

Guns Before Butter

One may well wonder whether the American people are not looking back to the days when Hitler, Goering and Company were being held up to ridicule and the German people to scorn.

What bothered a large section of our population was the fact that the Germans being offered guns before butter, and that they were accepting the idea as their way of life.

Well, we spoke to one of those 100-per-cent democratic Americans the other day in an effort to question his present opinion about the Truman recommendation for militarizing America and supplying arms and other supplies to a large section of the outside world. And we were surprised to discover that what aroused his ire when imposed upon Germans isn't bothering him at all, now that he and his fellow Americans are the victims.

Armament, he told us is "necessary." So is universal military training. Likewise a selective service draft. Likewise billions for selected nations in Europe and Asia.

When we asked whether he liked the prospect of accepting rationing, inflation, controls, job freezing and lower living standards generally as a means of militarizing the United States and its friends, he stolidly—and stubbornly, we thought—replied that those things are "necessary" too.

It was only when we suggested that this nation was headed for a "guns before butter" policy that was essentially the same as that imposed upon the German people that he showed any real interest. He told us then that he didn't like our question. He was willing to accept the fact but he shied at the name.—Reading Labor Advocate.

What Do You Think of This?

Should a high State Department official accept a valuable favor from a big corporation, especially when he is in a position to shape government policy which may mean literally billions of dollars to that corporation, and possibly risk getting Uncle Sam into war?

The official is Loy Henderson. He heads the department's division of the Middle East, in which is located Saudi Arabia. There, the Arabian-American Oil Company, a Standard Oil subsidiary, has vast petroleum "concessions" practically next door to Russia.

It is admitted that Arabian-American recently provided and installed air-conditioning equipment in Henderson's Washington home. An oil company official says Henderson "agreed" to pay \$350. So far, there is no proof that Henderson paid even that bargain price. In any event, why should a top diplomat get so close to the smelly oil interests?—Labor.

REFLECTIONS

By Raymond S. Hofses

WE ARE ASSURED by the editor of "The CIO News" that the organization for which he writes is satisfied to have "business" and "industry" make profits.

The assurance is scarcely necessary. Both big labor unions stand for the profit system. Everybody knows that—although just what constitutes profit is a question which neither explain in detail.

However, here is what the CIO editor does declare:

"Let us say—here and now without quibbling—that we're in favor of business and industry making profits. In the first place we think that profits are desirable. In the second place, we recall what happened to the country some 18 years ago when there were no profits."

NOW, I Am offering one definition of profits: Profits are what is left after all the expenses of running a business are paid.

That, I admit is a tricky definition. The second I write it another question arises: "What are expenses?" And when we ask that question there comes to mind, among other things, the salaries taken by owners in their capacity as managers and the additional salaries taken by the relatives of owners who may or may not be doing socially useful and necessary work.

Those salaries run all the way up to close to a million a year, per individual which is a lot of money. They are not profits. But they ARE one of the results of the private-profit system. Profits is what business and industry tuck away in their reserve funds plus what they distribute to stockholders who own various-sized pieces of the business but who do none of the work that is necessary to make the business operate.

IF THE EDITOR was writing carefully, he wasn't attacking the enormous "takes" that go to a few business and industrial moguls under the guise of salaries, wages and bonuses. But what he was doing was assuring a lot of dirty-handed steel workers that the CIO had no quarrel with a system which permits those who own to dip into workers' pockets. In fact, he goes so far as to assure the membership that paying people for owning something is "desirable."

However, he does make a qualification. He wants the profit-takers to be reasonable. It seems that just so much parasitism is all right, but any more is all wrong. The fact that he doesn't say HOW much must be puzzling alike to stockholders and rank and file CIO-ers.

who take the trouble to think the matter. He does say, however, that he wants wages to become "fatter" and prices "skinnier," without suggesting just how much "weight" should be gained or lost by either.

As Jack Benny would put it, it's not the principle of the thing, it's the "money" that bothers this CIO editor.

NOW, THAT'S WHERE we Socialist part company with the leaders of organized labor.

We agree that profits are "desirable" and even necessary—if workers, who are the majority, agree that business shall be owned privately and operated for the profit of owners. But we also say—and emphatically—that the workers are acting like a bunch of "gillies" when they tolerate such a system.

