

# 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

## Retail Merchants Association of South Dakota

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April 15, 1947

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### MEMBERS OF THE RETAIL MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH DAKOTA

**MANY WAR-TIME CURBS EXPIRE** - Most of the remaining war-time controls lapsed April 1st. Solid Fuels Administration closed up; emergency controls over trucking and shipping lines ended; the Draft Act died; and all but a small segment of the Second War Powers Act expired.

**IMPORTANT CONTROLS ENDED** for fish, tea, condensed milk. United States Department of Agriculture removed all import controls on canned fish, tea, and condensed milk through action taken under WFP-63, effective March 31. Canned tuna, salmon, sardines, and herring are among the types of canned fish released from import controls by this action. Other types of pickled, salted and canned fish had already been removed from WFO-63.

**BILL WILL SHORTLY BE INTRODUCED** in Congress to provide for the opening of Maine ports to Canadian boats carrying sardines for Maine canners without the necessity of clearing the Customs.

**DOCTOR** "The best thing for you to do is to give up drinking and smoking, get up early every morning and go to bed early every evening."  
**PATIENT** "Somehow, Doctor, I don't deserve the best. What's second best?"

**GOVERNMENT PURCHASING DEFINITELY** affecting current and approaching Food market. Agriculture's purchases of dried eggs to date are 37,300,000 pounds - has also bought 23,800,000 pounds of frozen eggs. Support price has been raised 2¢ a dozen for May.

**AGRICULTURE WILL PERMIT FOR EXPORT, OUTSIDE BUYERS TO CLEAN UP SURPLUS STOCKS OF DRIED BEANS ON A CASH BASIS.**

**MEAT ALLOCATION FOR EXPORT** in second quarter, 154,600,000 pounds - up about 12,000,000 pounds from first quarter. No pork is included in the allocations.

**BIG MANUFACTURERS HAVE JUST CUT** their prices on evaporated milk. Agriculture bought 25,000,000 pounds of dry milk during March to support that market, about 10,000,000 pounds of which goes to UNRRA.

### 50th Anniversary Headquarters



The Coliseum at Sioux Falls offers ideal facilities for convention exhibits and business sessions under one roof.

50 Anniversary Convention, Sioux Falls, June 22-23-24  
Celebrating Fifty Years of Service to Merchants of South Dakota

WASHINGTON FOOD REPORT OF APRIL 5 - Consumer sugar rationing and supervising releases to industrial users will be handled by OPA people from present territorial offices until October 31, 1947. You will continue to go to the same places with reports and problems. Top decisions releasing additional sugar and all control policies will hereafter be managed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture from Washington. Agriculture will go ahead with OPA's plan to set community ceiling prices for sugar as in the past. These will be set separately in eight regional sections of the country and will go into effect on April 15. Price of refined sugar was raised 5 cents per hundred weight. Individual consumers will be able to start using another 10 pound stamp on July 1, and are assured of 35 pounds during the rest of the rationing period, about as much sugar as city families will need.

JOKER INSERTED IN THE SUGAR EXTENSION ACT instructs Agriculture to allot additional sugar to home consumers up to a maximum of 50 pounds this year before providing additional supplies to any food processor or manufacturer except hardship cases. This provision was put in the bill in an attempt to end sugar controls right away on the theory that, if so much extra sugar were allotted to consumers, there would be no need at all for rationing. The attempt failed, but the joker remained in the law.

EXTENSION OF SUGAR CONTROLS orders such large releasing to individual consumers that new management under U.S. Department of Agriculture will be handicapped in allotting canners especially of fruits, enough sugar to pack pre-war quality - but is determined to find some method of doing this.

WISCONSIN PACKERS OF SWEET CORN have raised the ante to \$2 more per ton than last year. This has been done to encourage a higher acreage. This will indicate that slightly higher prices of corn can be expected for the new crop.

