

Most of today's human existence is clothed in the ghostly raiment of fear—fear of so many things that these big and little fears spawn the greater fear of another World War.

The Birmingham Eccentric

PART 3

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Norway Turns to Electricity For Its Power

Replaces Scarce Quantities of Coal and Oil

By ROBERT BALL

Special Correspondent for the Eccentric

OSLO, Norway—“You haven't seen anything yet,” was Engineer Skallerud's greeting as I presented myself at the planning office of the Oslo Municipal Light and Power Company.

“In ten years we'll be heating the whole city of Oslo with electricity alone. Everywhere you see a radiator now, in another ten years will be an electric panel.”

Becoming me to a chair, Skallerud adopted a more conversational tone.

“You probably know already that here in Norway we already have more or less electrical power per capita than any other country in the world.

“WE HAVE TO. Without coal or oil, nearly every Norwegian wheel has to turn by electricity, and our biggest national problem is to supply more and more of it.

“All of us—government, municipal, and private power people—we are all scanning blueprints.”

“Perhaps you have heard that power output here in Socialist Norway is 60 per cent in private hands,” continued Skallerud.

“That needs an explanation. The greater part of the private output goes straight to the consumer.”

“For example, Norskhydro, our biggest private company, supplies power mostly by municipal and government stations.”

THE PATTERN OF Norwegian power development is familiar. Private and municipal companies develop the readily available water power sources in areas where the demand made it worthwhile.

The government undertook developments in the mountainous north where a part of Norway's three million population is spread thin, with such energy that over 80 per cent of Norway's lonely farms are electrified.

Recently, however, the government has constructed stations to serve the metropolitan south, with the result that the private share of the household market is steadily diminishing.

EXPANSION PLANS show the present Oslo has an available power capacity of 230,000 kw, and 45 per cent of current capacity is municipal capacity.

First step in this new development, \$20 million Hol Hydro-electric works, is under construction, playing an important role.

Naturally, for Oslo's 170,000 families, the question of where the power comes from is less important than what it costs.

Norwegian light bills are different from American; each consumer pays a flat yearly fee for a certain rate of current electricity, one kilowatt on the average, and is then metered only for those hours when the question of where the power comes from is less important than what it costs.

OBVIOUSLY this system depends somewhat on the good will of the consumer, since if he wishes he could burn lights up to the agreed rate and night for a year without paying extra.

Skallerud's own annual light bill of \$90 is unusually high; Oslo's average family pays about \$22.

“Now that everyone is talking about European economic unity, I suppose I ought to say that our hydro-electric developments do not indicate ill will toward the coal-exporting countries,” Skallerud added smilingly.

“It's simply that the water power just goes to waste unless we use it.”

How do the Norwegians feel about public-private competition?

“THERE IS NO competition to speak of,” Skallerud answered. “We need power so badly that every kilowatt that anyone can produce is snapped up.”

But in the future? “Well, yes, the potential sources are all in government or municipal possession. I suppose eventually the private companies will turn completely to industry, won't they?”

Says Ritchie Admits Making Up Mind 'Atom Day' Rallies In Advance on Decontrol of Rentals

Two Birmingham men this week continued to press for more adequate investigation of the rental housing situation here before controls are lifted.

Glenn M. Emery, 311 E. Southside way, and L. D. Gilliam, 549 E. Frank, said they had interviewed one city commissioner who admitted his mind was made up before he voted on the matter at the July 24 public hearing.

Stated Emery: “One commissioner has been honest enough to tell us that until we give him a copy Sunday, he had not seen the federal decontrol regulation and was not familiar with its provisions.”

“FURTHER, THAT he made no investigation but rather made his decision on his own belief that the rent controls were inequitable. Further, that he made this decision prior to the hearing of July 24 and that the hearings did not change or affect his opinion or vote.”

Emery identified the commissioner as Chad M. Ritchie. Both Gilliam and Emery have written to Federal Housing Expediter T. G. Woods asking that federal certification of the July 24 action here be held up pending an investigation by Wood's Office.

They contend that the city did not conduct a “comprehensive investigation,” as mentioned in the city's formal decontrol resolution.

Mallender contended that there were “SCREENS AND STORM SASH • WINDOWS • ALL • FLUSH DOORS • SIZES • WOODCRAFT CO. 1184 Grant at Ruffner

always has been a shortage of rental units here, and probably will be.

Emery this week pointed out that Area Rent Director William C. Haines has admitted the city commission made no attempt to contact him regarding the advisability of lifting local rent controls.

Two NROTC Men With Atlantic Fleet On Training Cruise

Two NROTC students from Birmingham are among the 1,400 men taking part in the second phase of the 1950 Midshipmen Cruise with the Atlantic fleet.

Vernon K. Little, Northwestern university, and Thomas L. Tweedale, Cornell university, have embarked on a nine-ship task force headed by the battleship USS Missouri.

These future naval officers will participate in all routine and emergency operations and drills as members of the ships' crews. Tactical warfare, air defense and a refueling at sea are included on the agenda for the trainees.

The youths are the sons of Mr. and Mrs. Frederic Little, 1568 Henrietta and Mr. and Mrs. Ralph L. Tweedale, 29200 Wildbrook.

CITY COMMISSIONER Milton F. Mallender has defended the city's action with the statement that the “whole thing revolves around an interpretation of what is a ‘housing shortage.’”

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'Atom Day' Rallies Planned by U of M

University of Michigan alumni in almost 500 American communities will stage “Atom Day” rallies on Oct. 2. Loren T. Robinson of Campbell Ewald company has announced. He is chairman of the special alumni committee planning the event.

Howard Hallas, 931 Forest, assistant director of public relations

for Nash-Kelvinator, is a member of the planning committee. The “Atom Day” dinners and meetings will signal the nationwide launching of the general campaign for \$5,500,000 to finance the Michigan Memorial Phisic project, a study of constructive uses of atomic energy.

Members of the committee will announce final plans some time in September.

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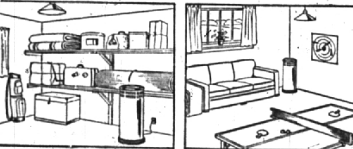
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Kiwanis to Meet At Nick Rakas Farm

The Kiwanis steak fry was held Tuesday evening at the home of Ralph Williams, 15037 Humphrey drive. The next event will be at Nick Rakas' farm next Tuesday, Aug. 22.

It has been decided that each Kiwanian bringing a new member into the club will receive an appropriately worded plaque as an incentive to increase club membership.

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