

have been ignored—their proper functioning in the industrial system misapplied. There is nothing the matter with the system itself if these functions are recognized for what they are, and the office they fill and the work they do, properly apportioned. The industrial system has apparently broken down because the factors have not been recognized for what they are by those whose duty it is to teach, the statesmen and politicians, and the heads of our institutions of learning from which only occasionally a lucid voice is forthcoming.

THE notion that we need a central regulating power over industry explains the opposition to the Constitution and its interpretation by the Supreme Court in the recent N.R.A. decision. Paul Blanchard in a recent number of *The Forum* complains that the Constitution hampers progress because "it prevents a central control of our economic life and a unified system of labor laws." For our part we would be quite as distrustful of unified control of our economic life by politicians temporarily in power as in the hands of the nine able gentlemen who constitute the Supreme Court. As a matter of fact, the Constitution is more flexible than "unified control" in the hands of a strong administration. It has been amended twenty-one times in 150 years. It is far from being a static instrument since it provides for its own modification by direct amendment. And we were told years ago by Peter Finley Dunne, somewhat cynically, that decisions of the Supreme Court "follow the election returns." So we may rest in that assurance if all else fails us.

BUT the very centralized powers for which Mr. Blanchard contends are a danger more imminent and perilous than any possible usurpation of power by the Supreme Court. We would not lightly ignore certain considerations, but some thoughtful men are saying that a dictatorship has been averted by the Supreme Court decision. We will not go so far as to assert this, but certain recent developments in the process of vesting in the Executive unusual powers have held a menace which it were wise not to underestimate.

NO doubt the power of forty-eight states to legislate in their own way on all matters which are not interstate opposes an obstacle to "unified control of labor," and we for one are glad of it. We would rather bear the possible inconveniences, if there are any, in favor of the forty-eight experiment stations in the legislatures of forty-eight states. It seems to us that democracy has a better fighting chance. We are glad that the Supreme Court stands as a guardian over the rights of the states. We have forty-eight times more faith in the emulative example of half a hundred legislatures competing for adventure in social progress than

a centralized government at Washington, however sloppily benevolent.

WE have made some progress in economic thought. No complaint that unemployment arises from laziness or improvidence is likely to be heard again. Nor is it probable that any great paper like the *Chicago Tribune* will again advance the giving of arsenic to the unemployed, the tramp or the striker. Strikes have become almost popular and unemployment too familiar a phenomenon. No future president of a great railroad system will advocate that strikers crying for food should be given "rifle diet and see how they like that kind of food." No, newspapers and railroad officials have grown if not more humane at least more cautious. So much has been gained for the cause of sanity and a calmer outlook upon the social problem.

HOW little we can depend on the teachings of so-called radical journals like *The Nation* is shown by their attitude toward the Supreme Court decision. *The Nation* says: "The President cannot complain about his luck. The Supreme Court has given him a new chance to assert his leadership after he himself has forfeited many golden opportunities. We think that he now has the best issue of his career." If *The Nation* really understood the economic issues involved it would hail the Supreme Court decision on the N.R.A. as a great step in the preservation of our liberties. We have no grave objection to amending the Constitution in a way that will restrict its power over national legislation. But that merely looks to a possible improvement of the instrument itself, and the Constitution provides the method of procedure. It is unfortunate that the issue should be presented at this time when the decision is in accordance with the best traditions of a liberty-loving people.

IF there is need for an amendment to the Constitution it is a pity that the chief protagonists of such change should be those who have shown small comprehension of American traditions. We should far rather trust the future of this republic with the men composing the Supreme Court than with Franklin Delano Roosevelt and those comprising the milk and water socialistic school of *The Nation* and *The New Republic*. There is, we believe, little to choose between Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Villard. Neither school to which these men belong has the faintest conception of natural law in wealth distribution, and both seem to think that laissez faire and the operation of free competition disastrous in their results. Neither school has the faintest conception of human liberty. *The Nation* has done some good service on occasions for the defense of human rights, but what man's fundamental rights are is left to conjecture.

