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The Public

A Journal of Democracy

Germany and Revolution

Labor for Shipyards

Published Weekly
New York, N. Y.

February 16, 1918

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The Public

A Journal of Democracy

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The Public

A Journal of Democracy

Volume XXI | **New York, N. Y., February 16, 1918** | **Number 1037**

Editorial

In view of the grave danger that the German army, one year from now, may be in control of the continent of Europe; in view of the possibility that America may have no battlefield, because she arrived humiliatingly too late; in view of the desperate need of our Allies, combing out their last resources in man-power and staggering under unimaginable burdens and sacrifices; in view of the famine rising like a tide to engulf the friends who are fighting our battles, there is something of interest for the American people in the evidence of John W. Towle before the Senate Committee on Commerce. Mr. Towle is an engineer who had been sent by the Emergency Fleet Corporation to supervise the work on Hog Island. An extract is sufficient:

"Did you detect any patriotic desire on the part of contractors to sacrifice profit?" asked Senator Vardaman.

"Very seldom," replied Mr. Towle. "They seemed, for the most part, to be trying to squeeze as much as they could out of the Government."

"From what you say, I take it that there was reckless prodigality in the handling of public funds in the building of the Hog Island yards," suggested Senator Vardaman.

"That's been my idea right along," Mr. Towle assented.

"The contractors did as they pleased?"

"Absolutely."

Mr. Towle became "unpopular" with the Emergency Fleet Corporation, he said, because of his frequent criticism of the Hog Island work. He made daily reports, he testified, in which he freely exposed conditions, but no heed was paid to them.

The witness told of $2,000 an acre being paid at Hog Island for land under water, as against an estimated value of $1,000. He called the figure flagrantly excessive.

"That's only an instance of the inefficiency and incompetency with which things were handled," said Mr. Towle.

Mr. Towle spoke of the Stone and Webster firm of Boston as having made $333,000 on a contract for a little more than $1,000,000. He considered that a "vastly excessive" profit. He said the firm of Holbrook, Cabot and Rollins of Boston, which has a member as Vice-President of the American International Shipbuilding Corporation, had a sub-contract for piers amounting to $1,600,000, and in addition it received a rental fee of $260,000 for its equipment, paid by the Government.

* * *

It is surely time to call a halt to the canonization of Leon Trotzky and the glorification of Bolshevik policies. Mr. Ransome's reiterated plea that the Allies should accord recognition to the existing regime because its opponents would conclude a separate peace, is a plea that has little accord with facts. Those who stand clearly for reaction do not dare show their heads; even the Cadets, who have been branded as a bourgeois party, have little political influence. Those who stand in active opposition to the Bolsheviki are the Social Revolutionaries, clearly a majority both in the country and in the recently dissolved constituent assembly; and there is no evidence that this party ever intended to open negotiations with the Germans. No events within the power of the Bolsheviki to bring about can mitigate their destruction of the one chance Russia had to maintain her national unity. As to the exposure of German intentions, this was in the nature of the general situation, as was also the destruc-

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tion of the old basis of the Entente Alliance. The separate peace just concluded with the Ukraine brings Trotzky's labors to a close, by placing Russia at the mercy of Germany and involving the country in hopeless sectional warfare. Russia is paying dearly for the uncritical idealism that has tolerated these doctrinaire impossibilists. It is the hope of those who desire the good of that country, that she be quickly freed from this unmitigated curse.

* * *

In a pastoral letter recently issued, the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster indicates, with remarkable clearness, the social forces that are now fermenting in Britain and rendering possible the upheaval which causes so much apprehension to men of Lord Lansdowne's class. The Archbishop says:

"The effect of competition uncontrolled by morals has been to segregate more and more the capitalist from the wage-earning classes, and to form the latter into a proletariat, a people owning nothing but their labor power and tending to shrink more and more from the responsibilities of both ownership and freedom. Hence the increasing lack of self-reliance and the tendency to look to the State for the performance of the ordinary family duties. While the Constitution had increasingly taken on democratic forms the reality underlying those forms had been increasingly plutocratic. Legislation under the guise of social reform tended to mark off all wage earners as a definitely servile class, and the result even before the war was a feeling among the workers of irritation and resentment which manifested itself in sporadic strikes but found no very clear expression in any other way.

"During the war the minds of the people have been profoundly altered. Dull acquiescence in social injustice has given way to active discontent. The very foundations of political and social life, of our economic system, of morals and religion are being sharply scrutinized, and this not only by a few writers and speakers, but by a very large number of people in every class of life, especially among the workers. Our institutions, it is felt, must justify themselves at the bar of reason. They can no longer be taken for granted."

It is certain that the war is liberating tendencies on the part of the working people that did not enter into the calculation of any man, and which are now no longer amenable to calculation. What is transpiring in Britain is certain to take place in this country. Our labor world is less organized, less self-contained, and less conservative. This will accentuate the violence of new adjustments. It is nothing short of blindness on the part of the employing class that makes it fail to see where its narrow policy of profiteering and sabotage is carrying the country. But, who knows?—it may be to an ultimate good.

* * *

Persons who have suspected that the law of supply and demand was having some difficulty in functioning in the case of hide and leather prices have had their suspicions confirmed by the report of the Federal Trade Commission. Correspondents in the West and South have "wanted to know" why hide agents were offering lower prices, on the plea that the market was overstocked, while the shoe men were pushing up prices because of the difficulty of getting hides. The Federal Trade Commission says that the slaughtering of cattle and calves in the United States during the last five years has increased thirty per cent. This confirms the estimate of the International Institute of Agriculture, which said that up to 1916 the world showed no apparent shortage of cattle. The Federal Trade Commission reports that the quantity of hides stored by the "big five" Chicago packers — Armour, Swift, Morris, Cuhady and Wilson—increased forty-five per cent. during 1916 and the first half of 1917. These five concerns are declared to be the chief factors in the hide market. Their holdings, which on January 31, 1916, amounted to 88,633,193 pounds of hides, increased to 127,694,169 pounds July 31, 1917. Stocks held by smaller packers, says the Commission, showed even a more striking increase. Imports of hides in 1917 showed an increase of seventy per cent. over 1912. The Commission notes the striking fact that while the farmers received seventeen per cent. more for their cattle from Swift's five principal plants in 1916-17, the value that Swift & Company put on their hides from the same cattle increased thirty-five per cent. Although stocks of hides were found by the Commission to be abnormally large, many tanning companies reported they were operating at far from capacity; and it is suggested that the prices of

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hides are so high that many tanning companies have been keeping out of the market in the hope that prices would decline. As the exports of men's shoes have fallen from 13,000,000 pairs in 1916 to slightly over 6,000,000 in 1917, it is estimated that the demand for the army has been offset. This is an interesting situation. Shoes are dear because leather is scarce. Leather is scarce because the tanners cannot get hides. And the price of hides is low—to the farmers—because there is an over-supply. Cannot Congress divert a part of its energy from creating war cabinets to bridging this gap between the price of hides and the cost of shoes?

* * *

A wise move was the turning over to the Department of Labor of the housing problem. That Department has an understanding of the situation better than has been disclosed so far in other governmental branches. Its heads know why housing is scarce, and can distinguish between superficial and fundamental explanations. They know what difficulties are in the way, and the right way to remove them. It does not follow, of course, that they have the power to apply proper measures, even though knowing what they are. But if they have not, we may look confidently for intelligent advice which legislators should follow. It is furthermore reasonable to expect, as a result of the Department's labors, considerable broadening of knowledge concerning the problem, and a long advance toward a solution that will solve.

The Labor Report

The final report of President Wilson's Labor Commission is a sensational document. The work of a joint committee of employers and labor representatives who spent weeks in a first-hand investigation of conditions throughout the country, it presents the conclusions of men who cannot be accused of any bias except the desire to expose and so correct errors and maladjustments that are interfering with the prosecution of the war. It is signed by Secretary Wilson as one of the five commissioners, a Cabinet officer distinguished for his personal modesty, his conservatism, and his punctilious regard for the official proprieties. And in it is presented, by direct and inescapable inference, a powerful indictment of the policies that have controlled at least two important departments of the Federal Government.

The Commission finds that "repressive dealing with manifestations of labor unrest is the cause of much bitterness, turns radical leaders into martyrs, and thus increases their following, and, worst of all, in the minds of workers tends to implicate the Government as a partisan in an economic conflict. The problem is a delicate one. There is no doubt, however, that the Bisbee and Jerome deportations, the Everett incident, the Little hanging, and similar acts of violence against workers have had a very harmful effect upon labor both in the United States and in some of the allied countries. Such incidents are attempts to deal with symptoms rather than causes. The I. W. W. has exercised its strongest hold in those industries and those communities where employers have most resisted the trade union movement, and where some form of protest against unjust treatment was inevitable. . . . Sinister influences and extremist doctrine may have availed themselves of these conditions; they certainly have not created them."

Here, in so many words, is a condemnation of the policy of Attorney General Gregory in instituting a wholesale assault on the I. W. W. as an organization, through the arrest and indictment of more than 200 of its leaders and members, while failing, so far as any one knows, to lift a hand to punish the authors of outrages by agents of great employing corporations against workmen. That is the substance and obvious intent of the Commission's report. Its meaning will not escape the President nor the people of this country, and executive action looking toward at least a mitigation of the Gregory policy becomes inevitable.

The Commission's second indictment is, again by inescapable inference, against the War Industries Board as the responsible agent of the Government in fixing prices. Profiteering is held to a large responsibility for a situation that is summarized in the following terms: "The effective conduct of the war suffers needlessly because of interruption of work due to actual or threatened strikes, purposed decrease in efficiency through the strike on the job, decrease in efficiency due to labor unrest, and dislocation of labor supply." The Commission finds that

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"the elimination to the utmost practical extent of all profiteering during the period of the war is a prerequisite to the best morale in industry. So long as profiteering is not comprehensively prevented to the full extent that Governmental action can prevent it, just so long will a sense of inequality disturb the fullest devotion of labor's contribution to the war." Secretary Baker has testified that all department heads have been instructed to defer to the decisions of the War Industries Board as to prices, and the responsibility can be definitely centered there. It is not an occasion for censure so much as for the guidance of the Board in the future. The public does not know to what degrees of stubbornness the corporations that control raw materials went in holding out for exorbitant prices, or how necessary it may have seemed to bribe these constructive traitors during the rush days of the summer and fall. But here Mr. McAdoo's responsibility enters in. An adequate revenue program would have covered into the treasury all excess profits that escaped the price fixing program, and would have been as efficacious as fair prices in enlisting the sacrifice and enthusiasm of the workers.

Other notable features of the report are its urging of a consistent labor policy for all Government agencies and a unified agency for investigation, mediation and administration in the labor field. We are all hoping that the reorganization of the Department of Labor will meet these needs. And finally, there is its protest against the survival in American industry of a majority of employers so out of touch with the world's spirit as to refuse to their employes any voice in determining wages, hours and conditions. This, of course, is the primary and overshadowing cause of our difficulties,—a cause long recognized and here once more clearly stated. That the Commission does not go deeper into fundamentals and point out the need of a radical economic reconstruction, is understandable when it is considered that they are dealing only with those errors that can be corrected in time to affect the prosecution of this war.

Incidentally, this report is the most conclusive answer to all at home or abroad who question the fundamental democracy of Woodrow Wilson. It is the report of a body appointed by him personally, and it expresses vicariously but accurately his mind. It is the mind of a courageous champion of democracy and freedom, an enemy of privilege and tyranny wherever found, a leader who shrinks from no application of the sacred principle for which our armies are to face the German guns.

"Demonstrated Ability"

When it was announced from Washington that the American International Corporation was to take complete charge of the great Hog Island shipbuilding program and of work at other yards, THE PUBLIC felt that the Shipping Board had acted wisely. The contract provision that the Government should advance $21,000,000, and as much more as was needed to construct the yards and meet all payrolls and supply bills, seemed undue generosity to a corporation backed by Mr. Rockefeller, but we reflected that ships would be produced, and that was the great item. Mr. Frank Vanderlip was at the head of the corporation, and was he not also head of the Rockefeller bank in New York and a business leader of high repute?

