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ARTHUR EDWARD POWELL
Editor and Proprietor

EDITORIALS

OUR WAY OF LIFE

Writing in Fortune a short time ago, Wendell Willkie said: "This effort to separate 'business' from the ordinary life of the people and to set it in a distinct and inferior category represents a profoundly false conception of our economic system. There are about 10,000,000 private enterprises in the U.S., which employ about 34,000,000 people, who in turn support many millions of other people. Business is a part of life and a way of life. By it we earn our bread, build our homes, care for our children, find expression for ourselves. Every one of us lives directly or indirectly by business. . . . It is business, in the broadest sense of the word—including industry and technology, and including the modern farm, which is a business enterprise—that has made the American people so great."

For a long time, we, the people, who live by business, have sat supinely by while the public servants who manage our governmental affairs denounced business, reviled business, fought business, and attempted to destroy private business at every opportunity. The result was the greatest and longest business depression in our history.

And now, almost overnight, we find it imperative that we embark on an unprecedented program of defense rearmament. Do we turn to politicians in this emergency? No! We turn to business, to industry, to the great factories of America. The principal members of the preparedness board lately appointed by the President are business men. And that is as it should be. Even as industry must provide us with the tools of peace, so must it provide us with the weapons of defense.

It has taken the direst of crises to reawaken us to the role that private industry plays in our lives. Let us not forget it again.

POLITICAL PRODIGALITY MUST STOP

If we Americans have been suffering from any illusions regarding the cost of an adequate national defense structure, they would be shattered by now. The billion dollars or so requested in the President's recent special message to Congress was but a small drop in a very big bucket. Congress has already raised that amount to more than \$5,000,000,000 for defense purposes—and that sum, gigantic as it is, marks only the beginning.

Some of the leading columnists have been criticizing high government officials for failing to frankly inform the people as to just what sacrifices are now necessary. And that indictment seems justified from a completely non-partisan point of view. Defense appropriations have been requested on a piece-meal basis. No reliable estimate of the total cost has been issued by any responsible government source. And no definite plan has been presented to the people who must pay the bill.

In the opinion of Senator Byrd of Virginia, who has proven himself a cool head when it comes to fiscal matters, reasonable rearmament for this country will cost, not five or six

OKAY, BUT LET'S CONVOY IT THIS TIME!



Talbot, in the Washington Daily News.

billion, but as much as \$20,000,000,000. The question before us now is not whether we shall rearm to the limit. All are agreed that must be done. The question is how to pay for it in a logical, business-like manner, free from waste and too much politics.

To that question, there are three related answers. It will be necessary to raise the debt limit. It will be necessary to greatly increase present taxes, and perhaps to create new taxes. And finally, it will be necessary to cut the cost of government to the bone. Every nickel spent now for an unnecessary or avoidable purpose should be regarded as criminal waste. Excessive relief appropriations, excessive farm aid appropriations, the luxury of political spending of money to put government into competition with private business, must be stopped.

The people are ready to pay the bill. But they will not permit further political prodigality when the nation needs the weapons that can make us secure against invasion.

EYE OPENERS

Those who had faith in the extreme claims of advocates of socialized electric power seem doomed to staggering disillusionment—the bills are coming in.

The floodgates of the Federal treasury were opened wide to pay for unnecessary government hydro-electric projects. The strongest kind of political pressure was brought to bear to promote the building of municipal systems to distribute the vast surplus of Federal power paid for with the money of all the taxpayers.

And what has happened? Down in the Southeast, where the TVA has almost entirely supplanted the private electric industry in a whole state, the reductions effected in electric rates have been small—despite TVA's immense advantage of tax-subsidies, freedom from standard bookkeeping methods, countless governmental privileges, etc. States and towns in its territory have been suddenly confronted with a gigantic tax problem. TVA has taken millions of dollars worth of property off the tax rolls. So have municipalities using its power, which have absorbed private systems which once paid a substantial part of the cost of operating schools,

paving streets, maintaining police and fire departments and all the other activities of local government. And the only possible solution seems to be to pile new burdens on the remaining taxpayers or raise TVA electric rates and make it pay all taxes paid by private companies. TVA, in brief, has cut cents from the power bill—by adding dollars to the tax bill.

In the Pacific Northwest, there has been an increasing anxiety on the part of thinking citizens lest that area be "TVA-ized." In mid-May, proposals to create people's utility districts to distribute power from Bonneville dam went down to smashing defeats at the polls. And there are many sound reasons why that happened—one being that existing PUDs have failed in almost every instance to realize the claims of their supporters.

The experiment in socialized electricity has cost billions of dollars, and produced nothing the people did not already have except greater public debts, more taxes and more public job holders. "No more socialism" would be a fine motto for America to adopt now, when all our

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available public funds should be devoted to defense.

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