

# TAX FACTS

Published in  
the interest of

SOUND ECONOMICS

and

AMERICAN IDEALS

Vol. XII

Los Angeles, California, October, 1934

No. 6

## THE BASIS OF PEACE

That the peacemakers of the world are in earnest, we cannot doubt. The women—especially the women—are eagerly awaiting the dawn of peace, lasting peace. Modern methods of warfare and new concepts of human relations have robbed Mars of his one-time glory and prestige. The knight in shining armor has become a sweating, swearing doughboy in battered helmet crawling through the mud.

The world has all the machinery it needs to adjust the differences and decide the claims of nations, yet those who sit at council tables, the League of Nations, the World Court, the various disarmament conferences, are continually embarrassed by the roar of guns at home. We cannot place all the blame on the munition manufacturers. Who plowed and prepared the soil for the seed of their evil sowing?

Europe is so full of gunpowder, of the figurative type, that her ministers sit with their fingers over their ears to muffle the sound of the explosion they momentarily expect. A king visits France as a peace gesture. He and the official host sent to greet him, Foreign Minister Barthou, are both assassinated before the King has been on French soil an hour. It becomes of the utmost importance to find out who did it and why. Was Italy or Hungary or one of the Balkan states trying to stir up trouble? Every country in Europe has the jitters—probably not Spain. She provided her own war for home consumption. The United States does not expect to be involved in another European brawl very soon, but she is having some light skirmishes in her own yard, and has been forced to call on the State Militia more than once.

Why is our yearning for peace so great; our hopes for it so faint and far? How can there be peace without justice—justice for nations as nations, and justice for individuals as individuals? How can the powers of the world, great and small, abandon their armies and navies as long as the peoples of the earth are not allowed to trade the various products of their labor when, where and as they please? Take down the tariff walls and open the ports of the world to the people of

the world and you won't need armies and navies to settle disputes. Guns and gas bombs are not the implements of fairplay.

To blame the industrial upheavals of America or the revolt in Spain on Communistic agitators answers nothing. Why Communism? What brought it into being? No country can hope to gain peace by merely quelling an outbreak when it occurs and deporting its ring leaders. This is not an accident that calls for surgery, it is a disease that requires the cleansing of the entire social system. Russia thought Siberia was the answer. France tried the Bastille. It works beautifully for a while—this trampling on men's rights and silencing them when they protest.

With a revolution here and a revolution there, struggling humanity wrests a few privileges from the ruling class, always at fearful cost to both sides. Until the last bar to freedom is down, there can be no peace. Humanity will never give up the struggle. As each point is gained, the vision of complete liberty becomes clearer and more enticing. How to gain it, the struggling masses do not know, but gain it they will, and woe betide the lords of the earth who join forces to oppose this surging tide that knows no ebb.

The fruitful, God-given earth swings in a universe controlled by mighty laws. We cannot break those laws; we cannot disobey or ignore them and expect to live in peace and plenty. Luxury for the few and poverty for the many cannot go on forever. Time was when the poor working girl only *heard* of the gorgeous trappings of the rich and pictured them as best she could from the little she had glimpsed in shop windows. Now she *knows*. The magnificent sets and elaborate costumes of the motion picture have opened the door to this hitherto little known world. She has seen, and she is not going to stand outside and look in—she and her children and her children's children. She's going to crash the gate, and how! If the powers-that-be would stop bothering with the Communists long enough to consider the matter, they might realize that the motion picture is the most dangerous "agitator" in the world. It visualizes

concretely the comfort and beauty that surround those who command the wealth of the world.

Survival of the fittest? All right, put it that way. But, in the name of justice, every man has a right to *try* for the top, hasn't he? Let every man begin at scratch, and then see who wins the race. It isn't fair to give some an advantage over others, and the others know it. They are becoming more firmly convinced of it every day. Every man has the same right to the use of this great store house, the earth, each has the same right to pursue his course unhampered by restraining laws or regulations. Give him that freedom, which is his birthright, and the amount of worldly goods which he can accumulate will depend entirely on his own strength and ability. There will be no object in his making war on anyone.

If there were no opportunity for a man to appropriate the wealth of others *legally* as is now the case, there would be far less temptation for those who do not enjoy any special privileges to go out after other folk's possessions in direct defiance of the law. It is a well-known fact that most of the women check passers are young women who are trying to satisfy their yearnings for pretty things. Nearly all of the checks are used to buy lovely clothes. Let's have a little more justice in the economic set-up, maybe there won't be so much stealing on the part of the poor working girls when there is less "stealing" on the part of big industries.

The struggle for liberty is as old as humanity. Sometimes the objective has taken definite form, men have fought for well defined points. We have come now to that last great battle for economic freedom. No, it is not a battle. It is a war, and its field is as wide as the world. Go on, you men of privilege, stamp out the fighting here and the fighting there, it will only spring up somewhere else. This desultory firing that is going on in Europe and America is just the little sniping that always precedes massed combat.

Men have gained too much to give way now. "If we wish to be free—if we mean to preserve inviolate those inestimable privileges for which we have been so long contending—if we mean not basely to abandon the noble struggle in which we have been so long engaged, and which we have pledged ourselves never to abandon, until the glorious object of our contest shall be obtained—we must fight!—I repeat it, sir, we must fight! An appeal to arms and to the God of Hosts, is all that is left us!"

Now, what would you do with a man who would utter such radical statements as that? Shades of Moscow! The conservatives among us would call out the "Red Squad" and have him clapped in jail. Unfortunately—for the conservatives—the gentleman is dead. His name

was Patrick Henry. He made stirring speeches about liberty, and went home to his slaves. He was smart enough to sense the incongruity in the situation. He said so. If he had lived in 1860, he would have been the loudest of the abolitionists. If he were alive today, seeing the war carried into the economic field, he would be most emphatic in denouncing the various forms of privilege that bar the path to that liberty that was so dear to him.

Those who live and grow fat by taking more than their share, wealth which they have not earned, are still dining at the table of George the Third, but the Patrick Henrys of the world are marching on.

"Gentlemen may cry, peace, peace—but there is no peace." The guns will never be still until man has learned to use and share the earth beneath his feet. Whether we are to have evolution or revolution depends on the tenacity with which privilege holds on. When the remedy is so easy and so painless, we suggest that you gentlemen retire as gracefully as you can, without waiting to be driven off. Luxury-loving gentlemen have been known to lose their heads by not doing so. This is just a suggestion.

The desire for liberty is not a fad, and even failure of government, whether it be in the line of Communism, Socialism, Fascism or what, merely closes the entrance to one more blind alley. Humanity will stumble on the right trail, lose it and find it again, perhaps a thousand times, but man will never lose the vision of liberty for which he has agonized through every generation since he first became aware of himself and knew that he *was* a man and not like the great beasts that yielded to his puny cry. No matter how muddled his ideas and theories are now regarding the means by which this vision is to be realized, he knows in a vague sort of way that this liberty must be based on justice. He is right, and nothing less will answer; no substitute can silence his guns—not for long.

### THOSE NAUGHTY REALTORS

Dr. Charles A. Beard, in a recent address, declared that 2000 American cities are on the verge of bankruptcy. He named three main causes as: Construction of expensive highways in towns, counties and cities. Construction of water works, sewer lines and other local projects. Increase of education.

"Dr. Beard blamed the real-estate interests for the second great expansion in municipal debt, saying that they have 'hounded local governments for years and driven them into extending streets, pavements, water services, and sewers into alleged real estate developments. This has meant an increase in the public debt for the benefit of private interests.'"