

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Reviewed by
CARTER FIELD

Railroads are trying to prevent a car shortage as a result of war export bottleneck. . . Rushing the war tax bill good politics but bad economics.

(Staff Syndicate—WFO Service.)

WASHINGTON.—One of the war bottlenecks in the world of 1940 is, and one which contributed in no small measure to the eventual taking over of the railroads by the government, was due simply to the fact that shippers and receivers of freight alike used railroad cars for storage purposes.

The railroad executives are very much worried about the possibilities now, and are determined to do everything they can to prevent a critical situation. The last thing they want is another spell of government operation.

In the last war the worst spot was at the ports. At Jersey City and Hoboken, Baltimore, Philadelphia and Newport News, the entire railroad yards were packed with cars loaded with freight for export, freight which could not be loaded, and freight which so clogged the yards that they virtually put the railroads out of business. There was no use hauling trains to any port. There would be no place to park the cars after they got there.

A natural sequence was that there developed a shortage of cars. Naturally if cars are held in yards, loaded, but with no place to put their contents, they cannot also be out on the road hauling the freight. So there were not enough cars.

This situation is approaching again. This time the first bad effect is not so noticeable in the ports as in the sources of supply—around the coal mine heads, and at the plants producing goods for export.

Yet one would think, because of the necessities of the convey system, that the situation in the ports would be worse. But the convoys do not start from American ports. The ships sail up to a certain port in Canada, and the convoys are crisscrossed from there. This slightly improves the situation at the American ports, though this also might easily become serious.

But more than 41,000 cars loaded with coal and unexported are now being held around United States coal mines, according to the car service division of the Association of American Railroads.

"Although coal loading is now more than 20 per cent above that of the corresponding period of 1939," the association said, "there is no shortage of cars and some is anticipated."

BAD ECONOMICS

Rushing the war profits tax bill through congress now is excellent politics, better psychology, but bad economics. Actually it would have been much better to follow the original plan, which was to make a careful study of the whole situation in the months that intervene before the new congress convenes in January. Then a bill would have been all prepared, and it would have been considered by a congress in which the individual legislators would not have to face an election for 18 months. All the "bugs" and "joys" which can possibly be seen in advance in any piece of legislation would have been caught and rectified. In short, the bill would be as good as can be expected from any such unwieldy groups as compose the house and senate.

The tax on heavy profits could have been applied to 1940 earnings and hence have produced as much revenue as a bill enacted now. True, it is a little advantage to business men to know just what the tax will be, when they still have before them something like five months of the year the earnings of which will be taxed. It gives them a chance to trim their sails a little.

SOME OBJECTIONS

The objections to framing the law now of course are that in the desire to take every possible dollar of war profit, congress may easily do things which imperil tremendously the efficiency of our national defense. The law can easily be such that it will deter individuals and corporations from switching from their normal line to things that the government needs.

It is not a case of patriotism. Very little evidence is before the national defense commission now, nor did it develop in the first world war, that manufacturers declined to do things necessary to the national defense because of any tax situation. That is not the type of thing that is feared from an unscientific war profits tax. What can happen now and what did happen in the last war is that there is a certain discouragement of supply sources. For instance, a might have a very smart idea which would be valuable to the national defense. A might be a man never thought of by the war or navy department, or by the national defense commission experts. He might study the idea, and decide that it was too risky. He would be about certain to lose money even if the idea worked. It would be a total loss if it did not work.

Speaking of Sports
Madcap Maxie
Awaits Title Go
With Joe LouisBy ROBERT McSHANE
(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)

MAX BAER, who was thought to have reached the end of his trail when he lost a bloody battle to Lou Nova last year, is now planning a return engagement with Heavyweight Champion Joe Louis.

Madcap Maxie, champion of the night club circuit, recently reached back into his misadventurous past for the tattered remains of a great strength and whipped a second rate clown named Tony Galento. The fact that Tony was nothing more than a blatt, bullying, beer guzzling freak receives little consideration. He was supposed to have courage of a sort, didn't he last four rounds with Louis?

So Baer, whose claim to a championship match is based on a victory over an animated bear, is set for an animated bear fight.