Sooner or later a man, if he is wise, discovers that business life is a mixture of good days and bad, victory and defeat, give and take. He learns that it doesn't matter so much who gets the credit so long as the business shows a profit.

HOUSE HAS VOTED TO APPROPRIATE \$6,000,000 to operate the school lunch program until schools close in June. Similar action by the Senate is likely.

ADVERTISING OF OCCASIONAL HOTSHOTS in scattered markets indicates approach of some bargain selling of tomato juice in order to spur badly retarded movement; canners planning to run much less juice and to favor peeled tomatoes.

ANTI-MONOPOLY: A Judiciary Subcommittee took up SB104 - which limits the right of corporations to buy the assets of another corporation - and heard from Senator O'Mahoney (D Wyo), author of the bill. He said that a loophole in the Clayton Anti-trust Act has permitted monopolistic mergers to proceed at an appalling rate. W.T. Kelly, General Counsel of the Federal Trade Commission appeared in favor of the bill.

A TOTAL OF 238 FAILURES occurred in February, 1947, according to the latest release by Marketing and Research Service of Dun & Bradstreet Inc., as compared with 92 in February of 1946. There were 92 manufacturers, 34 wholesalers, 70 retailers of all types, 20 construction, 22 commercial concerns.

DRIED FRUITS such as prunes, peaches, apricots, figs, and raisins are being sold at loss of possibly 25% to 40% by a North Dakota Wholesaler.

WANTED TO BUY: A 6 or 8-row adding machine. State make, size and price. Koehn Grocery, Parkston, South Dakota.

**SIMILAR TO 1920, BUT DIFFERENT** -Wildly inflated prices, after World War I, declined rapidly through five or six months. In foods, deflation started while large stocks were being accumulated from harvesting and by different kinds of processors. Distributors were unwilling, or unable, to take deliveries. Wage rates were so low that there was little buying except staple food from retail stores. Farmers were so over-extended financially that they were unable to hold supplies, and did not have the benefit of government supports. This is not a 64 dollar question, but a million dollar question. Have you the answer?

**DISTURBING OUTLOOK** for retail merchandising is in following views of the President of a big department store: Cut prices already approved for after Easter selling show what we are up against. Inventories were marked down about \$50,000 when we closed our books on December 31. Spring arrivals of men's furnishings, women's apparel, and all soft goods, have sold in such small quantities at normal markups over prices paid within last thirty days, that we are taking immediate markdowns on this stock, which we hope will then be low enough priced so that it will move ahead of manufacturers selling us later deliveries, at still lower prices which will be necessary to secure really large buying.

**PRODUCERS, IMPORTERS, WHOLESALERS and RETAILERS** may lose a lot of money from shortsighted blunders, if they do not clearly understand that production, competition and prices are working through a series of adjustments toward the different conditions that must prevail if we are to have fairly well balanced after war prosperity.

**UNIONS MODIFYING DEMANDS** in negotiations with Alaska canners, but industry still will have to pay more money for labor. Scattered lots of old pack left are moving slowly as buyers don't relish paying high prices for stocks that will have to be carried till summer season comes when new pack may start offering more cheaply.

**WHOLESALERS ARE COMMENCING** to reduce prices somewhat and do more aggressive selling work, including persistent warnings to retailers that they must pay attention to the return of competition.

"Say, I hear you lost your job, why did the foreman fire you?"

"You know what a foreman is--he's the one who stands around and watches his men work."

"What's that got to do with it?"

"Why, he got jealous of me. People thought I was the foreman."

**IT SEEMS CLEAR TO BUSINESSMEN AND ECONOMISTS** that the people are showing unwillingness to buy the output of goods at present prices. They also suspect that, if this attitude continues and production slows up and employment declines, they won't be able to buy them. An authority in the textile field tells us that national income now at a rate of 175 million dollars a year, would have to be 250 million dollars a year to move, at present prices, the quantity of cotton goods we can produce. We are now at a low point of physical consumption in the cotton goods field in terms of national income. Buyers know that the pipe lines are filling up. They can get what they want, when they want it. They know that production soon will back up on manufacturers and that when it does, they will compress their profits and sell for less.