We had not liked Mr. Vanderlip's dream of foreign loans and concessions for his company when it was organized two years ago. We had been alarmed when he wanted us to go into Mexico, and we did not like his pleas for compulsory universal military service. But today the need is ships.

We are not emphasizing the gross incompetence now revealed in the American International Corporation's management of affairs at Hog Island because it gives us any vindictive pleasure to bait these men. The details of their incompetence have been widely printed in the newspapers, as reports of the hearings held by the Senate Commerce Committee and the testimony brought out by Senator Johnson of California. We are emphasizing their failure as a warning to the vast number of Americans who have been entirely taken in by the cry that we must have business executives "of demonstrated ability" at the head of our Government at this time. This uncritical acceptance of our financial magnates as supermen is one of the country's pet obsessions. None of us has escaped it. And, in the light of the facts, it is a dangerous obsession. Enterprises carried out by men who distrust democracy and adhere to reactionary policies in

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conflict with the spirit of the times cannot be well carried out. They are doomed to failure in this day when a spirit of cooperation and service is the first requisite to success. We may be devoutly thankful that the building of an army was not under the same management as the building of the Hog Island shipyards. Mr. Vanderlip has been covered with praise because he left the National City Bank and went to Washington at $1 a year. It is time we were demanding that he cease touring the country to lecture the people on thrift and apply some of his zeal to eliminating the wild extravagance and incompetency that has characterized the Hog Island operations of his American International Corporation.

Keep Down Bond Issues!

The office of the Secretary of the Treasury was the last place from which to expect an unanswerable argument against the putting out of huge bond issues while a penny of surplus wealth remains unconscripted. Yet, exactly such an argument was released for publication on Sunday morning by Mr. McAdoo's publicity bureau. It is in the form of a report from "a committee of eminent economists," appointed by the department to study the purchasing power of money in war time. The committee is made up of Prof. Irving Fisher, of Yale; Prof. E. W. Kemmerer, of Princeton; Prof. B. M. Anderson, Jr., of Harvard; Dr. Royal Meeker, U. S. Commissioner of Labor Statistics; Prof. Wesley Clair Mitchell, of Columbia, and Prof. Warren M. Persons, of Colorado College. The committee's report says not a word about taxation as against bonds. What it does is to describe clearly the process of inflation that results from bond issues, illustrating its analysis by quoting figures which show that average wholesale prices in the United States last month were 81 per cent above those of July, 1914; that the rise in retail prices of foods in the same period has been 57 per cent, and that since the war wholesale prices in the United States have been rising at the rate of nearly 2 per cent per month.

What remedy does the committee propose? Merely that those who buy Liberty Bonds shall put them away in a safety deposit vault and refrain from using them either as security for loans or in payment for commodities. It is a strong plea to the patriotism of the bond-buyers, and in a measurable degree it will be answered. But to keep gilt-edged Government securities out of currency is a task that no report or appeal will accomplish. The process so clearly described by the committee is sure to go on. The committee warns us:—"We simply go through the motions of giving over billions to the Government without really giving them up. Thereupon the Government, in order to buy away from us what we will not otherwise surrender, bids up prices. And the rise in prices which comes about from this sort of lending is cumulative. As the prices of war supplies rise the money cost of war grows and the Government has to borrow more. Bigger loans by us to the Government require bigger loans to us from the banks. This further expansion of bank credit favors a further rise of commodity prices, starting the whole process over again in a vicious circle. . . . In the wild scramble to buy—the public competing against the Government and the producer trying to satisfy both—there is increasing difficulty in getting supplies. There occurs railway congestion, car shortage, coal famine and other dislocations."

The report is an honest report, and does credit to these economists. None can read it without coming to the conclusion that they have little faith in the efficacy of their plea to keep the bonds out of currency, that they wish to impress on us the necessity of limiting bond issues to the minimum. This is shown clearly enough by their closing paragraph. "The best and quickest way of finding the right road—the road of thrift—is by reducing consumption and increasing production, by repressing non-essentials and by organizing a redirection of industry. President Wilson has well said, 'It is our duty to protect our people, so far as we may, against the very serious hardships and evils which would be likely to arise out of the inflation which would be produced by vast loans.'"

"Reduce consumption." That can be done in one of two ways—by conscripting the surplus incomes of the class that spends large sums for luxuries and non-essentials, or by borrowing their money at interest, and so forcing up prices to the point where the working population—the 90 per cent that owns one-tenth of the nation's wealth—must reduce consumption of the necessaries that spell a minimum of health and comfort.

The rank injustice of the present program

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is emphasized again by the announcement that net earnings for the United States Steel Corporation for the year 1917 amounted to $518,770,382, or $10,000,000 in excess of the par value of the Corporation's common stock. Of this total, the Corporation announces that $223,138,771 have been set aside for taxes, leaving $295,641,611 as clear profit. The net earnings are an increase of 85.5 per cent over those of 1916, and of 233 per cent over those of 1907, long considered a banner year. Just what the taxes will be for 1917 has not been determined, and it is not improbable that a large part of the $223,138,771 set aside for the purpose will eventually remain in the Corporation's treasury. Yet these men have the impudence to complain of labor's excessive demands. This is one of the corporations that declined to follow the Government's recommendation in favor of paying the wages of men laid off on coalless days.

Can we not hope that Mr. McAdoo is yet to prove himself a statesman—that his war finance bill is the first step in making the Government independent of the financial interests that have covertly threatened to go on strike if their excess profits and surplus incomes are conscripted?

The President and Congress

President Wilson is demonstrating, not only that he knows the weak spots in our war organization, but that he is entirely capable of exposing the motives of those behind the assault on his policies as those policies are just now personified in Secretary Baker. In asking Congress for authority to transfer the functions of various departments and bureaus and to disregard, during the war, such legal technicalities and red tape as stand in the way of driving ahead, he is asking something far less revolutionary than the Chamberlain proposal to put all executive power in the hands of "three distinguished citizens of demonstrated ability." From the first, Secretary Baker has recounted his difficulties with the unwinding of red tape and has stressed the need of legislation that would untie the President's hands. Government disbursing officers and the auditors of the Treasury Department have long been the high priests of a system of checks and regulations and precedents that are the despair of the uninitiated. It is a system built up by suspicious Congressmen, and it is admirably designed to trip up any executive officer who wants something done in a hurry. It was just this system that Mr. Chamberlain and his allies would have us believe his target, yet when Mr. Wilson proposes to overcome the difficulty by a far less radical departure from precedent he is met with a chorus of disapproval and alarm. This Congress still has its opportunity to read history and decide whether it wishes to write itself down as one with the petty body of obstructionists that were the despair of Washington during the Revolution. War seems to bring out the best in our executives and the worst in our Congress. The narrow sectionalism, the lack of intelligence, the chaos of conflicting special interests exhibited by Congress are bad enough in peace times. In an emergency like this they are maddening. Congress should be informed, sobered, and shamed into decent behavior by the presence on its floors of cabinet officers or their representatives, prepared at all times to allay the skipping spirits of its members with a few cold drops of fact, to be administered either in answer to honest inquiries or in rebuke of irresponsible criticism. THE PUBLIC renews its suggestion of last Spring, that this change be inaugurated, now if need be, through the unofficial representation of executive departments on the floors of Congress during certain hours of the week.

Lloyd George and Baker

Lloyd George has had and continues to have the unqualified approval of even the most pugnacious of this country's desk-pounding and speech-making war-makers, of the type now intent on destroying Secretary Baker and replacing him with a man who will aid them in their campaign for permanent compulsory universal military service. It has become clear enough that Secretary Baker's opposition to their attempt to "put over" compulsory universal service as a permanent policy at this time is his unforgivable offense in the eyes of those newspapers and financial interests that are now trying to discredit him. What is Lloyd George's position on this question? At the labor conference of January 18, where he made a plea for additional man-power in the army, the British Premier was

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questioned at length by the labor delegates at the conclusion of his speech. The following is from a verbatim stenographic report of the proceedings:

A Delegate—Will the Prime Minister give an immediate undertaking that in the event of the terms of settlement being arrived at, as indicated by him, compulsory military service in this country will be immediately withdrawn?

Mr. Lloyd George—It is my hope, and that is really what we are fighting for, that we will establish conditions that will make compulsory service unnecessary, not merely in this country, but in every country. Unless we succeed in establishing those conditions, I personally shall not feel that we have achieved one of the most important of our war aims. We want to make this sort of thing impossible again ever. It is not a question of whether you are going to stop it in this country. You must stop it in other countries—otherwise, you cannot stop it here. We must defend ourselves here, and the first thing for us to do is to put an end to militarism throughout the world.

"One of the most important of our war aims," says the British Premier, is to make permanent compulsory service unnecessary after this war. Proponents of the Chamberlain universal service bill in this country make no pretense that its passage would have any relation to the prosecution of the war. They are careful to explain that the system could not be instituted until after the war, and their sharp tactics in pressing for a favorable vote in Congress at this time are covered by the plea that we must act in time to save the temporary cantonments. Their plan is clear enough—to "put over" their measure at a time when the nation is in the first heat of war enthusiasm and when all the benefits and none of the vast evils of a compulsory universal service system are in evidence. What they really want is made clear enough by some of their propaganda,—a nation so imbued with the spirit of discipline and respect for the established order that economic changes will be discouraged at home, and so powerful, bellicose and patriotic in the bad old sense that they can rely on a battleship or an army division whenever the exploited populations of weak debtor countries become obstreperous. We have to be thankful to them for making the issue so clear. It needs only to be understood, and the American people will promptly throw their support with President Wilson, Secretary Baker and Premier Lloyd George.

The Moratorium

The Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Rights bill, which Congress has just passed, is an act of justice so far as the men at the front and their dependents are concerned. It recognizes to a limited extent their right to a place to live regardless of a landlord's permission. For it is mainly as a curb to landlordism in some form that the measure will have practical effect. As drawn, it stays legal proceedings for collection of debts of all kinds. Ordinary creditors, however, have long found laws for collection of debts of little value against propertyless persons. But when the debt is for rent in some form, the provisions of these laws are so drastic that they prevent an honest debtor from making a fair division of whatever he may be able to pay between the landlord and other creditors. So, for once, the landlord must bear the greater part of the burden.

It is not to be assumed, however, that this is altogether as it should be. The law practically puts on some landlords the burden of supplying homes to dependents of soldiers. While it is just and fair that these dependents be assured homes, there is justice also in the house-owners' conplaint that they should not be compelled to bear the whole load. The law adds to the unreasonable penalties laid by the present tax system upon landowners who have built upon their land. Congress might have avoided this by providing compensation. And however difficult it may be ordinarily for Congressmen to see the justice of taxing land values for Federal purposes, they ought to see plainly that it is the method that should be adopted to provide compensation in this case. The holder of unused valuable land is the chief factor in the creation of a house famine, and is immune from the burden of a non-paying tenant. Why should he not be called upon to help make good the losses of his fellow landowner who has made proper use of his privilege?

"Social Control" or Freedom?

