

CHAPTER XXVI

The American Trend

DRIFT TOWARD COMMUNISM. RIGHT TO HAVE OR RIGHT TO EARN? GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE.

Mid-September, 1621: They begane now to gather in ye small harvest they had, and to fitte up their houses and dwellings against winter, being well recovered in health and strenght.

Nov. 23: The Gover and his assistante took an exacte accounte of all their provissions and proportioned ye same to ye number of persons, and found that it would not bould out above 6 months at halfe allowance, and hardly that.

Late May, 1622: Now in a manner their provissions were wholly spent. As they were now fayled of supply, they must live a whole year before any could be raised.

In Late Summer, 1622: (A small boat arrived, bringing a little food. Ed.) But what was gott being devided among so many, came to but a little, yet by Gods blessing it upheld them til harvest. It arose to but a quarter of a pound of bread a day to each person; and ye Govr caused it to be dayly given them; otherwise, had it been in their own custody, they would have eate it up & then starved. Now ye welcome time of harvest approached, in which all had their hungrie bellies filled. But it arose but to a litle by reason they were not yet well acquainted with ye maner of Indean corne, but cheefly their weakness for wante of food, to tend it. Also much was stolne before it became scarce eatable. And though many were well whipt for a few ears of corne, yet hunger made others to venture. So as it well appeared yt famine must still insue ye next year allso.

Early 1623: So they begane to think how they might raise as much corne as they could, and obtain a beter crop that they might not still languish in miserie. At length the Govr (with ye advise of ye cheefest amongst them) gave way that they should set corne every man for his own perticuler, and in that regard trust to themselves.

And so (the Governor) assigned to every family a parcell of land. This had very good success; for it made all hands very industrious, so as much more corne was planted then other waise would have bene by any means ye Govr or any other could use, and saved him a great deal of trouble, and gave farr better contente. The women now wente willingly into ye field, and took their litle-ones with them to set corne, which before would aledg weakness, and disabilitie. The experience that was had in this common course and condition, tried sundrie years, and that amongst godly and sober men, may well evince the vanitie of that conceit, that ye taking away of property, and bringing in communitie into a common wealth, would make them happy and flourishing; as if they were wiser than God.

For this communitie was found to breed much confusion and discontent, and retard much employment that would have been to

their benefite and comforte. For ye yong-men did repine that they should spend their time and streingth to worke for other mens wives and children. The strong had no more in devisiion of victails and cloaths, then he that was not able to doe a quarter ye other could; this was thought injustice. And for mens wives to be commanded to doe service for other men, as dressing their meate, washing their cloaths, &c., they deemed it a kind of slaverie, neither could many husbands well brooke it.

—WILLIAM BRADFORD, *Of Plymouth Plantation*

IT IS the way of governments to encroach more and more on personal liberties, which they are supposed to protect. Much of history, especially the unhappy and bloody part, is the story of man's endless struggle to keep government from destroying him. Sometimes it is an alien government, but often it is his own; and many of the bloodiest struggles are civil wars and rebellions. Governments always tend to expand, and the lust of tyrannical rulers to extend their power underlies many of the struggles against their efforts to buy security in office by corruption.

All this is in direct opposition to principles long held and still generally professed in America. In a broad way it explains the contrast between the American way of life and the alien philosophies which we think we despise but often follow. The American concept of respect for personal property and protection in the enjoyment of the fruits of life and labor are fast being displaced by programs of seizure and re-distribution according to the philosophy of Marx.

This complete reversal of our erstwhile thinking explains the newer concept of government which many term "liberal," though it is the direct antithesis of true liberalism, for its acceptance, far from making men free, enslaves them to the state. One very wise President declared, "Though the people support the government, the government should not support the people"; quite in contrast to the statement of a later President that "one object of his administration is to *give* them (the people) more of the good things of life, to *give* them a greater distribution of wealth, not only in the narrow terms, but of wealth in the wider terms; to *give* them places to go in the summer-time, recreation; to *give* them assurance that they are not going to starve in their old age." There is a sharp contrast between the points of view of Grover Cleveland and of Franklin Roosevelt, and surely the standard of the former comes far closer to the erstwhile American idea than does the latter. For old-fashioned self-respect and self-reliance, and the idea that "he that will not work neither shall he eat," we have substituted the principle that the world owes us a

living and that somehow every man must be guaranteed a "living wage," whether he earns it or not and regardless of what his labor is worth.