*Dear Editor I am in love with a homely girl, but she doesn't care for me, while a pretty girl with lots of money wants to marry me. What shall I do?*

*Reply Marry the one you love and send me the name and address of the other one.*

**MIXED PRICE TREND** in dry beans Pintos, blackeye and large limas commanding highest prices of season. Suppliers of all these varieties short. Great Northern and baby limas have weakened and are \$3.00 to \$4.00 under levels following decontrol.

LATEST REPORT ON SALES are as follows: Sale of Chain Stores in first quarter of 1947 show about a 40% gain over a year ago, which includes some large markets; while the business of Independent Retailers shows only about a 10% larger business. This should be fair warning to you Independent Retailers that you must clean up, pep up, and show more courtesy than you have practiced in the past when merchandise was scarce and hard to get and easy to sell. Re-arrange wherever possible, price your merchandise right and plainly, and get the "CASH"

"IT AIN'T SANITARY", PROTESTED THE TRAVELER, "TO HAVE THE HOUSE BUILT OVER THE HOG PEN THAT WAY".  
"WELL, I DUNNO", REPLIED THE NATIVE, "WE AINT LOST A HOG IN FIFTEEN YEARS."

INDUSTRY PRICES LAG IN RISE--Business concern over the rising price spiral is shared in top Administration circles in Washington. It is plain that business generally would welcome a halt in prices. Before this issue warms up further, it should be recognized that industry alone cannot shoulder the burden of reducing prices. The question is, "Are the nation's retailers largely responsible for rising prices through too high a markup?" It is quite natural and may be expected that everyone likes to realize a fat profit. However, such practices may in the long run prove detrimental. The Government has been leaning toward Government control of industry and, therefore, if private industry allows the situation to get out of bounds, the Government will have a good excuse for taking over the nation's business. The question is, "do we want the bureaucratic OPA returned to tell you what to do, how much to sell your merchandise for and keep you living in fear?" This is just a reminder, and it does not accuse anyone of being out of line.

*NOTICE: There is considerable Black Marketing in the Automobile business. While you are not an Auto dealer, many of you need, and would like to buy a new car. The South Dakota Automobile Dealers Association, Huron, South Dakota, is now making a drive to halt such practices. Talk to your Auto Dealers and encourage them to be on the look-out. A good way to get worthwhile information is to have them watch the new cars being brought into your territory and get the license number and the motor number of such cars that may look suspicious and have them report such information to the South Dakota Automobile Dealers Association, Huron, South Dakota. Cars are high enough without paying black-market prices. Your Auto Dealers will be receiving information from their Association.*

IF YOUR ADVERTISING COST has increased, there is a reason. Newsprint advanced \$6 per ton two weeks ago. Current price, \$93 per ton; cost at start of war, \$54 per ton. This will no doubt have a similar effect on paper bags and wrapping paper.

THE WORLD POWERS recognize the fact that they must unite and stay united if we are to have a lasting peace. Independent Small Retailers must also be united if they expect to survive in business. Send your dues in today while you have it in mind.

HIGHLIGHTS OF YOUR GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY CONVENTION--75 of the 100 booths have been sold, and the advertising for the YEARBOOK is progressing nicely. The Wholesalers and Jobbers have been very loyal. Everything points toward the greatest event that will be staged in South Dakota this year. However, much depends on you Retailers. The least you can do is to attend; and in addition, encourage other merchants to attend. All are welcome, members and non-members, alike, It's free. Remember the dates: JUNE 22-23-24 to be held in the COLISEUM, SIOUX FALLS, SOUTH DAKOTA.

Sincerely yours,

RETAIL MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH DAKOTA

*Chris Dam*  
Chris Dam, Secretary.