Much as we may dislike the tendency toward standardization of industry and the growth of industrial units of enormous size, it is a develop-

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ment that is upon us. And it is becoming increasingly apparent that, even were we to remove all artificial monopolies and privileges, there are still economic advantages in large-scale production that we would not sacrifice. Some great integrated industries would fail to survive the lopping off of their privileges. In others, would-be competitors, even with the freest of fields, would shrink before the task of duplicating huge coordinated plants that had justified their size by effecting economies in production impossible to smaller concerns. Experience has pretty well proved, not only that large-scale production is in some instances more economical, but that in many men the gregarious instinct and the instinct of workmanship fuse in such a way as to give good results when these men are enlisted as members of a large organization. The fine spirit of the employes on certain well-managed railroads is an example of this. Some men for their own farms or their own workbench, others for the warmth and stimulation that comes to them through association with a working army of their fellows! And all that we of the individualist school can ask is that each be given a free choice, with the alternative always left open, so that men may pass easily from the farm to the factory, or vice versa, and in either place find conditions conducive to the living of a life free from the blighting influences of poverty and of harsh compulsion from their fellows. To accomplish this a democratic organization of industry is one of the aims we must keep before us, not only as a means of arousing industrial workers to their common interests and so accomplishing the abolition of privilege, but as a means by which those who will always prefer to remain gregarious in their life-work may attain the requisite measure of freedom, or of participation in the management. This involves labor unionism, which in turn involves some radical departures from the old theory of individual rights and freedom of contract. The United States Department of Labor has just performed a useful service by publishing an analysis of this comparatively new tendency in American life and its struggle with the prejudices and preconceptions of our courts. Much of the beneficial legislation obtained by organized labor has been nullified by court decisions, while the unions are even now being threatened with huge penalties for exercising the functions for which they exist. The Department of Labor, in announcing its bulletin, the work of Mr. Robert Gildersleeve Paterson, presents the following interesting summary of his conclusions:

> In comparing the progress of such legislation in England and in this country, the reasons for our backwardness are found in conditions inherent in American jurisprudence not flattering to our system. The limitations of a written constitution, the lack of coordination between State and Federal courts and the necessity, in order that the constitutionality of a statute may be unquestioned, that it should have the sanction of both State and Federal courts, are commented upon. Emphasis is placed upon the persistence of a natural-law or individualistic philosophy in the reasoning of the courts, their adherence to formalism and legal precedent, and finally the rigid and illogical separation of law and fact, so that, for example, a court must decide the question of the "reasonableness" of a law as a legal question, without any machinery for investigation of the facts. In the concluding chapters the "conflict between individualism and social control," or between theoretical and actual equality, is reverted to, and here it is shown that the courts have gradually adopted a more liberal policy of interpretation and that, especially since the beginning of the present century, decisions have to a much greater extent recognized the propriety of the regulation by the legislatures of labor contracts in the interest of the employee. Recent decisions of the Supreme Court in the case upholding the Adamson law and the Oregon ten-hour and minimum wage laws "evidence a clear perception of the rights of the employer, the employee and the public. A new basis for the legal interpretation of social legislation is being constructed that will keep in view the mutual interests of the individual and of society."
>
> It is pointed out that should there be a reaction from the movement toward public control of wage conditions, which is not considered probable, the result would be a strengthening of the labor organizations and such a struggle on their part to enforce more favorable conditions as would make the unions themselves a factor in the nation's life "affected with a public interest." This, the author points out, would eventuate in "a degree of public control over the labor contract quite as great as that we may see by direct regulation through the legislature and the courts." At any rate, in his opinion, "The old freedom of contract is a concept which in its extreme form will prove but a passing phase in our constitutional interpretation.

THE PUBLIC agrees with much of what Mr. Paterson says here. But it registers an emphatic dissent from his assumption that "social control" in the matter of wages, hours and conditions is anything more than a passing phase, or that it exists even now except as a means of making effective union control, or control by the men themselves. Social workers, bill drafters,

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philanthropists, may have aided in procuring beneficial labor legislation of a kind that will not be needed when the freedom of choice that will follow the abolition of privilege is obtained. But their help has been merely incidental, and utterly subordinate, to the influence of wage earners themselves, exerted through the power of their voluntary collective organizations. So, in a sense, it is not "social control" at all,—a phrase that calls up hordes of busy young social workers gathered about tables to decide what the working man should have done for him—but merely the use of Government by labor itself. That will continue to be the case in increasing measure, and, rather than social control, we shall ultimately have something like a congress of workers and producers deciding between the conflicting interests of different groups. But inside those groups we can expect a large measure of autonomy. There will be no huge Government machine, and graduates of schools of philanthropy will be obliged to go to work, along with those of us who write pieces for reform papers!

Germany and Revolution

By John Willis Slaughter

What a good general desires to know about the enemy in front of him is as near an approximation to the truth as possible regarding strength, disposition, supplies and morale. In the struggle to achieve political results there is no difference in principle, but immeasurably greater room for error. Powerful indefinite impulses on the part of masses of people, for destruction or rebuilding, are forces for statesmen to guide to specific and useful ends. We mean in this war to do something to Germany beyond defeating her army. We intend that the German people shall undergo a change of some sort that will make them a nation that can live with its neighbors. In the popular mind this intention takes the form of elimination of the Kaiser. In Washington it takes the form of the prosecution of war until terms of peace can be made and guaranteed by the German people. The general inclusive term is the democratization of Germany. A great country has fallen under the sinister rule of Prussia. It is dominated by a social system that is military, feudal and reactionary. The population has been regimented until it has lost the sense of freedom. There is a brewing discontent, a slowly awakening resentment, that is presently to erupt in revolution, and sweep the whole system to destruction. The trouble is that this formula, of misrule to be set right by revolution, is far too simple. Our views of the situation lack discrimination. Our purpose may miscarry because it has no distinct target. Meanwhile, the Germans take our word for it that we intend the destruction of their nation. Let us attempt, therefore, to analyze and clarify.

The first important fact is that Germany is a unified nation, and one with Prussia. Instead of a series of small states, resentfully tolerating Prussian domination and ready to break along the lines of ancient cleavage, Germany has provided a spectacle of solidarity in her political system that remains unaffected by the stress of war. We might as well expect disruption of our Union along the lines of 1860, as to look for a recrudescence of sectionalism, the old *Kleinstaaterei,* in Germany. This unity is clearly not a thing of mere political arrangement or a formal constitution. It is unity in the sense of vital adherence, the force that makes nations with or in spite of constitutions. And the domination of Prussia has a history. The one chance Germany had to confederate on the basis of the equal rights and influence of her constituent states was lost in 1848. Federalism proved its weakness, and the states of Germany fell inevitably into the orbit of Prussia and grouped themselves as her satellites. In 1866, the future of the German system was clearly designated. It was the work of Bismarck to extend Prussia to the whole of Germany, to weld the country into a compact mass. All sections, therefore, look to Berlin as the source of their national existence. All are Prussians, and it is inconceivable that there can be any return upon this historical road.

What then is Prussia, and what, therefore, is the basis of German national life? The cus-

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tomary terms of abuse are ready at hand, that Prussia is an autocracy, a militarism, a feudalism; that she holds Germany to an unwilling obedience by force. This description is so far untrue that it causes us to overlook the real strength of our enemy. The Prussian system as a government is far from feudal. Its progress has involved the increasing subjection of the landed aristocracy. While feudalism is to be found abundantly on the estates, it is local and not national. There is no denying, however, its indirect influence, but it is neither maintained nor encouraged by the Prussian system.

Nor is Prussianism synonymous with militarism. The two things exist side by side, but do not coalesce; this is indeed, the whole trouble. Prussia is fundamentally a great scientific bureaucracy, a system of efficient and successful administration. It took the chaos of Germany a half century ago and created system and order. It has backed and aided every department of German commerce. It has opened avenues of trade. It has placed in the service of national enterprise the last degree of expert advice and aid. As for the people, they have found that the Prussian administration provided conditions of life and labor superior to those of other countries. The whole world before the war was going to school to Germany in all matters pertaining to social legislation. There is no denying therefore, the liberal tendency of Prussian methods. It is because we belittle these facts and refuse to see the enormous benefits that the Prussian system has conferred upon all Germans, that we are mislead into thinking that they are ready to repudiate their government. In all domestic affairs the government is organized like a great business enterprise. If we can imagine one of our huge corporations, expert, alive, highly integrated, extending its functions to include all our national activities, we have the counterpart of the German government. We do not like the system. We want our national life, through our national government, to express something more than business efficiency. But that is not the point. Such a government has undeniable power. It must be remembered, too, that in domestic affairs the Reichstag has played a highly important rôle. It came late, and was the mere adjunct to a great governing institution already in existence. But it has a part in domestic legislation only a little short of control.

As for the monarchy, we heard very little about autocracy before the war. The King of Prussia, in domestic matters, has only limited constitutional powers in the Confederation, and his function differs only slightly from that of constitutional monarchs. In the main, the persons who have occupied the throne during the past century, in fact since Frederick the Great, have been considered rather a nuisance to the great administrators, who were the real Prussian rulers. This in outline, is the domestic, political system of Germany. It undoubtedly expresses Germany, and it is the merest futility to expect its repudiation by the German people in any measurable time.

But upon the great civil administrative machinery of Germany is superposed another Prussia different in conception, organization and aim. While there is necessary interaction because the same population is involved, the two organizations are essentially antagonistic. The second Prussia is that of foreign and military affairs. Most Germans would laugh at the suggestion that the Emperor is autocratic in domestic affairs, but in matters of foreign policy and the army the case is different—he is war lord, autocrat, absolute and unlimited. These two departments have been withheld from any degree of popular control, and are maintained as the exclusive prerogatives of the Prussian monarch. Because of this fact, Germany exemplifies that archaic conception of state sovereignty, which admits no responsibility in dealings with nations; because of this, the German outlook is imperialistic and aggressive. While the exercise of monarchical power in domestic affairs is merely theatrical, it is grimly real in the making and tearing up of treaties and in the utilization of the military forces. The Emperor through his military cabinet appoints all officers, makes or mars all careers. The court is therefore a military court. The cult of war is consonant with the sentiment which maintains the crown. Out of this situation have grown the special status of soldiers, the creed of *Deutschtum* and the missionary aggressiveness of *Kultur*.

The bridge between these two Prussias is the Imperial Chancellor, who as head of the civil administration, must command a following in the Reichstag, but who, as director of foreign policy and the army, has no responsibility except to the monarch. It is not to be thought that these two

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Prussias have been a peaceful company. Over and over again the parliament has endeavored to extend its control into autocracy's preserves, but always without success. The reason for this is the simple one, that foreign policy and the army could be made to play each into the other's hand. When the people's representatives showed too strong a tendency to invade the military precinct all that was necessary was to invent a European crisis. Army extensions or army credits were thereupon always forthcoming. This international danger, manufactured for a special purpose, grew into the tradition of a ring of enemies, hemming Germany about and ready to pounce upon and destroy her. Any one not a German knows that there has been no menace on the continent of Europe for a generation except Germany. But the device always works in spite of the bitterness of civilians in cases like the Zabern incident.

The two Prussias, domestic and imperial, had another point of contact. In the extension of her trade and financial operations abroad, those activities comprised under the term "peaceful penetration," the characteristic Prussian qualities of expert knowledge and efficient team work, were of course employed. A great industrial organization was extending its field of operation and its search for opportunities and resources to exploit. This was an opportunity to graft imperial Prussia on the real Prussia. That graft is known as *Realpolitik,* a combination of foreign policy and business enterprise, which we call economic imperialism. Domestic Germany fell into the trap and gave the Emperor his naval appropriations.

How has the war affected these two irresponsible imperial functions of foreign politics and army control? Regarding the first, events have registered definite changes in the German attitude. No department of government is considered to have failed so completely as the diplomatic service. For Germany to find herself confronting the whole world in arms is, of itself, a situation sufficient to cause the gravest questioning. The pet formulas of Cossack danger, French revenge and British envy are each stretched beyond the breaking point to account for conditions. Germany must have managed the game clumsily and inefficiently in any case. But the evidence of stupidity shown by the foreign office in the Zimmermann plot and the Luxburg dispatches, was more than enough to break the confidence of even the most trustful Germans. The fall of Bethmann-Hollweg is the most significant fact in recent German history. It is to be remembered that the Imperial Chancellor holds his authority from the monarch alone, and in questions of foreign affairs has merely to snap his fingers in the face of the Reichstag. But a situation had been reached in which this was impossible. The German Empire has had few chancellors. The shortest term was that of four years of von Caprivi. The changes of this year have been on foreign issues, and before Michaelis took office he made a search for support amongst the people's representatives. This was the beginning of the German revolution. The larger foreign problems have clearly become matters of domestic politics and party alignment, and it is unlikely that the measure of control that the people have obtained in this field, will ever be relinquished. Defeat of the Pan-Germanist party at the present time, whether through public pressure or choice of the Emperor, would open the way to an indefinite extension of this control.