There was a day when we believed that each man should be protected in the full enjoyment of the earnings of his life and labor: today we take from the workers their earnings, to give to those who dislike work and prefer to loaf. Formerly we paid them to work: today we pay them to be idle. We once encouraged economy, thrift, and foresight; but today we tax those who make provision for the future, and give to spendthrifts.

The essential difference between our former stand and that taken today—and it is essentially the difference between the American way and the way of most of the rest of the world—may be readily summed up. It is a contrast between putting first either the individual man, his life and liberty, or the State. On this depends the verdict of whether the State exists to protect the rights and liberty of man, or whether man lives only for the State. Our government derives its just powers from the consent of the governed, as opposed to the principle tersely phrased by Marshal Pétain, "Authority no longer comes from below. It properly is that which I give or which I delegate."

Nearly all the political philosophies opposed to the American way of life are tinged with communism. Framed on the idea of taxing to provide privilege for the few, *they violate property rights, and this constitutes the essence of communism.*

The American way has been to put faith in the individual, believing that each one should shape his own life; and, as far as possible, determine his future. We put our faith in the Creator; or in nature if you prefer so to phrase it, and have believed that men will be able to work out the happiest lives possible under freedom and in conformity with natural laws. But other social creeds put the State above the individual and hold that it is the function of government to plan, direct and regulate each citizen. Inevitably, this involves the denial of property rights, for the state is the universal employer and the universal distributor and the product of industry belongs to the state. Theoretically, in accord with the dictum of Marx, goods are to be distributed "to each according to his needs," or according to the political support which can be bought by those in power.

To these statements there is one exception, for there is one school of political thinking which falls into neither category. When we say that the American way of life is built on a broad recognition of personal liberty, there is one qualification. We

believe, or formerly believed, in liberty under law. To have the fullest and truest freedom, liberty must be circumscribed by limitations, to prevent others from interfering with our liberty and to keep us from violating the equal rights of others. Unless our liberty is under law, it can be only a delusion, for to have the fullest liberty we must forfeit some liberty. Otherwise others will rob, enslave or kill us.

Uncontrolled liberty, regardless of law, is the essence of anarchy. The anarchist resents all limitations and all controls and denies the necessity of government. It is true that some self-described "philosophical anarchists" modify these extreme ideas, but it is not worthwhile to get into fine-spun distinctions: the primary thesis of anarchy, as the derivation of the word indicates, is the repudiation of government.

Fortunately, these extreme philosophies find few adherents in the United States and need not be here considered, but the writer adds that, to his mind, some of these "reformed" anarchists are not as far astray as are the socialists, communists, and their like. They are seldom true anarchists, and often do not differ greatly from those who believe that "that government is best that governs least."

The political theories that threaten, and which have already done much to destroy the American way of life, are those with the communist slant, ranging all the way from a "planned economy" or a "welfare state" to out-and-out communism. The socialists seldom admit fellowship with the communists, but they are practically twins; for socialization of all instruments and processes of production, which is what the socialist seeks, necessarily involves a socialization of the wealth produced. As a corollary to their creed, the employment of multitudes must be by the government and they must depend on and be taken care of by the government. Sooner or later, this means communism. It often leads ultimately to the suppression of all criticism of, and competition with, the government, ending in the suppression of freedom of speech, press, education, and religion.

It is beyond our purpose to attempt to substantiate these statements or offer any thorough discussions: let the student think them out for himself and read the literature abundantly available. Let him also remember that Russia, which in the opinion of many is the embodiment of communism, is actually the Union of Soviet *Socialist* Republics.

History and experience teach that any political philosophy built on (1) denial of the rights to personal property, which finds

expression in a program of taxation according to ability to pay, (2) distribution of resulting funds to favorite classes in accordance with the second phrase of the slogan of Marx, and (3) the ever-increasing concentration of power and authority in the centralized government, always drifts nearer and nearer toward outright communism.

All such programs are a denial of justice, and to ensure justice is the first duty of the state. Justice Brewer said with truth, "It is written by the finger of Almighty God, on the everlasting tablets of the Universe, that no nation can endure and prosper, through whose life does not run the golden thread of equal, exact and universal Justice."

