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ARTHUR EDWARD POWELL
Editor and Proprietor



EDITORIALS

FOOD FOR THOUGHT.

Those who have leaned toward the belief that democracy, as it has been typified in America, is a failure, must find considerable food for thought in recent events in Europe.

Across the waters, a new order has come in absolute power. It takes various forms and names—socialism, communism, fascism—but the underlying principle is always the same. Its main tenets are that an absolute dictatorship be established—that the authority of the state over all social and business activities be supreme—that criticism shall be punishable by imprisonment, torture, even death—that the individual is nothing, and that individual rights shall be non-existent.

We see the results of that now in headlines. In Russia, thousands are dying of starvation, and he who lifts his voice in protest is crushed ruthlessly almost before the words leave his mouth. In Germany's recent reign of terror, 70 to 100 men were slaughtered because they questioned the "divine authority" of the present government. The German people hide in their homes, afraid of the future, not knowing what new atrocities it will bring. In Austria the Chancellor has been murdered, and chaos reigns. A dozen countries are preparing for war, and frontiers are armed camps. Almost every nation hates and mistrusts every other.

In each of these countries the people are prevented from knowing what is actually happening because there is no free press—the few newspapers that have not been forced out of business by the government, are leashed and muzzled and are permitted to publish only official pronouncements. An official pronouncement in this case is whatever the dictator wishes the public to believe, and the truth is often diametrically opposed to it.

We have made mistakes in this country. No government ever existed which could not be improved. But, knowing what is going on elsewhere in the world, do we want to scrap what we have in favor of political theories which, in Europe, seem to produce nothing save hatred, revolution, terror?

TEACHING THE NEED FOR CO-OPERATION

The thought is widely expressed that the most encouraging factor in the agricultural situation is the steady, sustained growth of the great farm cooperative organizations. As they enlist more members, and make their influence more widely felt, their battle for stable market and better prices automatically approaches closer to victory.

It might also be said that a lesser-known phase of cooperative activity is almost as important as this kind of work, and gives equal cause for encouragement. That is the work the co-ops do in educating their members and the general public as well. They seek to be agencies of economic information, as well as buyers and sellers of commodities—and their influence in this direction, as in the other, is always widening.

Cooperative leaders have demonstrated to the thinking public that fair and profitable prices for agricultural products are an essential of recovery generally—that bringing back the farm income to a normal level would be a major step in bringing back the urban income. The American farmer constitutes the greatest single market for our factory products, and no one can profit if his buying power is dormant.

The cooperatives, in brief, are showing the nation that all our citizens—rural and urban dwellers—have the same interests and the same problems, and that better times for one means better times for all.

WHOSE OX IS BEING GORED?

"A group of Washington editors were singing high praises of government ownership of public utilities, railroads, oil and gas distribution, steamships, mines and what-not," says an editorial in Skamania County Pioneer, Stevenson, Washington. "The writer asked them why not include the country weeklies—and then what a howl of disapproval went up."

"Not a single one of them wanted to have his business included because it would soon revert to complete annihilation of personal rights." "We should become serfs under such a regime." "It has been the independence and fearlessness of the press that has maintained the freedom of the American people through all the years of its manifold political changes." "Without a free and privately owned press America would soon be under the mailed fist of a military dictator."

"So it all depends on one's point of view." "Government owned businesses are all right for the other fellows but it's all wrong when it comes to the business of the man who advocates it."

THE BLOOD OF COMMERCE

What have the railroads done for America? Here are some of their achievements, taken from an editorial in the Hurleyville, New York, Sentinel:

America represents 5 percent of the earth's area—and it has one-third of all the railway mileage in the world. Our 123,000,000 people are served by 260,000 miles of rail, while the other nations, with a combined population of 1,500,000,000 have 780,000 miles.

Other countries average a mile of railroad for each 2,000 people. In America, we have a mile of line for each 100 persons.

Furthermore, this amazing railroad development, brought about by private enterprise, has had a direct influence on the growth of other industries. Good and comprehensive railroad service made it possible for industry to locate in every part of the land, building cities and states, and bringing civilization to vast areas that once were wildernesses. The American people have more automobiles, more telephones, and more of every modern convenience than any other people—and this kind of progress has consistently followed progress by the railroads.

As the Sentinel says, the role of the railroads in building up this country has been identical with the role of the veins and arteries in building and maintaining the human body. Stop the circulation of the blood and the body dies. Stop the railroads from functioning, and our commerce would die from lack of nutriment.

THE "TAKE-A-CHANCE" CLUB

You won't find the address of the "Take-A-Chance Club" in any telephone book or city directory. It has never been incorporated, and it has no club-house. But a good many thousand Americans belong to it—though they wouldn't admit it—and no "fraternal" organization in the world exacts such high dues.

The ritual of the club runs something like this:

"I will always take a chance when driving my car. I will cut corners and drive on the wrong side of the road if I happen to feel like it. I will make a regular habit of passing other cars on hills and curves. I will always drive faster than road conditions warrant, and I will be especially careless when it is raining or snowing and visibility is poor. I will not make regular inspections of my car's lights, brakes and steering. I'll take it for granted that they are good enough. I will make no effort to learn the traffic laws of my state and community, and if I do happen to discover some of them accidentally, I will break them at every opportunity. I'll let the other driver watch out for me as well as himself, and I'll act as if the highways and streets were my private property."