The army falls into a somewhat different category. It is a going concern with perfect organization, and is under the stress of a great war. There is, therefore, no likelihood of its passing from an autocratic to a democratic control. The present system is bolstered by every consideration of present necessity as well as by the German expansionist psychology. There is nothing short of defeat that can bring about the change that the world requires. The adequacy of this defeat may fall at any point between the frustration of purpose and complete overthrow. But the ultimate strength of the German army does not lie within itself, but within civil Germany. The people have been taught to believe that only an autocratic army could serve their defensive needs. They are slowly coming to understand that an autocratic army means aggression, and that other nations with democratic control can create armies for their own defense.

With a clear grasp of all these facts, incidents like the recent strike, and proposals like those for extending Prussian franchise fall into their proper place of insignificance. The issue in Germany is between civil Prussia and imperialist Prussia. A sweeping revolutionary change such

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as the allied world has been expecting since 1914, and which so many Americans see looming out of their daily papers, is altogether improbable. As a matter of fact, revolution of the kind that forms the objective of our participation in the war, is going on all the time. But like the revolution that is taking place in other countries, it is unnoticed, because it does not stage itself in striking events. The essence of revolution is a change of mind.

Labor for Shipyards

By Ordway Tead

An intensive campaign is afoot to secure and train 250,000 workers for the shipyards. "Four minute" men are to be sent about the country to bestir all men who can readily be fitted for the shipbuilding trades to put their services at the nation's disposal. Good wages and excellent living accommodations are assured by the time the ship construction program is fairly under way. The plans and methods for maintaining sound industrial relations as they appear in memoranda and organization charts evidence careful forethought and sound intention. But meanwhile there has already been a considerable influx of men into the shipyards to do both the preliminary work of preparing the plant and for actual shipbuilding. And of the thousands who have offered their labor all too many hundreds have left after only a few days or weeks of employment. The labor turnover has been enormous. And the rumor has gained wide currency in the labor world that despite the high wages the shipyards are highly undesirable places to work in. If this impression is to be counteracted, efforts in other directions than four minute addresses must immediately be made.

The truth is, of course, that the factors which affect the attitude of a worker toward his work and his employer are manifold. American employers have been exceedingly slow to learn this, but that offers no excuse for the Government's failure to operate along the most modern lines in identifying and removing the causes of discontent and shifting. It should not take extraordinary intelligence to discover the sources of unrest in situations like the following: At one yard men must stand in line in the cold for at least fifteen minutes and often over half an hour waiting to get into the mess hall for dinner. At another yard there is no suitable indoor space where the workers can eat their lunches. At another yard isolated on the marshes the restaurant can provide for only about half the employees. Comment on living conditions is unnecessary in the light of the parting remarks of a group of disaffected men who had been appealed to on patriotic grounds to remain at work. They said, "Is it patriotic to stay here and get lousy?" Imagine, also, the state of mind of a carpenter who in search of employment must walk two miles across windswept marshes with his tool chest over his shoulder. At the entrance he has to stand in line outdoors from a few minutes to several hours before he can make application. He is then given a physical examination and if accepted, is taken to cold barracks to live, for the plant is too remote to make commuting convenient for men working on a ten hour schedule. Is it strange that under these circumstances the workers begin to doubt the genuineness of their country's desire for their services in the shipyard?

Obviously it will not be enough to get men to the shipyards. They must be kept there—not by conscription, but by successful competition with the terms of employment which the best private employers offer. This means that the Government must know specifically the terms and conditions of employment which influence the men's attitude and efficiency. Physical working conditions, methods of selection, methods of starting at work and training, occupational hazards, the employer's policy toward grievances, discipline and promotion, the employer's attitude toward trade unionism, the living provisions in the adjoining communities, these constitute a by no means complete list of the variables which determine the attitude of the man to the job. And only as there is competent, specialized administration over all these problems will they be solved, and the friction and discontent they arouse be eliminated.

Take one single problem—the provision of convenient, comfortable and adequate working conditions. No less than eight major items of

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importance must be considered under this head alone, if working arrangements are to conduce to good will, stability of the working force and efficient workmanship. First, there is fire to be guarded against. As the recent blaze at Port Newark indicated, this is no theoretical hazard. At the wooden shipyards combustible construction is almost universal, and even in the steel yards most of the emergency accommodations are of wood. Yet empty fire pails rather than modern extinguishers are to be seen in the barracks and shops, and the problem of keeping exposed standpipes and fire pumps from freezing is not successfully coped with.

Second, there are accidents to prevent. On outside construction work in cold weather the risks are abnormally great. And since the technique of ship construction is not widely known in this country, the peculiar hazards of insufficient, slippery and unrailed scaffolding; falling materials, swinging cranes and pneumatic tools of all sorts, will require special attention. Also, new workers are notoriously subject to a high accident rate. So that all conditions of weather, occupation and inexperience contribute to make the likelihood of accident exceptionally great. Not only are all the best preventives and precautions essential under these circumstances, but adequate medical nursing and ambulance staffs must be available with all the necessary equipment close at hand to the job. Yet yards have been opened before any expert provision has been made in these directions, before anything but the most amateurish first-aid is at hand.

The items of ventilation and heating present fewer difficulties in the open yards which make no pretence of offering protection from the weather, than in the shops, foundries and company housing accommodations which are so often nothing more than crude wooden sheds. Nevertheless, where men are exposed to the rigors of our northern winters for nine and ten hours a day, some provision should be made for warmth and rest at the noon hour. Viewed in its most mechanistic terms, the wastefulness of requiring the perpetual expenditure of human energy in the mere effort of keeping warm in zero weather, is calculated to be a drain on strength and endurance which must be compensated for in some way. The serving of coffee or hot soup in the middle of working periods to the out-of-doors workers would not be charity; it would be just good hygiene. Indeed, were we for the moment to think of the worker solely in terms of the human physico-chemical engine which his body is, we would be led to drastic reforms all along the line in shipyard methods. The problem of adequate lighting furnishes a further case in point. Industrial engineers know that output can improve as much as twenty per cent under conditions of illumination which satisfy the demands of the human eye. Yet, the lighting of shops and yards is left unregulated, with the result that eye strain and preventable fatigue accumulate and cause absolutely unnecessary worry and unrest. As a human engine, the body also demands plenty of clean, fresh water at a certain temperature. But to satisfy this demand sanitary drinking facilities must be near the work. The water must, moreover, be forced upon the men's attention by its very accessibility and attractiveness. Greasy tin cups and frozen or rusty bubblers do not offer the proper inducements. Of course it is not easy to have tempered drinking water on marshy and frozen sites. But negligence in this direction only emphasizes my point of the need in the first instance that experts in the management should make the provision of water as serious a duty as the securing of timber or steel plate. If ships are to be built all the elements necessary to the building must be kept equally in view. Myopia on the problems which affect human beings is gross inefficiency.

Similarly, the importance of adequate toilet facilities has to be remembered, and no less contributory to contentment and efficiency are warm, clean places in which workers can wash and change their clothes. Nor can employers afford not to guard in every way against infection and theft in the dressing room. Again, the question of physical examinations of applicants raises delicate problems about which the four minute men will be asked. Are all applicants to be physically examined, and if so what defects are to be considered as debarring them from employment? Will any opportunity be offered in private or public clinics for debarred men to overcome their disabilities? And if no examinations take place, what security has the clean and decent worker that he will not encounter filth and disease germs of a serious character?

The provision of proper eating places in the isolated yards has already been recognized as a

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factor in holding the workers. But the inconvenient conditions under which food has to be served should not afford an excuse for profiteering. Food should be served at cost; plenty of it, and of good quality.

Without proper attention to all these items in their every detail the sources of discontent will not be removed. Labor turnover will continue to play havoc with the morale and productivity of the working force. And working efficiency will not be kept at a maximum. The equipping of shipyards for safe and human uses is, obviously, a technical matter which has still to be seen in all its subtleties. Many of these I have not even mentioned. The difficulties of transportation, for example, create a serious handicap for many yards. The difficulty of having to advance railroad fares to the coast districts will prevent many workers from risking their savings; and the fact that there are no safeguards thrown around the discharge of workers who may suddenly find themselves unjustly removed from jobs and miles from home will make others hesitate to shift to this essential industry. It is, therefore, hard to escape the conclusion that until all these possible obstacles and difficulties are visualized and given expert attention, the full quota of shipyard labor will not be available.

Naturally, in the assumption of an enterprise of the scope and magnitude of our shipbuilding program mistakes and omissions are inevitable. But it is not with the past that we are now concerned. We must get into action for the future. The necessary steps are obvious. It has become the Shipping Board's immediate job to assure in all the yards working conditions and terms of employment which not only compare favorably with those in private industry, but which are manifestly superior to them. To perform this job rapidly and well four steps must be taken.

The Shipping Board should assume (or should usurp if that is necessary) all the authority necessary to handle properly the labor problem of all the shipyards.

The Shipping Board should be able to recognize all the facts and factors in the process of shipbuilding which can affect the attitude of the workers toward their employer and toward the work. In other words, it should be able to "audit" the labor problem of its yards.

The Shipping Board should undertake such "labor audits" and surveys of relevant conditions, and should have constantly before it the currently accurate data as to problems which require solution.

And finally, on a basis of this knowledge it must act—and act quickly. No excuse should be allowed to delay immediate action on the recommendations which will inevitably grow out of systematic investigations in the labor field. Ships cannot be built by men who spend a week or two in a yard only to find conditions too unpleasant for tolerance. That simple fact must animate the whole labor administration of the shipyards.

It is not primarily a question of money or of organization. The Shipping Board has both. It is a question of insight into the human elements of the industrial structure. It is a question of sympathetic understanding of the worker's point of view. Last of all, it is a question of pursuing a courageous administrative policy which brooks neither delay, disobedience, nor inhumanity.

Paying for the War

Joseph L. Cohen

II

Thus in spite of the fact that there is good ground both in economic science and history for the principles of "pay as you go" and for "conscription of wealth," even their advocates were soon forced to modify them, whilst McAdoo and Simmons favored a fifty-fifty division of taxation and loans. But what was the scheme actually to be put through both Houses with the support of the Administration, of which a substantial part is already being administered? It is this, that less than 24 per cent of the estimated costs of the first year of the war be provided by taxation and the rest, 76 per cent, be provided by loans.* Nor is this all; at first an attempt was made to include as part of the bill on taxation, an increased tax on coffee, tea, sugar, mo-

* $3,347,470,000 is to be raised by taxation out of $19,735,807,000 total estimated expenditure of the first year of war.

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lasses, parcel post, newspapers, essentials to the workingmen, and even now the workman's mail, his "movie" and other conventional luxuries are discriminated against.

So long as this war can be paid for by recourse to surplus incomes and war profits without possible injury to productive enterprise, and still leave to the possessors of such incomes and profits not only the comforts but the luxuries of life, the necessaries of the poor should not be burdened by any additional tax whatever; and such taxes can not be justified.

The scheme adopted has the support of the Administration and there was the coalescence of the intellectual classes in support of it as part of the government programme. Was this all the leadership our intellectuals could give the Administration?

The first "Liberty Loan" of $2,000,000,000 was part of the Government scheme for financing the war. On this the Minority report on the Revenue Bill offered a trenchant criticism:

> The so-called "Liberty Loan bonds" bear only 3½ per cent interest, but because exempt from taxation are an excellent investment for the very rich, but a bad investment for the poor man, to whom such effort was made to sell them. Mr. Kahn, a New York banker, in an address before the Merchants' Association of New York on June 1, 1917, pointed this out and presented a table showing that on the basis of income taxation proposed by the House bill these bonds because of their tax-exempt feature are equivalent of an investment yielding a return of 5.2 per cent to a person with an income of $100,000, to 9.21 per cent to a person with an income of $2,000,000 or more.
>
> The wage-earner and the man with a salary so small as not to be reached by the income tax, who pinched and saved and sacrificed in order to purchase them, received a meagre 3½ per cent.
>
> The bond issue offered the opportunity for a desirable investment.

