

TRANSPORTATION CONTROL OR FREEDOM?

Comes an announcement of plans for a National Transport Commission. It is intended to bring under the authority of the new body all truck, bus and aerial transport agencies, as well as other transport agencies now regulated by government bureaus.

The political brethren are getting well into their stride. They seem to have determined that competition is another Carthage that must be destroyed. The American people are rapidly to be reduced to that degree of control in which they will be thoroughly dependent upon the political job holders for all possibilities of evolution.

How our concepts have changed!

Once we sang of the "land of the free and the home of the brave." Who will be the poet of regulation and security? Must our great tradition of freedom be supplanted by an elegant history of the rise of government?

Slave minded folk want security. Free men ask only a free field and no favor. They welcome competition. The only equality they seek is an equal chance to show how unequal they are. The American pioneer left the relative security of the more settled parts of the country and braved the dangers of the frontier. For what? For the freedom that came of holding a piece of land.

In the safe place a tenant, in the dangerous one he became a freeman.

Whatever may be our concept of civilization, one condition is its index. That condition is freedom of trade. Henry George points out that the highest civilization will be that in which "exchange or trade is absolutely free and has reached the fullest development to which human desires can carry it." Free trade means ever so much more than the mere abolition of national tariffs. It means freedom to produce, deliver and receive wealth and services without interference, either by pirates or the public servant.

"Fair and free is the king's highway
Room for the beggar, room, I say!"

In our attempt to keep some people from "hogging" the highways, either on the ground, on the sea or in the air, our duty is to prevent monopoly of the highway, thereby encouraging competition. Our duty is not to interfere in any way that reduces competition; for competition is the struggle so to serve as to deserve the best rewards that the opportunity offers.

The goal should not be control. It should be freedom.

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