What can be done to end the evil of profits? The CIO editor appears to believe that the answer to that question should be given by the very people who benefit from profits, rather than by the workers themselves. Quoting the Wall Street Journal, which says that "corporations are alarmed over the way the purchasing power of the dollar is shrinking," he asks, "Why don't they do something about it?"

But the fact is that, up to this time, what the strongest unions have done about it has so completely failed to increase workers' buying power that the CIO now justifying anticipated demands for higher dollar wages by the admission that profits are higher and workers are worse off now than they were when labor received less for an hour's work.

BUT THERE IS hope! The CIO editor begins another article with the following paragraph:

"One of the darkest revolutions in history occurred in this country back in '78."

Well, it is possible that that revolution was not the "revolution" to end all revolutions.

There may be another revolution one of these days, a revolution that starts in the minds of men and one that is fought with ballots and organized planning. It may be that the American people will reject the profit system and establish a cooperative economy under which human welfare will supply the incentive for business and industrial activity. Then profits for private owners will cease to be "desirable" because the means of life upon which all of us depend will be owned and operated by all of us. And then the senseless and futile struggle for a little less legalized robbery can end.

NEW-STYLE WILLIAM TELL



NO, NO, NO, NO, NO

It was bound to happen—sooner or later.

OPA was tossed into the ashcan, and prices—and profits—started climbing. They kept right on going up and up, month after month.

The purchasing power of workers dropped each time prices rose.

Officials of the United Packinghouse Workers knew their members were having tough sledding, so they decided recently to conduct a survey to find out just how bad the situation was. They found:

1. A major portion of members of the union had been forced to spend their wartime savings.
2. A large portion had been forced to go into debt to meet current needs.

They learned, too, that profits of the big packers had increased well over 300% since 1939.

The union decided to ask for a pay increase of 29c an hour so members could live decently. The packers said, "No."

The union scaled its request down to 19c. The packers still said, "No."

The packers tried to get the CIO union to accept the inadequate 9c increase that it had granted an AFL union which represents a small portion of the packinghouse workers. The CIO union said, "No."

Finally, the union said it would accept the 9 cents, retroactive to Jan. 12, if the industry would arbitrate the difference between that figure and 29 cents. The packers said, "No."

A short time later some 100,000 CIO unionist "hit the bricks."

Well, that's the story. We're not going to use a lot of words to condemn the packers. They stand soundly condemned by their own actions.

This editorial, however, would not be complete without our using the word "greedy." So we'll use it where it belongs—to refer to the attitude of the packers.—CIO News.

Unions a Bulwark Against Depressions

We will not have another depression like the 1930's, for many reasons, one of the main ones being the fact that labor unions now are strong.

That unqualified statement is made in the "United Nations World" by Herbert Harris, economist and an editor of "Fortune," a high-priced magazine for the well-to-do.

Unlike in 1929, Harris says, we now have "safeguards" against a "drastic set-back." Chief of these is the collective bargaining strength of 15 million union members.

"Labor leaders are today in a position to keep wage rates from any appreciable downward variations."

That puts before the foes of organized labor this question: Would you rather have weak unions and a depression, or strong unions and no depression?—Labor.

HARD CASH

We now have another first class example of how monopolies, in this case an international storage battery cartel, takes money from the pockets of consumers—from trade unionists, from you and me.

They don't do it directly, of course. But by the round about practice of dividing world markets and making sure that no competition will be allowed to undercut their high prices, and by patent agreements, they have been able to keep a significant invention off the American market.

The result is that the American motorist must continue to buy the old fashioned storage battery that suddenly goes dead without warning every year or two.

We would like to think that the storage batteries lasting 20 years will soon be standard equipment with every car. But monopolies being what they are, we have our doubts.

Meanwhile it will be a good thing if all of us do a lot of hard thinking about how much monopolies cost us, in hard earned cash out of our pockets.

A New Way to Eat It
People who live in glass houses might as well answer the doorbell.

Fair Return
A British barrister on his death bed willed his entire estate to fools and madmen. When asked his reason for such a gesture, he replied: "From such I've had my money, and to such I make return."

LONERGAN'S COMMENT

Read the Society Papers For the "Inside Dope"; Truman Still Firm; Taft-Dewey Tie Up

By RAYMOND LONERGAN

If you wish to know what's going on in the Nation's Capital, you must read the society pages of the Washington papers.