What has happened to these socialists, college professors and the practitioners of literature to allow their pet child, Conscription of Wealth, to grow faint with anaemia, whilst the middle classes and the working classes of today are forced to share the costs of the war with posterity. Busy making the war popular!

Note their peculiar situation. They support the war for its indirect effects, especially on the distribution of wealth, through taxation. The Administration issued a loan. They supported it. The loan was in fact so remunerative that one billionaire invested $50,000,000 in it. When taxes are to be raised substantial sums are attempted to be levied on the worker's breakfast table. Thus, instead of directing the machinery of government, our liberal intellectuals soon found themselves tossed about like wreckage on a stormy sea. The indirect gain anticipated from the war has been almost forgotten!

The fundamental reason for the acceptance of this inadequate scheme of taxation on wealth, and the issuing of a loan on such favorable terms, is implied in an argument of Professor Seligman. He urges that such taxation should be levied as is calculated "not to damp the loyal enthusiasm of the citizens." An echo of this view was heard also in the Senate Chamber. But is it not a fact as Professor H. C. Adams writes: "The Administration that shrinks from a levy of taxes, lest the war spirit be chilled, shows either a doubtful cause or a weak-kneed Cabinet." And later, "it is a truth worth remembering that democratic peoples are willing to go all lengths with a government which takes them into its confidence. It is assumed that the purpose of the war is approved, otherwise there is no apology for undertaking it." But if we are to arrange not to damp the loyal enthusiasm of the citizens, why not leave posterity to pay for all the costs of the war? Surely this argument proves too much. Besides, even if we are to pay a substantial part of the costs of the war immediately, why not contemplate also the loyal enthusiasm of the poorer citizens, large numbers of whom are living on or below the subsistence level? Surely, no warm advocate of the war can face the dangers likely to result from raising the taxation on tea, coffee, sugar and other necessities, with serenity. The growth of the I. W. W., the rising discontent, and the outburst of strikes bears eloquent testimony to the spirit which this scheme of taxation is arousing. Let us note, however, that we are here confronted with a situation in which a comparatively small group of powerful men are selfishly placing as much as they dare of the costs of the war on the other groups in the community. We are evidently confronted with capitalism fighting in its old unenlightened manner.

Another argument frequently used to justify the transference of the burdens of the war on to future generations derives its support from

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the universal desire not to interfere with active enterprise.

Mr. James S. Alexander, President of the National Bank of Commerce in New York, who has been one of the leading protagonists of the view of those in authority, argues that "anyone familiar with our national resources must realize that at best only a small percentage of the great cost of our part in the present war can be raised by taxation without seriously crippling our industry—without killing the goose that lays the golden egg." The argument is, of course, perfectly familiar. Indeed, it is almost a fortunate fact that the cry, that taxation means confiscation, that it will lead to the driving of capital abroad and to the crippling of industry at home, has been so persistently used and so frequently heard that one has come to be on one's guard against it. The introduction of the inheritance tax, of the income tax, and now of the excess profits tax, has in turn been opposed by interested parties on the ground that it would prevent the normal expansion of industry and would lead in consequence to the impoverishment of this country.

As a matter of fact, all evil foreboding along this line is based on the assumption that the effects of temporary taxation are identical with the effects of permanent taxation. We do not know what effect temporary taxation will have. Even though it be conceded that a 25 per cent tax on incomes in normal years will have the effect of substantially reducing the amount of saving—a concession, by the way, which not all are prepared to make—it does not at all follow that a temporary tax on incomes of 25 per cent, or even of a much higher percentage, will discourage saving. The saving habits developed in the course of years are not likely to be immediately affected through increased taxation on wealth for the short period of the war.

With the maxim that we should not tax high enough to cripple industry or impede production, we are all in agreement. But what percentage of income can be taken by the government without adversely affecting industry? The *obiter dicta* of Mr. Alexander do not help us.

The government's attitude toward the problem of financing the war is well illustrated by the treatment of the proposal to levy an 80 per cent tax on excess incomes. In Great Britain, Mr. Bonar Law, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, has proposed to raise it to 88 per cent. But here it is to be only 31 per cent of the excess profits. Let us, therefore, see what effect an 80 per cent tax on excess incomes would have had on a few leading establishments.

The American Smelting & Refining Co. in 1913 earned $9,756,540 of normal profits, peace profits. In 1916 their profits were $23,252,248. If you will take 20 per cent of that which is their war profits, the difference between $9,000,000 and $23,000,000, and add it to their peace profits, leaving to the Government 80 per cent, they should still have profits to the amount of $12,455,681. We have not touched the principal, we have not touched the normal profits, we have not touched the business capital. It is there in complete, efficient working order, with $12,000,000 to distribute among the stockholders—quite enough, for the man who sits at home and draws in his profits when the soldiery of the United States are forfeiting their lives upon the front.

Let us take another—Armour & Co. In 1913 the profits of Armour & Co. amounted to $6,028,197. Their profits in 1916 were $20,100,000. Twenty per cent added to their peace profits would give them for the year 1916—it is on this basis that I am estimating—$8,842,561, something over $2,000,000 in excess of their peace profits. Shall any man complain who goes through this war, in this dread situation, a little better off than he was in time of peace?

But that is not all. Armour & Co. in the year 1916, in addition to distributing that $20,000,000 of profits, issued a stock dividend of $80,000,000.

The Bethlehem Steel Co. earned in 1913 $5,122,703 in profits. Their income in 1916 was $43,593,968. Twenty per cent added to their peace profits gives them for 1916, $12,816,956. Who really believes that the Bethlehem Steel Co. would be affected in its productive efficiency with its capital untouched, its peace profits untouched, and some $7,000,000 of war profits added? Thus, even when income tax is paid, substantial profits remain to be distributed.

Every reason already offered for paying the costs of the war out of taxation and from current income is an argument against loans. But there are three special considerations that deserve attention.

Loans only postpone the evil day. What one citizen lends another must repay with interest.

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To indulge in them is a sign of weakness, one which might lead to bankruptcy. When it is recalled that the war will end with huge responsibilities perhaps for the support of a large army and navy, certainly for the insurance of millions of soldiers and for the pensions of thousands of widows, the drain of a monster national debt may act as an ulcer long weakening the body politic, until, after the passage of many years, the debt is paid.

Second: Paying for a war mainly by bonds inevitably forces inflation. Who has forgotten the history of the Greenbacks of the Civil War? Inflation raises prices, greatly increasing the cost of living to the masses. Prices soar but wages and incomes do not increase correspondingly. Great distress goes hand in hand with the impression of prosperity that borrowing always falsely gives.

Third: Bond issues merely mortgage the many for the benefit of the few.

Even after the government has drafted every bank, public and private, state and municipal buildings, and every postoffice in the land, and has called to its aid the editors of every paper and expert advertisers, and even if it exerts pressure on all government officials to invest, it is a fact that a small proportion only of the total population will buy bonds. In effect, then, the present and prospective power of the government to tax the nation is mortgaged in a measure to a few. No one should fear *their* ever being willing to allow unearned incomes to be taxed. Yet as the wealthy are, on the whole, enthusiastic in their support of the war, they might presumably be willing to pay for it.

You have but to call the roll of American millionaires to remember how many of them laid the foundation for their fortunes in the Civil War.

Doubtless this war, too, will breed its millionaires. Doubtless, this war too will leave a heavy burden of debt which the industrialists, the workers with brain and hand, will have to bear. But one new fact arises which will most assuredly not be forgotten. The pitiable finance proposals of the first year of the war were inaugurated by a liberal Administration supported by an overwhelming number of the intellectual liberals in the country. If the war lasts, can these same leaders be trusted to pay for it in a democratic spirit?

RELATED THINGS

Russian Peasants and Land

As illustrating the internal changes that have been going on in Russia apart from political events, the articles of Mr. M. Philips Price, in *The Manchester Guardian* of late November and early December, have a special value. These articles were, of course, written before the events of November; only extracts are reproduced:

On the day after my arrival I interviewed the Ataman of the Orenburg Cossacks, and the first question I asked him was: What was the attitude of his Cossacks towards the programme of the Russian revolutionary democracy? "We Cossacks," he replied, "are above all things democratic, for we were free when the Russian peasant was a serf. Our ancestors fled out here to escape the Tsar's tyranny, and the Tsar rewarded us with land in return for our services against the Tartars. Our whole institutions are democratic. I, for instance, am elected by the Cossacks of my 'krug' (the Cossack term for a military area) on an adult suffrage and secret ballot. None of us may own land. Each stanitza (Cossack term for a village) has an area of land allotted to it by the 'krug' and this is divided equally among the families of the stanitza. Every 25 years the land is redistributed, as is the custom also among the communes of the Russian peasant. Co-operation has made great strides among us. In the last ten years 106 societies have started in the Orenburg district alone."

"Then why," I asked, "is there a feeling that you are not in sympathy with the land programme of the Revolution, seeing that in practice you carry out its ideas?" The Ataman smiled. "Our lands were bought by the blood of our ancestors; they have been Cossack for centuries. By occupying them we saved Russia from invasion from the East. But Russian peasants are continually wanting to migrate into our territories, and now the Socialist revolutionary party tells them that they are equal with us and have a right to the same amount of land as ourselves. We have nothing against those peasants who have lived among us for decades. In the stanitzas we even admit them on equal terms, but we must have the right to keep fresh

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immigrants from invading our ancestral territories. What our fathers won we shall not give up."

"What is the average land allotment received by a Cossack from his 'krug'?" I asked. "The Orenburg Cossacks," he replied, "get about 20 dessiatines (a dessiatine is equivalent to 2.7 acres) each, the Don and Kuban Cossacks less, the Siberian and Semiretch Cossacks about 20 dessiatines, and the Transbaikal 35." I then remembered that in the adjoining Samara province the average land allotment of the peasant before the Revolution was three dessiatines, and even now, after dividing the landlords' land, it will still not be more than seven. I could see, therefore, why peasants from European Russia have been migrating into these regions on the confines of Asia (400,000 have come to the Orenburg province since 1897) and why the Ataman insisted so strongly on the rights of his Cossacks. . . .

The colonists of the black-earth lands of Tomsk and Tobolsk and the foothills of the Altai have an enormous reserve of land fit for colonization still at their doors. Up to now this land has been at the disposal of Petrograd. But the revolutionary organizations which have sprung up all over Siberia in the last six months have now assembled at Tomsk and are engaged in drawing up a scheme of land autonomy in relation to the unoccupied lands of North Asiatic Russia. I understand that the Siberian Council of Peasants' Deputies, together with the Siberian co-operators' alliance, are the most influential of all the revolutionary organizations. The Council of Workers' Deputies is strong in some of the towns, and in Krasnoyarsk is controlled by the Maximalists, but the predominant element everywhere is the peasant and the co-operator, not the urban worker. Therefore watchwords about the "dictatorship of the proletariat" are less popular than watchwords like "Siberian land for the Siberians." The embryo Siberian Parliament, now sitting at Tomsk, has drawn up a scheme for future land colonization. The reserve lands are to be placed under the control of a Siberian Land Commission, which is to decide how many immigrants from European Russia shall be allowed to come in after the war, and how much is to be reserved for the future needs of the native population. The Siberians have in the past suffered so much from Petrograd officials and the Tsar's Ministers, who have given away their lands to favorites, that they intend in the future to be masters of their own house. I have reason to think also that the West Siberian Cossacks are disposed to enter into the Siberian autonomy scheme.

