

PLAIN TALK *by Jerome Joachim*

Unless the American people quickly rid themselves of the leadership which at present is taking us rapidly down the road to state socialism we will soon be in the same predicament as the one in which England finds herself. Every business man, every employer and every laborer realizes daily how extremely difficult and impossible the present situation is becoming.

In England conditions are becoming so bad there is serious doubt as to whether the labor government will be re-elected.

State ownership of the coal mines in England in 1947 brought on a coal famine the first year and innumerable residents of England's large cities had to shiver by candlelight amid the gloom of winter afternoons. Again last winter there was a coal crisis and again the government was unable to foresee it coming. Instead of exporting coal the Minister of Fuel announced that he would import coal from America. Being the first time in the history of the nation that this had ever happened the British ports were not equipped to unload American colliers and the coal had to be taken to Holland for expensive transshipment. Meanwhile each householder was reduced to a few scuttlesful of coal, industry was given drastically reduced amounts and many railroad trains were suspended.

Now the government has taken over the iron and steel production of the nation—at a time when armaments for Britain are all important. This was done—so the Socialists contend—for the benefit of the wage earners, whose welfare they claim to have above all at heart.

But the nationalization of the coal mines has not filled the men who go down to the pits, with the delights prognosticated. The miners have found the government coal board an employer as harsh as any capitalist. The Britains still ration food, the trade-unionist's like that of everybody else. Meat, butter, margarine, cheese and sugar are to be bought only in limited quantities.



Despite low prices made possible by subsidies provided from excessive duties on tobacco, wines and spirits, the January meat ration was brought down to the value of 16 cents a week. Even a Socialist can see the futility of a low price for no meat.

Housing in England, under socialism, is shorter than ever before.

Though government has not forbidden private building it has made it very difficult. Licenses to build are either not issued or with much procrastination. Many of the meatless Socialists remain homeless as well. The government keeps rents low, so low that dwellings are not kept in proper repair and tenants will not evacuate houses which are too large for them.

No country except Russia has more socialism than Britain today but the result is not a welfare state but one in which everyone suffers, particularly the little people. And daily our administration is attempting to bring to us more of the "welfare measures" which are impoverishing England. Effort to promote the welfare of everyone in general and of the industrial wage-earner in particular, are foredoomed no matter by whom or where attempted. The argument that if control and direction by the state were sufficiently embracing all factories would at once become efficiently located, all decisions would be wise, prompt and expert, and the happy smile on the worker's face would be permanent—will not bear examination. Complete centralization is not only a task beyond human capacity but one which—if it were possible—would result in the complete degradation of all except those responsible for such planning.

But enslavement to the socialistic doctrines which Edward Bellamy portrayed causes many of our leaders to persist in trying to alleviate problems caused by lack of incentives with solutions which decrease incentives still more.