"I'll pay no attention to traffic lights and stop signs, and I'll do my best to practice none of the courtesies of the road."

The members of the "Take-A-Chance Club" follow this ritual to the letter, and the result is that each year some 30,000 people are needlessly killed in automobile accidents, and property is destroyed to the extent of \$1,000,000,000.

Are you a member of the club?

CRIMES AGAINST PROPERTY

"How long will the millions of frugal individuals and families who have invested their savings in public utilities, remain silently submissive to the crimes the government is committing against their property?" asks an editorial in Forbes Magazine.

"Outright gifts totaling millions are offered cities, towns, communities to induce them to ruin local utility plants by erecting duplicate

municipal facilities. . . . To make sure that the civic competition will be unfair, such plants go scot-free of the heavy taxes imposed upon plants owned by investors—also free from regulation and from NRA burdens. "If this isn't de facto confiscation of private property without fair compensation, what is it?"

Forbes Magazine has asked some fair questions. There can be little doubt that the government's present utility policy—which is characterized not only by municipal subsidies, but by direct federal construction of great competing duplicate plants in various parts of the country, menaces private savings totalling billions. It threatens to cripple an industry which paid \$230,000,000 in taxes last year, thus reducing this much needed government revenue. And it imperils thousands of jobs now held by well-paid employees of the private utility industry. Last, but not least, it is establishing socialism in the United States as a substitute for our constitutional ideals of government.

The issue this presents goes far beyond the mere question of the rights of any single company or industry—it involves the entire question of taxation and private property rights of all the people—it touches every business and individual. If government can destroy electric utilities through grossly unfair duplication of properties, it can destroy any other industry in precisely the same manner. The voice of the people must decide this great issue, as it eventually decides all others, for the people are the government which is merely the agency they provide for their own protection in life and property.

THE FARM HOME

One of the greatest potential fields for stimulated construction lies in the farm home.

About 50 per cent of the farm houses in the country need extensive repairs. Twenty per cent need new roofs. Fifteen per cent need new foundations. It is estimated that if all the repairs were made the total cost would come to \$3,500,000,000—an average of \$575 per house.

Further, a great majority of rural residences are without interior plumbing. Fewer still have modern labor and time saving devices. It is said that the farm home, as compared with a good urban home, is 25 years behind the times.

Here, then, is a vast opportunity—for builders, equipment manufacturers and other industries. It is likewise an opportunity to eliminate much of existing unemployment, and to bolster lagging purchasing power—when construction is on a normal basis, every business feels the good effects. An increasing percentage of farmers are becoming able to build, repair and modernize their dwellings.

The best ally the tax collector has is public lethargy. In other words, the soaring tax rates in the United States are directly traceable to ignorance, indifference or a "Why should I worry?" attitude.

In the long run, the public passes on every law that goes through our legislatures. Public officials, whether they know it or not, are simply the servants of the people. They continue in their jobs only through the people's favor. The ballot box is the mightiest of all weapons.

Today the cost of every branch of government is sky-rocketing. It has reached the point where we pay until it hurts—it is approaching the point where it may be impossible for us to pay at all. More than 25 per cent of the national income goes to public treasuries. Twenty-five cents out of each dollar is thus stopped from providing permanent jobs from developing industry, from productive use.

The fact that a majority of the American people believe they are tax-free, is the great tax joker. They pay little or nothing in the way of direct taxes. They think that the burden of government is borne by the minority which pays income and property taxes.

But government would go broke tomorrow if it had to depend for revenue on that minority. The great bulk of revenue is obtained indirectly—from taxes on the things we wear, the things we eat, the things we use. Go to a show, drink a glass of beer, take a ride in your car, buy groceries, switch on a light—and you are paying taxes. Part of the cost of every product represents the taxes the concern making it must pay.

Remember the tax joker can trump all your earnings.

DALLAS—The annual inspection of growing crops for seed certification purposes has just been completed in Polk county by representatives of the Oregon State college extension service. A total of 765 acres of crops on 31 farms were inspected and 551 acres passed. These include many fields of clover and one or more fields each of wheat, utility plants by erecting duplicate

Singers Give Nightly Program at Caves

Oregon Caves National Monument, Ore., August 14. (Special)—Soft music from wooded mountainside forms long to be remembered greetings for Oregon Caves visitors as a part of nightly summer programs presented by the management of the Oregon Caves Chateau. A group of highly trained vocalists and instrumentalists provided well balanced programs in a natural amphitheatre, illuminated by a roaring, log bonfire.

Entertainment under the stars has developed a great popularity among monument visitors, arriving daily from all parts of the nation. Following special guide trips through the caverns during the day, a large bonfire begins blazing when darkness has claimed the evening hours. A trumpet calls from a hillside and comes an answering call from slopes beyond a canyon. A duet by the two distant horns lends melodic accompaniment to crackling flames surrounded by a semi-circle of visitors.