The boys who saw Max in his dressing room last June 1, after his fight with Lou Nova, must find it hard to believe that he is getting a chance to meet the champ. He didn't look very good against Nova. And Nova never was a really good fighter. Max lasted 11 rounds that night, until the referee called a technical knockout.

Of course, the whole story's history now. The Nova fight was more than a year ago. And the recent victory over Galento revives memories of happier days—days when he shipped Ernie Schacht, Max Schmeling and Primo Carnera. It's easy to forget something you'd sooner not remember. And it is easy enough to find an alibi for that "one bad night."

No Finishing Power

But Max didn't look like a championship leveler when he shipped Galento. True, he gave the fat boy a terrible beating, but he couldn't apply the finishing touches. He redressed himself in his own eyes, and perhaps in those of his manager, but he left a huge doubt in the minds of those who saw the performance.

When the fight was stopped by the referee Tony had been taking terrific punishment. He could scarcely walk; his spirit had long since left his body and only his paunchy frame kept him upright. Galento was fighting as a robot, a silly, meaningless grin on his bruised face.

Yes, Baer whipped him. But he didn't have the finishing power to get a knockout.

Actually, Baer is farther away from beating Louis now than he ever was. His youth has caught up to him—a youth that was devoted largely to having a good time. He bent a convulsed elbow eye often, paid too much attention to the fair sex and gave very little thought to building rates and reputations.

Baer was 30 years old when Nova whipped him so soundly. He was three years younger than that when he met Joe Louis in New York in 1936. He lasted only four rounds. Now he wants another crack at a man who is twice as great a fighter as he was at the time of their first encounter.

But with the heavyweight hat worn rather than from stretching to meet Louis' demands, Baer is the sole veteran of the old school who might attract a fair gate.

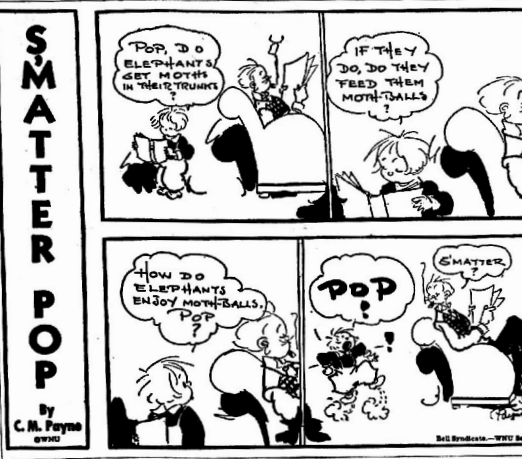
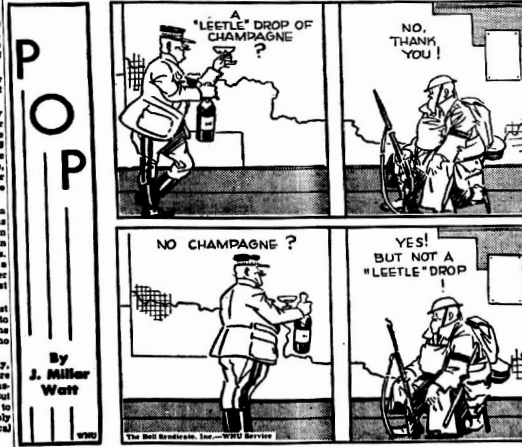
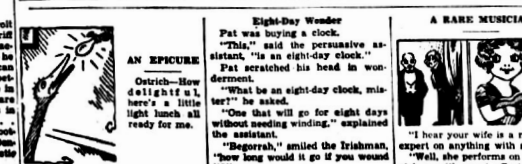
The boxing game is in a poor way, however, when matchmakers are forced to dig up self-admitted has-beens to meet the champions. As long as the public is willing to pay for them, promoters will supply a never-ending series of farcical boxing exhibitions.

Sport Shorts

Jimmy Adamiak, former Detroit heavyweight, is running for sheriff in Michigan. He is a very smart fellow. He insists the lighting plant he installed in the Columbus American arena last year was the best in the world. He is the only one in the state who has won the Polo Grounds. . . There are 200 registered small claims in the United States this year. . . Sixteen promising sophomore football players have been lost in the United States this year. . . Sixteen promising sophomore football players have been lost in the United States this year. . . Sixteen promising sophomore football players have been lost in the United States this year. . .

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