

Predict Increase in Funds to Check Decline in Farm Income

By REYNOLDS KNIGHT
First step toward checking the decline in farm incomes, it appears now, will be an increase in Agricultural Conservation funds to \$400 million a year from \$250 million. That's as far as Secretary Benson will go in yielding to the pressure to do something for the farmer before he goes to the polls a year from now.

Unfortunately, these payments go chiefly for taking land out of row crops or grain and putting it into grass. Such a program isn't of too much help to the farmer whose acre-

age is already too small for him to utilize his manpower fully.

The real farm problem is this: In the latest year for which figures have been broken down, 1 per cent of the nation's farmers sent 17 per cent of its crops to market. The next 19 per cent of farmers produced 60 per cent of the crops, leaving 13 per cent of crop production spread very thin among 80 per cent, by number, of farmers. Those are the people who are hurting; the rise in farm land prices show that price-supported farming is still a good thing for those who produce in large quantities.

The answer that would seem a logical one to a non-farmer—let a free market crowd out most of the bottom 80 per cent—will hardly satisfy the farmer's friends in office. Dairy men suggest a \$500-million-a-year fund to ease their pain while they figure out something. Wheat growers want the privilege of price support on some of their crop, with the right to export the rest abroad at any price they can get. Official Democratic lines is '90 per cent of parity.'

HOW TO KEEP WORKERS
The number of workers need-

ed to assemble, process and distribute the vast amount of goods consumed in prosperous America, and to man auxiliary service callings, keeps rising closer to the ceiling of available manpower. The closer it gets the more important to American industry becomes the task of keeping trained workers.

One great boon in this constant striving for employment stability is an attractive profit-sharing plan, says the Sheaffer Pen Co. Sheaffer has had a direct profit-sharing plan since 1934, and a profit-sharing retirement plan since 1942. Its labor turnover is 1.8 per cent per

month, compared with 3 per cent for all manufacturing industry. The average length of service of Sheaffer's hourly-paid workers is 9 1/2 years.

Things To Come
Pen company officials don't credit the low labor turnover to profit-sharing alone, since they strive to keep their labor policy enlightened in all other respects as well. However, Walter A. Sheaffer II, company president, does say that profit-sharing is a major factor in labor contentment. More than \$14.5 million in extra profit-sharing payments have been made since 1934.

THINGS TO COME—You can get furniture that looks like wrought iron, styled to go with your small daughter's Ginny doll. . . A radiant glass electric heater is offered as ideal "for

that one room that always stays cold when the rest of the house is warm" . . . A vinyl portfolio closes tightly simply by being pressed together with thumb and finger. . . Home lights are assured during power failures by a 13-pound nickel-cadmium battery unit; it recharges itself when central power is restored.

TRIMMING A BIG BILL—Noting that the nation's freight bill runs to more than \$25 billion a year, an executive of the Eastern Railroad Presidents Conference has pointed out that billions of this can be saved by leveling the controls exerted over each competing type of transportation.

Common Carrier Regulation
David I. Mackie, chairman of ERPC, told the Huntington, W. Va., Kiwanis Club, that the

road to such level regulation is mapped out in the report of the Cabinet Committee on Transportation. This committee, he said, took as its aim the "common regulation of common carriers." He predicted that if the Committee's recommendations were adopted, all competing carriers would enjoy greater freedom in competitive pricing, subject to the Interstate Commerce Commission's continuing authority to prescribe reasonable minimum and maximum rates.

Much of the savings he forecast would come, said Mr. Mackie, from ending ICC's practice of refusing the low-cost carrier in any field the full advantage it might get from pricing its service in accordance with its costs.

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OIL IMPORT WARNING — Arthur S. Fleming, director of Defense Mobilization, last week moved into a tricky field when he cautioned importers of foreign crude oil to reduce their imports of such oil by 7 per cent. That would be 50,000 barrels a day. Imports of residual fuel oil were allowed to stay at their current level.

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