and meat high-priced in the cities. One trouble in France is that the country is building up savings too fast—savings in cattle.

A butcher in Chartres, said the meat markets were open three days a week, a butcher in Compiegne said one day a week.

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PANORAMA—You'll never find it on an Indianapolis picture postcard, but this is the antique panorama the visitor to the city sees as he steps off the train at Union station. The S. Illinois st. section has barely changed in 70 years.

Maybe Gunther Judged Our City by Dingy S. Illinois St.

Flamboyant Posters, Battered Buildings, Filthy Clutter Greet Weary Train Traveler

By RICHARD LEWIS

What John Gunther probably saw when he hurled his provocative insult at Indianapolis as the dirtiest town inside the U. S. A. was the three-block panorama of the past on S. Illinois st. between Union station and Washington st.

While this section of town is no dirtier than the rest of the city, it presents a ramshackle vista to greet the visitor as he steps off the train and trudges north.

Pigeons inhabit the gutters on the roof of old brick buildings with dingy windows and scarred fronts. Legend has it that the building at the northwest corner of Maryland and Illinois sts. was a hotel or a boarding house.

Instead, it became the rim, worn but still sturdy. Business comes and goes there. All kinds of business.

Besides the little hotels with the torn green window-blinds, the traveler passes five package liquor stores and a half dozen bars.

The street is loaded with legends. It is also filled sometimes with trash.

And that's what the newcomer sees when he gets off the train at

Indianapolis. It makes an impression.

The double row of antique three-story buildings looked good in 1875, but they have achieved no dignity with age.

In the old days, they housed a dozen little hotels of the economical type and restaurants serving all you could eat for a quarter.

In 70 years, the major changes in the character of the street is the disappearance of the 25-cent plate dinner, the 5-cent cigar and the 24-cent haircut.

Time has passed the area by. Here was Indianapolis' first postwar building development—post civil war, that is. Its builders hoped it would become the hub of the business district.

Instead, it became the rim, worn but still sturdy. Business comes and goes there. All kinds of business.

The knowledge that one's children are in good hands, that expert medical and nursing care are quickly available, if necessary, and that each child is well protected by insurance, can go a long way to make a theater party more enjoyable for conscientious parents, Mr. Driscoll says.

Ex-Marine Becomes Boss Of Boston's Baby Sitters

Service Provides Mothers, Grandmothers, \$25,000 Accident Insurance for Each Child

By GRACE DESCHAMPS, NEA Special Writer

BOSTON, Sept. 22.—"I have gleaned what you could call a wealth of experience," the deep baritone voice booms.

Ex-Marine Lt. Joseph L. Driscoll isn't talking about fighter planes. He means babies.

Mr. Driscoll has made baby-sitting big business. Grateful Boston parents keep his telephone ringing, dredged or so A-1 carefully screened.

Out of the 60 cents an hour Driscoll receives for the services of his baby-sitters, he pays the sitters 48 cents an hour.

The modest rate is acceptable to most of them, Mr. Driscoll says, because most of the women have grown-up families and leisure time and they are quite willing to engage in a part-time activity which entails little or no real work.

Out of the 15 cents an hour remaining, Mr. Driscoll pays his own salary and defrays the cost of office rental, insurance, telephones, secretarial service and incidentals.

Booster Club Elects Christie

Marvin Christie, Southport high school athlete, has been elected president of the school's Booster club.

The club voted to increase the number of yell leaders from three to five and renamed Don Harvey and Suzanne and Barbara Damer to the position. New yell leaders selected are Katherine Dampier and Anita Williams with Betty Jones as substitute.

Beverly Baird has been elected president of the school's chapter of National Honor Society. Other officers include Nancy Hendricks, vice president; Nancy Ford, secretary, and Rosemary Arndt, treasurer. Other members of the chapter are Betty Anderson, Dolores Nerding and Madeline Stark.

Southport Hi-Y club officers and committee chairmen will attend the "older boys' training conference" at Flat Rock river, Oct. 27-28. Club officers are Dale Bough, president; Bob Blidack, vice president; Carl Kauffman, secretary; Bill Whitaker, assistant secretary; Richard Miner, treasurer; Ray Bertram, assistant treasurer; Bob Manning and Wendell Leedy, chaplains, and Marvin Christie and Bob MacBeth, sergeants-at-arms.

The increase in the index of consumer prices in 1939, the veiy, by more than 20 per cent, was due to the Great Depression. Other changes in 1939 were: house prices, 10 per cent; furniture, 10 per cent; clothing, 10 per cent; food, 10 per cent; and other goods, 10 per cent.

Compared with 1938, the index in 1939 was up 10 per cent. The increase in 1938 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1937 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1936 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1935 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1934 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1933 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1932 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1931 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1930 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1929 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1928 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1927 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1926 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1925 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1924 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1923 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1922 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1921 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1920 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1919 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1918 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1917 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1916 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1915 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1914 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1913 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1912 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1911 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1910 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1909 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1908 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1907 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1906 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1905 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1904 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1903 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1902 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1901 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1900 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1899 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1898 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1897 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1896 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1895 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1894 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1893 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1892 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1891 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1890 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1889 was 10 per cent. 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The increase in 1784 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1783 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1782 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1781 was 10 per cent. The increase in 1780 was 10 per cent. The increase in