Songs, recitations and instrumental numbers follow the trumpet selections, presenting a varied assortment of music.

Persons taking part in the programs include Helen Gould, Eugene, Ore., saxophone artist; Genevieve McGee, alto soloist and Louise Hanson, soprano soloist, both of Ashland; Wanda Wardrip, soprano; Margaret Hammerbacher, contralto; Fred Thornburg, baritone; Howard Barrett, bass, and William Bromley, tenor, of Grants Pass; David Loughin, Portland, trumpet soloist; Richard Hammond, Portland, trumpet soloist; Howard Beard, Corvallis, ukelele; Karl Ashenbrenner, Portland bass; Melvin Anderson, Medford, clarinet; Guy Stiff, Portland, trombone; Vltvor Earl, Portland violin; Edward Houghton, Pendleton, saxophone; Marguerite Welch Corvallis, reader and impersonator; Coral Ausse, Vancouver, Wn., musical director and accompanist.

A number of the musicians and singers have spent several years at the Oregon Caves and are widely recognized for their musical talent. The nightly programs were first begun over ten years ago by George Sabin, proprietor and manager of the Oregon Caves Chateau.

Economic Highlights

Happenings That Affect the Dinner Pails, Dividend Checks and Tax Bills of Every Individual, National and International Problems Inseparable from Local Welfare.

Europe continues to hold tenaciously to the news spotlight. A few weeks ago the German executioner constituted the greatest headline feature of recent months. The assassination of Chancellor Dollfuss followed, and all eyes were focused on Vienna. Now the death of President Hindenburg has again centered the world's interest on Berlin, and has further complicated the already chaotic Central European situation.

It is a known fact that von Hindenburg was simply a figurehead in Germany for the past year or two. Grown old and tired, it is reported he could be easily handled by his advisors—it is said that in recent months he would sign anything put before him without reading it. As long as he lived, however, the world knew that the German government was officially headed by a man of proven ability and strength. Von Hindenburg was literally the rock of Gibraltar of Central Europe; some believed that he was all that stood between Germany and economic and political insanity.

Chancellor Hitler moved fast when the President died. He at once seized the office the old Field Marshall had held and thus became both President and Chancellor. His power over Germany is absolute in theory as well as in fact; there is no check whatsoever on him. He is more powerful than was the Kaiser in the palmist days of the Hohenzollerns.

A number of qualified observers are now forecasting that Hitler is planning to restore the monarchy—but Wilhelm II will not sit again on the throne he left in 1918. Hitler's hope, if reports are correct, is to make himself King Adolf I. If he succeeds, his rise will have but one historical counterpart—that of Napoleon, who rose from a poor Corsican army lieutenant to become emperor of all France.

These events in Germany have had an unhappy effect on the Austrian problem. The Nazi Putsch which resulted in the assassination of Dollfuss failed, and its leaders have faced firing squads, but the rebels have not admitted defeat. Preparations for overthrowing the present anti-Nazi Austrian government are again underway, and the revo-

lutionaries have money, leaders and men. It will be a fight to a finish with no quarter given. Today the Austrian government is treating nazis and their families very much as the German government treats anti-nazis. It is confiscating their property and sending dissenters to concentration camps for long terms. Hatred is the great emotion of the hour and it is feared much more blood will flow in the streets of Vienna before the issue is settled.

The Central European powder keg is still open; the fuse is still laid. Behind the scenes diplomats work furiously, seeking secrets and ententes and agreements in case of war.

Up in North Dakota the governor was recently convicted of a felony, and sentenced to Leavenworth. The voters of North Dakota then re-nominated him for the office by a tremendous majority.

Behind that fact is a situation which is causing much worry in Washington. North Dakota farmers are mad—and if one state gets mad, the rest of the agricultural states will get mad too sooner or later. Agriculture is still largely in the dumps. Many farmers have little use for law and order; they dislike and mistrust courts. Thousands have lost their homes and their crops; those who still own their own farms are liable to find that cost of operation, plus taxes and mortgage payments, exceed revenue. The result is that they are in a harsh frame of mind, and their re-nomination of the

convicted governor was a direct slap at the federal power which sentenced him to prison.

The national government can do nothing as yet. But high officials are keeping watch on Bismarck and wondering if similar situations will occur in other state capitols.

The railroads entered depression long before industry as a whole, largely due to the increase in waterway, a tremendous drop in purchasing power, heavy decreases in the value of railroad securities. The federal government regards the railroads as one of the main industries which must be rehabilitated before normal times can start to return.

Now the railroads propose revision of the national freight rate schedule. A new schedule will be presented to the Interstate Commerce Commission for approval. Maximum increases, with few exceptions, are about ten per cent; many classes of rates are upped less than that. It is forecast that the schedule would net the roads about \$180,000,000 a year additional. This is but 50 per cent of the increased expenses the railroads must pay, due to higher cost of supplies, higher pay rolls, etc.

The Interstate Commerce Commission will probably permit the rate increase; under the law its duty is to allow the carriers a fair annual return of about 5 per cent. The lines have not earned as much as that in the last fifteen years.

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