Beyond the Siberian black-earth zone come the steppes of Turgai, Akmolinsk, and Semiretch, where live the Nomad Kirghiz and many hundred thousands of recently arrived Russian peasants. The late Tsar's Government adopted the policy of settling this dry steppe region, especially that near the Chinese frontier, with colonists from the Ukraine. Apart from the strategic "interests" here involved, landlords and Ministers obtained profitable areas of land where they could settle their more unruly peasants and get good rents. But this involved ousting the Nomad Kirghiz from some of their best grazing lands. This, in fact, was done, and the 2,000,000 Kirghiz of these regions were by 1916 reduced to something like half of the territories they possessed ten years ago. When on the top of this the Tsar's Government demanded military service in the rear from the Moslems of Asia the camel's back broke. The nomad population of Central Asia rose in rebellion in the summer of 1916 and civil war resulted. About 500,000 Kirghiz were massacred, and something like a million fled into the confines of China at the beginning of this year. While Western Europe has heard about Armenian massacres, the massacre of Central Asian Moslems by the Tsar's agents has been studiously hidden. . . .

In the last two months the Revolutionary Committees have begun to give place to bodies elected upon a legal system of adult suffrage and secret ballot, drawn up by the Provisional Government. In this way the district zemstvos are now coming into existence. These in turn elect the provincial zemstvos and are replacing the old zemstvos, which, like the Duma, were elected under the Tsar's regime on a gerrymandered franchise, giving all preponderance to the propertied and official classes. These democratic zemstvos are now taking under their control the local militia and the Land and Produce Committees. Again, the local Council of Peasant Deputies is the political party inspiring the new authority.

I find that everywhere in these Lower Volga

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provinces the burning question is the land. The policy of the Council of Peasant Deputies is directed solely with a view to solving this question, and within its ranks can be observed various political tendencies which express the opinions among the peasantry of those regions. In it is included 99 per cent of the politically conscious peasantry, all the soldiers of the garrisons of the neighboring towns (themselves the sons of peasants), and a few intellectuals. In the absence of urban factory workers it is clear that Marxian ideas are not widespread in the C.P.D. The chief interest of the members is in the expropriation of the landlords and dividing the land. Therefore the Socialist Revolutionary Party is predominant in the C.P.D. The policy of the latter differs from that of the Marxist Social Democrats in the question of land division.

The Marxists stand for State nationalization, the capitalization of the agricultural industry, and the proletarization of the peasantry. The Socialist Revolutionary Party, on the other hand, see the rich possibilities for social experiment in the Russian peasant, just freed from mediæval serfdom and untainted with Western industrialism. They hope to utilize his native instinct for creating communal institutions, to modernize the latter, and so to lead up to a system in which the land is socialized by the local communes. The peasant, they say, must not be the wage-slave even of the State, as the Social Democrats want, nor a proprietor, as the Cadets want, but a member of a social unit with a right to work an area of land and to reap the products of his labor upon it. To the social unit should belong the land, but to the peasant the products of the land. In order to meet the modern necessity for working industries on a large scale the Socialist Revolutionaries would make use of the agricultural co-operative movement.

NEWS OF THE WEEK

Week Ending February 11

Congressional Doings

A bill to coordinate and consolidate all governmental activities during the war and for one year thereafter was introduced at the request of the administration by Senator Overman of North Carolina on February 6. It empowers the President "to make such redistribution of functions among executive agencies as he may deem necessary, including any functions, duties and powers hitherto by law conferred upon any executive department, commission, bureau, agency, office or officer, in such manner as in his judgment shall seem best fitted to carry out the purposes of this act, and to this end is authorized to make regulations and to issue such orders as he may deem necessary." The President is further authorized to coordinate or consolidate any or all governmental agencies; to transfer duties or powers from one Department or other agency to another and to create by executive order new Departments or agencies investing them with any function he may see fit. All appropriations made for the use of certain Departments or agencies for specific purposes may be transferred by executive order to other agencies. All legal restrictions conflicting with the authority granted are abolished. [See current volume, page 181.]

* *

The Railroad Control bill was reported out of the Senate Interstate Commerce Committee on February 7, with the amendment providing for return of the roads to their owners, within 18 months after conclusion of peace. It guarantees the roads an income of $945,000,000 a year, that being the estimated average of earnings for the past three years. In reporting, the majority of the Committee declared that the compensation allowed is equivalent to what a court would grant. A provision is also made for a revolving fund of $500,000,000 available to the President for all expenses of Federal control. A dissenting report was made by Senator Poindexter of Washington. He objected to the provision for a definite date for return of the roads "without making any provision whatever for removing the notorious abuses and inefficiencies of the present system of private competitive ownership and operation." He objected to the transfer of original rate making power from the Interstate Commerce Commission to the President, leaving to the Commission only appellate jurisdiction. Since, he declares, the old system was unscientific, due to competition, and at the same time consolidation of railroads under private ownership would be politically unwise, he holds the only alternative to be "more adequate and extensive Government control and operation."

* *

The Daylight Saving bill, which has already passed the Senate, was favorably reported on February 9 by the House Committee on Foreign and Interstate Commerce but amended to operate for seven months instead of five. It requires that the clocks be advanced one hour beginning at 2 a.m. on the last Sunday in March.

The President's Commission on Social Unrest

Elimination of profiteering, the eight-hour day, squaring of the conduct of industry at home with democratic purposes and establishment of collective bargaining are reforms recommended in a report published on February 9 by President Wilson's Labor Commission, of which Secretary Wilson is the head. Causes of unrest are summarized as insistence by employers upon individual dealings with men, absence of disinterested proc-

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esses by which labor disputes may be settled peacefully, lack of knowledge on the part of both capital and labor as to each other's needs and problems, and meeting manifestations of unrest with repression. Referring to the Bisbee deportation, the Little lynching and similar occurrences, the Commission says:

> Such incidents are attempts to deal with symptoms rather than causes. The I. W. W. has exercised its strongest influence in those industries and communities where employers have most resisted the trade union movement and where some form of protest against unjust treatment was inevitable. The derangement of our labor supply is one of the great evils in industry. The shockingly large amount of labor turnover and the phenomenon of migratory labor means an enormous economic waste and involves an even greater social cost. . . . Sinister influences and extremist doctrine may have availed themselves of these conditions. They certainly have not created them. . . . Too often there is glaring inconsistency between our democratic purposes in this war abroad and the autocratic conduct of some of those guiding industry at home. This inconsistency is emphasized by such episodes as the Bisbee deportation.

Labor Department to Control Housing

Entire control of the housing of workers in all war industries was delegated to the Department of Labor, after a Cabinet meeting on February 7. A director of housing is to be appointed to have entire administrative charge of the program and plans are being worked out by the Labor Advisory Council.

Packers Fight Search of Records

With a search warrant issued by Federal Judge Landis, Francis J. Heney, counsel for the Trade Commission, entered the vaults of Swift and Company at Chicago on February 5, and seized all letters, documents, books and papers on hand. The action was taken under the Espionage Act, in furtherance of the investigation of the packing industry carried on by the Commission. On the following day the attorney for Swift and Company appeared before Judge Landis and asked that the warrant be quashed on the ground that the search and seizure provisions of the Espionage Act are unconstitutional. The provisions are alleged to be in violation of the Fourth and Fifth Amendments to the Federal Constitution. Should the claim be upheld it would invalidate prosecutions of the I. W. W. as well as the action taken against the packers.

Another City Adopts Proportional Representation

Kalamazoo, Michigan, adopted a new charter on February 4 by a vote of three to one. It contains the city manager provision, and further provides for election under the Hare system of a commission of seven. Kalamazoo is thus the third city of the United States to adopt proportional representation. The others are Ashtabula, Ohio, and Boulder, Colorado. [See vol. xx, p. 1251.]

Russia

Little news of military activities has come from Petrograd. The struggle for mastery of Finland continues between the forces of the regular government and the Bolsheviki. A majority of the Moscow Soviet has voted in favor of the organization of a volunteer army of 2,000,000 men. It opposed acceptance of the German terms of peace and in favor of a "holy war." The Petrograd Soviet issued a decree on the third, absolutely separating Church and State, eliminating Church income from the State, and confiscating all Church realty, furnishings and paraphernalia. The decree stipulates that religious societies may continue to use the property exclusively for religious purposes, although the title is vested in the State. Religious freedom is guaranteed as long as religious societies do not interfere with social order, limit the rights of individuals, or hinder the republic. No religious scruples are to exempt persons from their duties as citizens. The religious oath is cancelled and replaced by promise. Marriage ceremonies and birth registrations are to be performed by the civil authorities. Religious teaching is abolished in state schools, and in private schools with a similar curriculum. No state assistance will be given to any church society or religious agent. No religious society will be allowed to own any property, but will be permitted to borrow it from the state for church purposes.

* *

The economic question is now uppermost. Land distribution is hampered by the fact that the All-Russian Congress of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates adjourned without adopting the plans of the Minister of Agriculture for the apportionment. The landowning peasants as well as the Bourgeoisie are to be deprived of their estates. Premier Lenine is reported as saying: "We have taken the land to give it to the poor peasants. Do not let the rich peasants or exploiters get the agricultural implements. . . . The masses must take back what has been stolen from them. The rich who have hidden their wealth, think the masses will pull them through. . . . The republic needs twenty-eight billion rubles annually. Its prospective income is only eight billion rubles. The hidden wealth must be uncovered and placed at the disposal of the government."

European War

Military activities for the past week have been confined to artillery duels and to trench raids. Assaults of considerable weight were made by the Germans at Verdun, and the artillery fire at that point has been exceptionally heavy, but without in any way overcoming the resistance of the French. Exceptional activity by the Germans was reported on the American front in Lorraine, but without result other than small casualties. The Italian forces hold their gains of the previous week, and lesser actions are reported on the Macedonian front. Critical speculation is still centered upon the time and place of the expected German drive on the west front. [See current volume, page 182.]

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Peace negotiations at Brest-Litovsk appear to be very much confused. Petrograd reports that the Russian delegates unanimously rejected the German proposal that a separate peace be signed immediately. Meantime, a peace treaty is announced from Vienna and Berlin between the Central Powers and the Ukrainians. The terms are not given. At the beginning of the Brest-Litovsk negotiations the Bolshiviki recognized the delegates of the new republic of Ukrainia as participants in the conference; but later, on learning that they were secretly negotiating with the Central Powers, the Bolsheviki insisted upon their exclusion from the conference. This the Germans would not agree to, but continued to deal directly with the Ukrainians. The result as announced is that though the Bolsheviki hold out against the pressure of the Central Powers, the latter have come to terms with a large section of the Russian empire, representing some 24,000,000 people, and embracing a considerable section of the "granary" of European Russia. It is reported that an ultimatum has been issued by the Central Powers to Roumania, demanding similar terms to those of the Ukrainians. The Roumanian cabinet is reported to have resigned. It is also announced that since January 11, regular steamship service has been maintained between the Asiatic ports of Russia and Constantinople.

* *

News from Germany appears to be vague and uncertain. No reports of economic disturbances have come through. Either the protest strikes have been suppressed or the news has been censored. An active press campaign goes on between papers in favor of the Government's policies and those opposed. The opposition appears thus far to have been unable to influence action. Fear of Russian propaganda is given as the reason for excluding German prisoners who have been liberated by the Russians. Confusion in the Austrian Parliament, due to opposition of the Polish members and other factions, has led Premier von Seydler to offer the resignation of his whole cabinet, but the Emperor refused to accept it.

* *

A submarine succeeded in torpedoing the converted liner Tuscania, carrying American troops, about six o'clock on the evening of the 5th. The vessel was off the northeastern coast of Ireland, and within sight of land. The number of troops on board is given as 2,179, with a crew of 222. Returns from the rescued troops, though still incomplete indicate a loss of about 113 men. The ship was under British convoy and was manned by a British crew. All accounts agree in praising the calmness of the troops and the work of the crew. The Tuscania is the fourteenth transport sunk. The British have lost eight, the French two and the Italians two, all in the Mediterranean. Besides the Tuscania, America lost the Antilles, returning from Europe. The losses from mines and submarines during the week were ten British ships of over 1,600 tons, and five less than that tonnage The French lost two vessels, and the Italians one

Secretary of War Baker reports agreement among the Allies to furnish additional shipping for the transport of American troops and supplies to Europe A campaign is under way to list 250,000 expert mechanics to be drawn on to man the shipyards as fast as they are ready for the men. Every effort is being made to speed up shipbuilding.