"Her Majesty, the Queen of Rumania," and her little boy, King Michael, are causing quite a stir. Michael says he is now confident he will get his throne back—if he can get enough American dollars and soldiers to turn the trick.

Someone starts the yarn that he's in danger of assassination and a flock of Secret Service men are assigned to guard him.

Meanwhile, back in Rumania, Ana Pauker, the Communist lady who is acting as foreign minister, says: "We are glad to have shaken the burden of monarchy from our shoulders. Never again will we be forced to put our heads through the kindly yoke."

We don't like Communists, but that doctrine sounds good to American ears. Our forefathers did a lot of fighting to put a crimp in the "king business."

Some Washington "Socialites" would like to forget the Revolution.

Knowing to German Prince
Here's another intriguing item from the social columns: Prince Aschwin of Lippe-Biesterfeld, "pale, studious, and 33 years old"—he fought in Hitler's army during the war, but he is being received in Washington as a distinguished visitor.

Apparently Countess Kotzebue, "who displays the handsomest jewels seen in Washington in a long time," is responsible for the fact that the prince is living on the fat of the land on this side of the Atlantic, instead of being punished as a war criminal on the other side of the "Big Pond."

The countess, we are assured, is an American. At one time she was the wife of Prince Henry XXXIII of Reuss. We don't know what happened to the prince, but the lady is now the wife of a "Baltic count."

Financed Royal Match
She "took an interest" in Prince Aschwin and his brother, Prince Bernhard, and if this newspaper story can be believed, she financed Prince Bernhard's courtship and marriage to the Princess Juliana of the Netherlands, who one of these days will be queen of that country.

As a partial reward, the countess acted as godmother of the royal couple's eldest daughter. Furthermore, it was possible to so arrange things that Prince Aschwin was freed by a Dutch court. He was charged with "collaborating" with the Nazis. If serving in Hitler's army isn't "collaboration," then we don't know the meaning of that much-used word.

"Think Only of Themselves"
Apparently all along the Atlantic Coast these favored foreigners and their wealthy American friends are spending money in a most lavish fashion, while the common people of European countries are enduring indescribable misery.

It reminds me of a story told me by a Washington banker in the middle of World War II.

"Our bank is stuffed with the deposits of rich Europeans," he said. "Few of them will invest a dollar in Uncle Sam's bond issues, although the money is being used to save their native lands from the yoke of Nazism. They think only of themselves and of their own safety and comfort."

Thwarted
By MERLE BEYNON
I long for the life, the cavalier role of a suave and a sleek dilettante. To live like the guy who was left with the dough
Of his miserly, dotting old aunty.

I'd like to be careless, a spend-thrift, a rake,
To gather in blondes by the armful,
To buy up champagne and use it to chase
Some liquor that's even more harmful.

I'd like to go out to the racetrack with cash,
Give odds to the bookies who'd bet me;
And except for one thing, I'd start in right now;
I doubt if my wife would let me.

A New Empire
One of the most important exploration projects in the history of the world is being shaped up by the staff of the United Nations at Lake Success, N. Y.

Down in Brazil is the Amazon jungle. About 2,600,000 square miles have not been thoroughly explored.

This is an area almost as large as the United States. It is known to have immense possibilities. If they can be developed, there is no reason why Brazil shouldn't someday take care of a population of 200,000,000 people. Its present population is about 45,000,000.

Lottery

The latest scheme to help raise funds for Britain's Labor government is a state lottery on a grand scale. Sponsors say a total of more than 10 million tickets could be sold for one pound, or \$4 each. After distributing \$4 billion in prizes and spending \$200 million on expenses, the treasury would have \$3,800,000,000 left and the gambling instinct of Britishers would be satisfied.

The idea would probably go over except for the attitude of the established church. It has always condemned public gambling, and will probably continue to do so.

Tax-Cut Bill Means Yachts for Rich, Wall St. Newspaper Suggests

The income tax-cut bill passed by Congress means more yachts and other luxuries for the rich, says the "Wall Street Journal", a financial newspaper which has no reason to exaggerate the bill's benefits for the well-to-do.

"The new tax bill," it declared, "is better than a salary boost to many high-paid executives."

"Take for example, Leroy A. Wilson, new president of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company. When he was advanced from vice president last month, his salary was lifted from \$75,000 to \$125,000.

"The \$50,000 boost sounded good—but under the old tax rates it hiked his take-home pay only about \$9,000.