LET *The Nation* speak for itself. In one article entitled "A Constitutional Plutocracy," it says: "Our mutual life is dominated by agriculture and commerce. Unless they can be controlled by the nation the government of the country virtually passes to them." We say now that this is un-American doctrine. It is bad economics; it is Socialism half disguised. They are words if they mean anything that lead straight to Karl Marx. No wonder the Supreme Court decision irritates men who believe as they do in federal control of all means of earning a livelihood. The control of economic factors by forty-eight states is not enough. Statute law and the civil law we are told are not sufficient to guard against abuses. So the federal power must be asked to step in and work its wonders.

*The Nation* writer continues: "How can the situation be met? Met it must be, for without action we are confirmed as the serfs of big business." This is the sheerest kind of nonsense. In this instance the Supreme Court stands for sound economics and American liberty. The bigness of big business is a negligible factor. *The abolition of monopoly is all that is demanded*, but *The Nation* is not willing to take this step. It prefers to fight the Supreme Court decision when such decision is a victory for the principles of American liberty which we have cherished for 150 years and to which *The Nation* now and then has contributed some lip service.

REMEMBER now that in all of this Mr. Oswald Garrison Villard proposes no reform in the process by which we are (to quote) "handed over to the mercies of a business and fundamental plutocracy." Did indeed the Supreme Court decision do this to us? If so it is really imperative that something be done about it. Why these strictures against the Constitution and the Supreme Court and not against the powers to which we are now "handed over, bound hand and foot?" Will this kind of dreary nonsense find disciples? Is the answer that if Henry Ford's plant is now too big it should be made smaller, and by federal enactment? That big farms be split up into smaller farms? If the objection is to big business may we not ask, "How big?" Nothing here about monopoly that operates against both big and little businesses. Nothing against federal meddling and taxes that choke little businesses as well as big. Nothing to show that the earth is closed against industry, that men are denied a place to work, that capital and labor, big and little businesses, are crushed by the exactions of land monopoly.

IT seems to be the opinion of *The Nation* that everybody not opposed to the Supreme Court decision is committed to the status quo. If to reject the status quo means the acceptance of "production for use rather than

profit," which is a fundamental tenet in *The Nation's* Socialism—we are indeed committed to the rejection of all such nonsense. For is not all production for use, and is not profit the incentive and the real wages of production?

IN making his fight against the Supreme Court, if President Roosevelt should deem this essential for his reelection, he will have with him the forces of organized labor. There is little hope here for any real effort to get at the root of the matter. We shall hear nothing of fundamental economics, of course. These will be carefully kept in the background. The leaders of the A. F. of L. are for the most part politicians who will strive only to retain their power. The fight is none of ours though we may well remind both principals to the controversy that wages and hours of labor are not something in the power of any tribunal to regulate. They will learn this some day when they cease their shadow boxing. They will no longer serve as pawns in the game, whether played by politicians of the stamp of Hoover or Roosevelt.

THE condition of the tenants of the State of Georgia, once called, because of its greater enterprise, "The Yankee land of the South," is described as deplorable. The State can no longer be singled out from portions of the less progressive South. At least this is true of a part of Georgia. The landlords have seen to it that the land which yields abundance, which despite the fact that if the farmer can get a piece of land to work he can live comfortably all his life, the opportunity is closed against him.

HERE is such an obvious lesson that it seems impossible it can be ignored much longer. The impudence of a certain section of Georgia landlords passes all comprehension. One is reported to have said: "If a tenant makes a living he ought to be satisfied instead of trying to make more. When they come and tell me they are not making enough I tell them to get off my land and stay off." No wonder Erskine Caldwell, who has contributed a series of papers to the *New York Evening Post*, says: "The landowner-tenant system will have to go. No act of its own is motivated by any desire save that of profit at the expense of the physical, moral and economic welfare of the workers." This is the condition that is transforming the Yankee Land of the South into a veritable hell on earth for Whites and Blacks who are of the disinherited landless.

AT last we have found an appropriate name for the men in control of affairs at Washington. There is a type of antelope at the Central Park Zoo called aoudads which race around in circles. Recently when the eclipse