

1958 PROSPECTS

Everyone who has been reading the daily newspapers this winter knows there is supposed to be a recession on, even tho the reader has not been personally affected. Many in the marginal class of employees have been affected. Certainly a large amount of unemployment is a tragedy, as well as an economic waste, but until we can change human nature from alternate feelings of optimism or pessimism, we will have business cycles.

Many business men are cautious this spring, but few are down-right gloomy. How is the golf business going to be affected? Very little, if at all. Golf Courses are more dependent on the weather than anything else, especially the public fee courses. Private clubs are uniformly in good financial shape, unlike the depression 30's. An early spring with a big flock of golfers will send us off to a good year. Our economic recession hit bottom in February. By fall, the politicians will be wringing their hands about inflation again.

That brings us to the strage conundrum involving higher prices, or more inflation during a period of recession. Wages, freight rates, and taxes are up, or going up. This has generally caused a mark-up of about 5% on fabricated merchandise, where a large portion of the cost of manufacturing involves labor, freight, and assemblies. As to prices on Golf Course Equipment and Supplies for the 1958 Spring Season this is the situation:

Grass Seed—down in price from Spring of 1957 about 33-1/3%.

Machinery—generally up about 5%, tho this does not hold true universally. Some manufacturers have held the price line.

Fungicides, Insecticides, and Weed Killers—no change in prices.

Manufactured Fertilizers and Plant Foods—up about 5%.

On the average the cost of your equipment and supply needs will be the same in 1958 as it was in 1957.

If the writer is wrong in his prognostications, he will be shoveling snow next winter for hire, instead of exercise.

C. O. Borgmeier

Chairman Walter Fuchs called a meeting of his Turf Research Committee on the evening of March 25 to discuss the proposition of the establishment of a turf garden at Morton Arboretum. There is a good possibility that this project will finally get under way after many long years of endeavor on the part of our association to create enough interest in this district to help us find a place where we can do some of our own turf research.

Herman Woehrl of Kankakee is walking around with his right arm in a sling. He broke it recently while giving his helpers a hand to unload a truck load of fertilizer. Herman's course at Kankakee, which our members will remember from a meeting we had there two years ago, was recently taken over by the B.P.O.E.

March has been, up to the time of this writing, an extremely dry month. We have had a few light snow storms, but measurable precipitation has been abnormally low. It will be well if you get your water system in working order as soon as possible to be ready to take care of any desiccation which may appear on the greens. From a recent examination, we find many places where greens turf has been heaved by the frost during the past month breaking off many of the roots and creating an extremely shallow root system. It seems inconceivable that it would be necessary to water turf so early

in the season, but from past sad experiences we know that turf can be severely damaged if the top inch of the soil is allowed to dry out. Don't wait too long if you see the grass turning off color during this dry weather.

Many of the superintendents in this area cut their greens the second week in March. It looked for a while as though it was going to be an especially early spring, but although the weather has been dry allowing us to get a lot of our early work done, the nights are cold and there has been very little growth.

MIDWEST REGIONAL TURF FOUNDATION CONFERENCE

The Conference was held at Purdue University on March 3-4-5. The large number of Midwest Superintendents attending the Conference were loud in their praise of the high calibre of the speakers and of the material presented. Attendance was the highest in the history of the meeting, topping the 512 of 1957. It is interesting to note that there were 170 new names on the registration list, men who had not previously attended. There is no doubt but that a good many of the old timers who did not attend were absent due to having attended the National Conference in Washington D. C. and being on vacation. It was reported, too, that a number of the men were unable to attend due to being ill with the flu. Among these, we were sorry to learn, was Dr. Marvin Ferguson, who was to be one of the speakers. All sessions were well attended and the speakers held the attention of those present. Frank Dinelli and Oscar Borgmeier were tops in their capacity as Chairmen of their groups. Again, as we have so many times in the past, we wish to congratulate Dr. Daniel for his fine work and to commend him for his enthusiasm. Dr. Daniel is now a full professor at Purdue and we also congratulate him on this achievement. We were delighted to have our old friend Dr. Scarseth on the program. His talk and pictures were presented as only Dr. Scarseth can, and as usual, his remarks were of the utmost interest to all of us.

As has become the custom, we were again entertained by that wonderful Purdue Glee Club at our banquet. Our congratulations to Glee Club Director Stewart for his wonderful job with these boys.

26 Superintendents from the Chicago area attended the President's dinner at LaFayette during the Turf Conference at Purdue. Ed Stewart was the honored guest. This dinner is held each year at that time, to honor our Association president. The president is always handed the bill at the conclusion of the banquet. It's true that it amounts to a lot of money, and that's what the presidents think too, because they very solemnly pronounce that it might be a good idea that it be prorated among the diners.

It was suggested at our last meeting that we change the name of our Association. This hit the wrong note with some of the old timers. They point out that this association was one of the first of its kind in the country and at that time included much of the Midwest, including all of Illinois and Wisconsin. It is an old and honorable name and still lives up to its designation by having members from outside of the Chicago District. So, why not leave it alone, boys, and turn your thoughts to something more important.