"The tax cut will be more of a boon; it will give him a \$21,000 lift in take-home-pay. Even if his salary has stayed at \$75,000, he would gain some \$12,000 more under the new tax rates.

How many yachts will crystallize out of the new tax measure?" the Wall Street paper asks.

"To a toiler with a \$500,000 income, the bill means he can keep \$50,000 more than before. An executive in the \$20,000 range can get nearly the price of a Buick out of his \$2,000 added income."

Only Poor Men Go to Jail

The Municipal Court in Washington finds a man named Putnam guilty of "passing rubber checks," and sentences him to "a \$650 fine or 780 days in jail."

Putnam seems to be a shady character, and deserves no particular sympathy, but his case again brings up an interesting question:

Does the common court practice of offering lawbreakers a choice of money penalties or prison produce equal justice between the rich and the poor?

The man with a fat bankroll can pay the fine and go on his way rejoicing, but the poor man must go to jail.

If Putnam cannot pay, he must spend two whole years behind bars, or one year for each \$325 of the fine. If he has money, he can buy freedom for less than \$1 a day.

In all such cases, the poor man's wife and children are punished with him, by loss of the breadwinner while he is in jail, while the rich man's family gets its usual support.

Why not abolish the choice between fines or prison? Why not make it jail for both rich and poor? Or scale the fines according to the wealth or poverty of the lawbreaker.—Labor.

The Coming Day

By CHARLOTTE PERKINS GILMAN

Our eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the day
When all shall give their honest work and take their honest pay,
And poverty, the Social Curse, he wholly swept away
That day is marching on!

We have seen it in the writing of a thousand men who know,
We have heard it in the meetings where the crowding workers go,
We have heard it in the peoples heart, where all great movements grow
That day is marching on!

The end of fort and battleship! The end of gun and sword!
The end of shame and misery and vice and crime abhorred,
The time for us to build on Earth the Kingdom of the Lord—
That day is marching on!

Shades of Smedley Butler!

Maj. Gen. Smedley Butler, who won the admiration of many people by speaking plainly, used to say that the U.S. Marines were the greatest collection agency on earth.

What he meant was that the armed force of the United States was being used to do the work of American private business at the expense of weaker peoples.

Old "Smed" is dead and gone now, but if he should return he'd probably stick to his history. So will we.

Our story is that the chief reason why the government is being used to block Soviet imperialism is not anything that has to do with democracy. That word, as used by capitalism's commentators, writers and politicians is merely a rickherring to take the attention of the people away from the main issue.

Russia's chief crime is that Communism challenges the very existence of the capitalist private-profit system. Russian expansion blocks the plans for American expansion. It is a block that may be too great for the Marines to check without paying a price that will ruin the system which capitalism's politicians are planning to spend billions to save.

Russia simply doesn't recognize the right of American dollars to buy the things it wants everywhere in the world. To Joe Stalin the Roosevelt-engineered Arabian-American oil deal with the Arab King Ibn Saud is just a scrap of paper.

We are not denying that Stalin and Company are foes of freedom that human dignity has been destroyed by their dictatorship. But we are asserting that those are not the real reasons why our capitalists and their lackeys in and out of congress are toying with

the idea of going to war against Russia.

Right now we are trying to accomplish with American billions what we once did with the aid of Marines. It's the way of capitalism. If we finally go to war it will be to save capitalism; it will not be to restore freedom and democracy that American treasure will be risked and workers' lives sacrificed.—Reading Labor Advocate.

True Friends Of Education

It doesn't require a magician to determine who are the true friends of public education in America. Who first proposed and fought for free public schools? Who has consistently urged and worked for better salaries for school teachers? Who has always backed every move for finer school buildings and plants, for better teaching, more courses of education, better advantages all along the line? Who has always opposed tuition schemes, the purpose of which was to deny education to the sons and daughters of working people and give the advantages only to the well-to-do?

Well, it wasn't the National Association of Manufacturers, nor the building owners' associations, nor the landlord groups, nor the men of big finance, nor the captains of industry. No, none of these. The only group which has never forgotten public education is Organized Labor.

Yes, Organized Labor—the very first unions in America—fought for free public education, and now he big fellows yelped.

On the other side of the fence, the National Association of Manufacturers magazine, which is called "Trends," published an article in October, 1947, saying that if taxes were reduced the wealthy would have more money to "GIVE" to education. How do you like that?