China

President Feng-Kwo-Chang issued a mandate on the 6th in which he professes his unworthiness to occupy the Presidency, and promises that as soon as order is restored and the population relieved he will retire. After enumerating some mistakes of his administration the President says:

> As the Central Government has not acted properly I examine myself and feel that I have many defects. I appointed Fu Liang-tio and others without carefully examining into their conduct, so I am guilty of ignorance of men. I ordered the negotiations for peace while the rebels were triumphant. . . . I offered easy terms in an effort to satisfy the popular desire, so that I am lacking in foresight. My effort to save from misery brought more misery; my hope to save the situation resulted in more confusion.
>
> Toleration brings undesirable results, so that I cannot make others believe in my sincerity. I am too weak for the burden, and cannot escape public blame and condemnation for being guilty in many ways. I dare not hold my high position in opposition to public censure, but the tenure of office is ordered by virtue of the Constitution, and cannot be easily set aside. Moreover, hostilities have been resumed in Hupeh, and it behooves me to continue helping the cause.

NOTES

—The time for filing of income tax returns has been extended by Internal Revenue Commissioner Roper from March 1 to April 1.

—Congress has extended the time within which soldiers may file applications for war risk insurance from February 12 to April 12.

—An order issued in the interests of food conservation forbids the killing of laying hens between February 11 and May 1. It is expected that this order will add five million dozen eggs to the total supply.

—Reverend Henry Blanchard, for many years one of the most active singletax workers in the State of Maine, died at his home in Portland on January 11. He was pastor of the Congress Square Church from 1882 to 1903.

—German submarines, according to Andrew Bonar Law, Government leader in the British House of Commons, have caused the death of 14,120 non-combatant British men, women and children since the beginning of the war.

—There appears to be a growing opposition in Japan against ship subsidies. Citizens denounce the heavy

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taxes, part of which is paid to the Pacific steamships that "have been harvesting enormous incomes." It is predicted that the matter will be aired in the Diet.

—The net income of the railroads for 1917 was $958,000,000. The total revenue was $4,038,000,000. Operating expenses were $2,861,000,000. Taxes and minor items were $217,000,000, and $2,000,000 additional estimated for items not yet listed.

—The Maryland Legislature on February 7 practically ratified the Federal Prohibition Amendment. By a vote of 58 to 42, the House advanced to third reading the ratification resolution already passed by the Senate after voting down a referendum amendment. This is said to assure passage.

—Suit has been brought by the Utah Fuel Company in the Federal Court at Salt Lake City, against the Treasurer of Emery County because he increased the assessment of its 1500 acres of vacant land from $10 an acre to $15. The company asks for the return of $5,569.78 excess taxes paid.

—The Oregon Supreme Court declared unconstitutional on February 8, the anti-picketing ordinance adopted several months ago in Portland by a referendum vote. The court held that the title did not properly describe it. Under guise of prohibiting picketing it really forbade strikes and boycotts as well.

—A bill for an investigation and report on the feasibility of a State-owned power plant on the Connecticut river has been introduced in the Massachusetts leglislature. The plan is to use water power for manufacture of electricity and thus have an available substitute for coal. It has been referred to the Commission on Waterways and Public Lands.

—Permission to use women conductors was refused the Seattle Traction Company by the Washington State Public Service Commission. In opposing the request State Labor Commissioner Younger said that if the company would pay the wages that men require it could get all the men it needed. There is no shortage of men, he held, only a shortage of wages.

—In a hearing before the Railroad Wage Commission on February 5, W. G. Lee, head of the Brotherhood of Trainmen charged that the heads of the railroad corporations are purposely mismanaging affairs in order to discredit government operation. A. B. Garretson, head of the conductors corroborated his statement, charging in addition that work was purposely delayed and the men required to work overtime in order to discredit the Adamson Eight-Hour Law.

—The United States Treasury Department, with a view to the conservation of capital and credit during the war, has stopped all work on public improvements, except such as contribute to military ends. "Home building," says Secretary McAdoo, "is an excellent thing in normal times, but at present, unless there is a real shortage of houses for war-workers, I strongly advise that materials, valuable labor and credit be not utilized for this purpose."

—The very little children, says the *Panama Canal Record*, aged three to six years, and even younger, the kind that are so likely to get in the way of an automobile if they are allowed to play in the streets, are the ones that find the public playground at Balboa a choice place to play the morning hours away. These little ones have the use of the grounds and the care of a competent director from nine till eleven in the morning. A certain amount of training is mixed with the entertaining after the manner of the kindergarten. The experiment promises great possibilities for child development in the United States.

CORRESPONDENCE

Autocracy in Arizona

To the Editor of The Public:

Hon. George W. P. Hunt is again Governor of Arizona. His accession to the chief executive chair completes the long drawn out gubernatorial contest. At the bottom of the last page there is written "Tamam," which does not alone spell the very end to these legal proceedings, but to the misrule of the Corporation Autocrat.

After the election Arizona found herself in that peculiar position where she had two Governors but no chief executive. Hon. Thomas E. Campbell, who had been heralded as the premier of the Republican Party, had been selected as the one man from among their ranks who would have a fair chance to defeat Mr. Hunt at the polls. Backed by the corporation interests, he had money to squander as well as the influence of the big copper companies themselves. While Mr. Hunt's followers rested on their assumption that, because he was such a supporter of the common people's cause, he not only would be re-elected but would gain the chair with only their vote at the polls. Their position was almost disproven, as the close margin later showed. After election both parties claimed the office. It was finally decided that Mr. Campbell should act as Governor, and Mr. Hunt stepped aside until the final decision was handed down by the Supreme Court.

But Mr. Campbell as Governor was the Republican Party on probation, on trial by the people as it were. And the Republican Party was conceded to be an Autocracy of the Corporations. It had been persistently rumored before election that Mr. Campbell was a corporation man. Should he fail to make good, should he fall, he would carry down with him the whole of his party. And the interests backing him could hope only to lose still further the trust and confidence of the people of the State.

The population of Arizona is heterogeneous. Its psychology, that of the mass. The recent realization and rapid development of its mineral and agricultural resources have attracted to the State great numbers of immigrants. Struggling farmers from Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, have come here to accept the better advantages afforded in the Salt River Valley. Coal and

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mineral miners from all parts of the United States have flocked into the mining camps to exchange their labor for the higher wages paid at the copper mines. But these men cannot be driven. They came here to escape unfavorable conditions. They can be persuaded, are susceptible to reason, and can be convinced. Because of the pre-election rumors they were reluctant to receive the new Governor into their confidences. What wonder then when labor troubles were brewing at Jerome the miners were slow in accepting the promises from him. However, they were willing that he should disprove their suspicions, so they submitted to his proposition and were persuaded into a suppressed resignation without seriously hampering production and with little loss of life.

Then, like a Belgium invasion, came the Bisbee deportation. Without warning to the inhabitants of the Warren District, with absolute secrecy from without, the corporations mobilized their forces and swept down on the unsuspecting workmen. At the point of the rifle they were taken from their peaceful home, herded into a corral, driven aboard cattle cars and shipped outside the State. The almost complete dearth of information from Bisbee, due to the very rigid censorship of telegraph and telephone communications by the copper companies, prevented any verification of the actual conditions, so that for some time the public remained in ignorance of what really took place. When the facts did begin to leak out the people of the State were for the instant paralyzed. The fact that the Governor, upon being advised of the situation, did not go direct to the camp, proved quite conclusively that the same copper interests which had been such a potent factor in his political ambitions, which had contributed so liberally to his campaign funds, were now the directors of the State's policies. They had taken, as it were, the government from out of his hands and were running it to suit their needs.

Here was indeed an Autocracy of the Corporations. How much then was our State like a little Russia. The wish of the people was as suavely evaded as though German diplomacy were in practice. We were the victims of misrule by the corporations. Instead of having a chief executive, we had nothing more than a Czarish figurehead, who had gained his seat not through the wish of the people, but because the moneyed interests at a very great expense and through much effort had placed him there. What wonder then that he bowed in graceful acquiescence to the demands of the copper interests, or frustrated by a great gust of acting, the wishes of the people. Some one had either contracted such complicated campaign obligations as to make interference in the name of the people impossible, or else, did not possess moral stamina sufficient to cope with the situation. At any rate, it was a most unfortunate episode for both Mr. Campbell and his party.

He was forced to show his hand. Either he must acquiesce, making his people a victim of the depredation of corporation rule of which he would be indirectly a part, or he must oppose the moneyed interests and stand by his people. Had he chosen the latter, he not only would have had the support of the people of his State, but of the nation, as well as the backing of the Government at Washington.

Unfortunate though it may be, it has come twice—the opportunity for a politician to make himself secure with the people. Both times in this State it has been passed up, either through oversight or because of entangling affiliations. Or is it that subtle power of the people which, moving unseen, demands that this shall be the rule of Democracy? At any rate, the rule of the Corporation Autocrat has passed. It is quite certain the popular people will not again soon make such a seasonable opening. Henceforth the citizens will guard their liberty with care.

Florence, Arizona. J. Sheik.

Bonds or Taxes

To the Editor of The Public:

Mr. Byington, in The Public, of January 18, seems to put in the wrong place the emphasis of the antithesis between bonds and taxes.

Lloyd George said recently that England's vast war debt, being owned mostly by Englishmen, was merely "in the family," and therefore a matter of small importance.

The editor of "Land Values" was greatly diverted by such a naïve statement.

The main issue, the world over, in all ages, has been Unearned Incomes vs. Earned Incomes. The man who realizes this antithesis will usually treat a practical matter right; while the man who does not recognize this fundamental truth rarely fails to bungle. When the blind lead the blind both will fall into the ditch.

In deciding between loans and bonds the questions are, "Will bonds or taxes fall most heavily on unearned incomes? and which will fall least heavily on earned incomes?"

Take the largest group of unearned incomes, the $6,000,000,000 to $10,000,000,000 annual rents from, and increase in value of, the community-made values of natural resources. Will most of this vast "loot" be taken for public uses by bonds or by taxes? Manifestly the whole vast sum can be invested in bonds without impoverishing the parasitic speculators by a single cent; whereas, if the same amount is taken by a tax the parasites will be out these billions of dollars.

Next take the war profiteers: Without stopping to prove, in the limited space we have, let us assume that excess war profits are unearned, that the real "service" rendered the world by these profiteers was no more than would be fully paid by their pre-war profit. Then we can take the full (estimated) $4,100,000,000 in taxes without burdening any earned income; whereas, if we take $4,100,000,000 in taxes, on living expenses, we will greatly burden "earned" incomes.

So we might go down the line, solving every problem by merely asking what the effect of this or that proposed action will be, first, on "unearned" incomes, and second, on "earned" incomes.

Before the war and its immediate effects have passed by, the world is likely to be wise enough to make the distinction between unearned incomes and earned in-

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comes. In Russia the munition factories are being nationalized without compensation; which is precisely the same, at bottom, as the Frankfort, Germany, plan of collecting $5,000,000 taxes a year from ground values and using that $5,000,000 a year to purchase ground values. Each is "conscription," which is a much nicer word than "confiscation" or "repudiation"!

All unearned incomes are themselves "confiscation"; whether the unearned incomes of pirates or of speculators; of gamblers or of incomes from "watered" stocks; or of incomes from inherited wealth.

I oppose bonds because bonds perpetuate unearned incomes.

I favor taxes, because if properly levied they will fall wholly on speculators and other parasites; if properly levied they of course will fall not at all on earned incomes. Little by little this fundamental issue is receiving the attention it deserves. Fifty billion dollars taken from the right sources would be a tremendous blessing to the people of the United States; or of England, or of Germany, or of Russia.

Taking an unearned income is comparable to taking a stolen horse from the thief and restoring it to its proper owner—or if no owner can be found, making the stolen horse "community" property. To "compensate" the thief would be to encourage and perpetuate the theft.

The issue between "loans" and "taxes" is merely the issue between unearned incomes and earned incomes. Unfortunately, Mr. McAdoo and President Wilson do not understand the situation, for they think they can carry on a war for democracy by the sale of bonds (that is, by creating additional billions of unearned incomes).

W. H. Kaufman.

Bellingham, Wash.

Post Office and People

To the Editor of The Public:

In his article on "Post Office and People," Mr. C. J. Post makes some comparisons between postal and express charges which can only be designed to confuse the public mind in regard to the question of proper second-class mail rates.

He says the express will deliver a fifteen-pound package in New York from Seattle for seven cents a pound. And he says the post office would charge ten cents a pound for fifteen pounds of magazines carried the same distance. It is hardly necessary to call attention to the absurdity of the comparison. Fifteen pounds of a magazine, such as The Public, for instance, would consist of seventy-five papers or more, and would require seventy-five distinct deliveries. While Mr. Post's fifteen pounds of salmon would only require one delivery. If Mr. Post will take a bundle of seventy-five copies of The Public to an express company and get their price for delivering them to separate addresses in Seattle, he will find the express charge will amount to more than one hundred times the postal rate.

Comparisons between postal and express rates are as a rule valueless because the schedules are based on entirely different principles. We can only say that, as a rule, for small parcels and for short distances the parcel post is cheaper than the express; while for heavy packages for long distances the express is often cheaper.

The charge of one cent a pound for magazines and newspapers, which Mr. Post advocates, is an absurdity. It is a mere nominal charge. The post office pays the railroads several times as much just for hauling this second-class mail. Postage on papers should either be free or else it should be a reasonable rate. The Post Office Department is losing $150,000 a day handling papers under the rate Mr. Post advocates. The Government collects eighty cents a pound on letters and one cent on newspapers. Such a difference is an absurdity.

Mr. Post's statement that the post office rate to Seattle is ten cents a pound is neither true now, nor will it be true in 1921, when the new rates have fully gone into effect.

Perley Dor.

Denver, Colo.

Advice to Employers

To the Editor of The Public:

Let me say through your columns, so hospitable to any championship of fundamental democracy, one word of counsel, to which some daily newspapers have been inhospitable.

A great opportunity is offered by the conditions of the "Fuel Order" to the well-to-do for qualifying or removing the obsession which exists among the "masses" undeniably, and prevents the united energetic promotion of the war, that the poor lose by it and the rich gain. The best investment, for himself and for his country, that an employer could make today would be realized by cheerfully and promptly agreeing to pay his workmen in full for their enforced unemployment.

Erving Winslow.

New Haven.

BOOKS

Toward a New World

The Rebuilding of Europe. By David Jayne Hill. Published by the Century Co., N. Y. Price $1.50 net.

This is a book of prime importance to those who wish to grasp the ultimate and fundamental issues of the world-conflict. It is a careful, sane, scholarly analysis of European conditions in their relation to conflicting political principles. The old conception of state sovereignty, trying to maintain itself against the trend of modern democracy, is endeavoring to fight its way to a bloody triumph and negation of all political progress. What Dr. Hill calls "Europe's heritage of evil" is the dogma of exclusive tribalism, of the irresponsible power of states that dominated Europe of the past, and is now exemplified in the aggressive designs of

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the Central Powers. The doctrine, dating from Machiavelli and the beginnings of modern nationality, is summarized in four propositions:

"(1) The essence of a state is 'sovereignty,' defined as 'supreme power.'

"(2) A sovereign state has the right to declare war upon any other sovereign state for any reason that seems to it sufficient.

"(3) An act of conquest by the exercise of superior military force entitles the conqueror to the possession of the conquered territory.

"(4) The population goes with the land and becomes subject to the will of the conqueror."

Against this evil doctrine has been the whole trend of democratic evolution, not by way of complete antagonism with clear definition of issues, but by stages and compromises. Even after the revolution France still maintained the right of conquest, by substitution of the *volonté générale* for the kingly power. But only in the absolutist countries could the conception maintain its full force. But conquest in modern times means only partially territorial expansion of control; it means rather the preempting of regions suitable for industrial exploitation, the securing of markets and avenues of trade, that close identification of state-power with business enterprise, which has come to be known as economic imperialism. That it is the function of the state to stand behind its investors and traders, and support their competition for advantage with its diplomatic and military instruments, is a conception that grew naturally in German soil. Incidentally, it is this alliance, with its obvious advantages, that has commended the war to the great mass of the German people.

Against this view is to be found the gradually emerging conception of the state as an instrument for service rather than rule; of law, as something that expresses the will and necessities of people, instead of something delivered from above; of the responsibility of nations to principles of justice in their dealings with each other, instead of the absolute sovereignty that knows no law except of its own making. It is clear that a world maintained on the old system is one in which international law is meaningless, and in which states can only deal with each other through force and its concomitant, fear. The author states the issue between absolute and constitutional states in terms of great precision:

"The whole future of civilization turns upon the decision whether the state is to be henceforth a creation of force or a creation of law. If it is to be considered merely a creation of force, then preparation for war is the only wisdom, for only the strong state can survive, and it must be at all times ready to fight for its existence. But if, on the other hand, the state is rightly to be conceived as a creation of law, then all states accepting this theory are menaced by the existence of strong embodiments of power which refuse to be governed by the rules of law. As long as they exist, as long as they arm themselves for aggression, as long as they devise and entertain schemes of conquest, so long the truly constitutional states must be prepared to defend themselves and even to defend one another."

The task of the future is to establish and elaborate some machinery for surmounting tribal barriers. Dr. Hill is not indifferent to the difficulty of linking the nations of the world in a federal system. He does not view optimistically the proposal to create a super-state to legislate in international affairs, to adjudicate disputes and to enforce decisions. This conception is not, after all, consonant with the democratic interpretation of law; it is rather a reversion to the archaic type of sovereignty from which the world is trying to escape. Experiments so far made in the direction of federation have shown what a slow and difficult work it is. Certainly no cut-and-dried scheme could command acceptance. It is rather in the direction of actual international cooperation, as the Postal Union and similar means, that Dr. Hill finds ground for hope. He believes, indeed, that the natural tendency of business which, in its international aspects, provides causes for war, is, when liberated from political connections, toward free and peaceful adjustments.

"In brief, an international board of trade conciliation, composed of representative business men, supplemented by frequent general conferences, with no force behind them but the evidence of facts and the power of persuasion, if held to complete publicity could accomplish more in five years to insure the peace and prosperity of the world than any secret negotiations by diplomatists backed by all the armies in existence. If the business of the world were once frankly established upon a world basis, community of interest would go far to discourage war, for modern wars originate chiefly from economic inequalities and ambitions; and the agents of economic power, if they were not in alliance with military force, could more easily satisfy them by purely economic means."

J. W. S.

Improving the Civil Service

Principles Governing the Retirement of Public Employees. By Lewis Meriam. Published by D. Appleton and Company. 1918. Price $2.75 net.

This is one of a series of works to be prepared by experts under the guidance of, or associated with, The Institute for Government Research, "an association of citizens for cooperating with public officials in the scientific study of business methods with a view to promoting efficiency in government and advancing the science of administration." A glance at the leading headings and copious index will acquaint the reader with the scope and importance of the work; and a careful reading will bring conviction of the painstaking care with which the author has performed his task. It will also be apparent after a reading of the work that the problem of improving the civil service by some system of retirement of superannuated employes is not such a simple matter as many have thought.

The need of a just and systematic plan for pruning the service of its dead timber is at once apparent; but the setting up of a means that will deal justly with the employe who has spent his strength in the service of the public without corrupting the service itself, and at the same time placing an unnecessary burden upon the public is a matter requiring the most

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careful consideration. The author treats the question in its threefold aspect: as it is related to the employe, the government, and the public. He makes quite clear how public service tends to deteriorate through the retention of old men in the service who not only are unable to discharge properly the duties of their position, but stand in the way of the advancement of younger men who, if ambitious and spirited, quit the service for a commercial career; or, lacking personal initiative, remain still further to clog the machinery of administration. The evil cannot be corrected by those in charge of the administration under the present law for the reason that the burden does not fall upon them as it would in the case of private business; and the discharge of an old employe arouses the enmity of his friends who can make an effective appeal to the public. The head of the department would rather put up with the service of incompetent employes, or try to supplement it with additional numbers, than to brave public opinion by discharging the useless member. The public on the other hand, the author shows, hesitates to assume the burden of a pension system that adds materially to the present cost of government.

Yet the problem must be met. Government is assuming more and more of the functions of social life, many of which will depend for success absolutely upon efficient service. A way must be found to get from the public employe the same service that private business demands, and at the same time to save government from degenerating into a tyrannical bureaucracy. Though the choice of a system depends immediately upon legislators, ultimately it must have the approval of the public opinion that is now in the process of formation. It is for this reason that students of public affairs will welcome this painstaking and exhaustive work upon a subject of such vital importance.

The conclusions reached by the author are that financial provision for the retirement of those incapacitated by age, accident, or infirmities is absolutely necessary for the good of the public service. Recognizing that this provision must ultimately be borne by the employe he suggests a system of retirement benefits in which the employe contributes part and the government contributes part toward the creation of a fund to be dispensed upon the most approved actuary principles. He considers at length the merits of insurance borne entirely by the employe, and pensions granted by the government, together with the equities involved in establishing a system that must apply as well to those already in the service as to those who may enter. No system, he says, can be limited by hard and fast rules at the beginning, but there are sufficient data with which to start. And he concludes his dispassionate examination of the whole question with this modest paragraph:

"In ending these conclusions, it is perhaps well to repeat the thought given at the beginning. They are not immutable, they are rather prima facie. The important points are to adopt a system that will be financially sound, that will meet the needs of the service to which it is applied, that will be just to the employes as a class and to individual employes, and that will receive the approval of a public enlightened as to the possibilities of a retirement system as a social insurance device, the benefits of which are earned by the employes."

S. C.

A Tory Textbook

Woman Suffrage by Constitutional Amendment. By Henry St. George Tucker. Published by Yale University Press, New Haven. Price $1.50.

The book contains a series of lectures delivered by Professor Tucker before the Law School of Yale University. They present the view of a legalist in opposition to the pending Federal suffrage amendment. The points raised may appeal to those who hold all old institutions too sacred to be meddled with. But to most others it must seem that the arguments presented have been disposed of long ago. Thus the first lecture shows that the framers of the Constitution intended to leave the suffrage question to the States. But as they also intended to leave a way open—albeit a narrow and difficult one—to amend the Constitution, one wonders why the intent of a small group of men long dead, should be held paramount to the rights of half of the living people of today.

It is not surprising that, having urged respect for the wishes of an eighteenth century group in dealing with twentieth century problems, Professor Tucker should present as an argument the assertion that the suffrage amendment would change an organic principle of the Constitution. It is a pity that none of the students who heard him ventured to ask, "what if the organic principle is one that ought to be changed?"

He has much to say about "forcing" suffrage upon States that do not want it. Here was a chance for an inquisitive student to ask whether the women of a State are not as essential a part of it as the men, and whether a majority of the people can possibly act on a question if half of them are excluded from participation.

Suffragists who want to read the other side, will find the book useful, although they may well wonder if these lectures really cover the ground of the opposition.

S. D.

* * *

Great and meritorious are the services of the poor. They are soldiers in time of war, and cutivators both in war and peace. . . Daily do they moisten the earth with the sweat of their brow. Shall that sweat continue to fall upon ground which is not their own? Shall they remain without land under a government abounding with land? Shall they be compelled to choose between the hard alternatives of being trespassers or tenants all their lives? Shall they see forever this Federal government, after constituting itself sole purchaser of land from Indians, resolve itself into the hard character of speculator and monopolizer and make merchandise out of God's first and greatest gift to man?—*Thomas E. Benton,* in the Senate, on April 28, 1828.

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