The start on these ruinous programs is all too easy. It may seem absurd to speak of such proposals as unemployment pensions jeopardizing the future of the Republic, or to imagine that doles to those who are out of jobs or who don't like to work, paid by the industrious and thrifty, are a real danger; but experience shows that these are stepping-stones to disaster, *as England has already learned*. Furthermore, this is borne out by the advocates of communism, even the most extreme, who welcome each little change as a step toward the attainment of their ambitions.

Essentially such programs lead to the abandonment of liberty, self-respect, self-reliance, and even of moral judgment. We find a cabinet official who "refuses to turn his back" on a communist convicted of perjury, a President declaring that Stalin is a "decent fellow," and broad support for the declaration of the United Nations that everyone has a *right* to just and favorable conditions of work, to protection against unemployment, and to just and reasonable remuneration, insurance for himself and his family of an existence worthy of human dignity, and a lot of similar rubbish. This declaration also avers that everyone has a *right* to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and family, including food, clothing, housing, medical care, social services, and the *right* to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, and old age.

Undeniably these things are all most desirable, and we should exert ourselves to the utmost to secure them; but, in declaring that they are a *natural right*, as does this declaration, we forget the obligation of men to earn them. By the American creed, which we once held, it is our duty to do our utmost to earn these things for ourselves; but now we are told that we have a right to demand them, even if others must labor to earn them for us. Any change

of this sort is a direct step in the direction of the sacrifice of liberty, and approaches a partial slavery.

Such changes in our thinking show how our conception of government has changed and how fast we are slipping toward the communist philosophy. In putting many of these programs in practice, we are building up an immense bureaucracy and erecting a structure of office holders, dependent upon a centralized government, which makes it extremely hard to effect any change or to repudiate these fallacious programs. There were more than two and one-half million on the federal payroll, dependent for livelihood and for their alleged rights on the administration and ultimately on the taxpayer. Of course, such a situation makes change most difficult, and makes it imperative that change should come before the number of subsidized supporters of such government is further increased.

As Whittaker Chambers points out, programs such as the New Deal and the Fair Deal are in line with communism. This may strike some readers as extreme, for few realize the gravity of the situation; but Earl Browder, former head of the American Communist Party, has gone on record as saying that we have already accomplished many of the purposes at which that party aimed. He lists twenty-two recent changes in our government and says that "State Capitalism"—his name for communism—"leaped to a new high point in America in the decade 1939-1949." Glorifying in the changes in our government, he says, "They express the growth of state capitalism . . . an essential feature of the Marxist theory . . . prerequisites for socialism, the basic factor which makes socialism inevitable."

If the reader questions the judgment of Browder, that we have gone far on the road to communism, let him give thought to recent changes in American life and decide for himself. Space does not permit presentation of formal argument to prove each point; but many of these matters are clear and self-evident, and others are susceptible of proof. Ask yourself if these changes are not destructive of what we once regarded as the American way of life. Do not these changes indicate a breaking down of our constitutional government and an ever-increasing commitment to the teachings of Marx? Do they not show a decreasing respect for property rights and the centralizing of all power in Washington?

First, consider the income tax, at absolute variance to our former standards of taxation and advocated to effect the equalization of wealth, as proposed by Marx and by our late President.

Consider, too, that it is enforced with no regard to Constitutional safeguards of search and seizure, but without warrant or court action. Does it not boil down to government taking whatever it wants, with no limit on the exactions which may be imposed or the methods by which they may be pursued? Then consider the use made of the money so extorted, in accord with the second dictum of Marx; and, since these needs are determined by a political bureaucracy, there is no restraint on interpreting them according to political influence, which can be bought.

This leads us to look into our "social security" schemes, which start off on the wrong foot by assuming that security, jobs, living wages, pensions and all the rest of it are *rights*, to be demanded and not to be earned. This attitude coincides with the position of the Communist Party and the "human rights pact" of the United Nations, in flat contradiction of the American idea of personal responsibility and the obligations of self-reliance and self-support.

These "security" schemes are too complex and too varied for discussion here. They are complicated too by the fact that although federal funds are used, they are often expended by the states. They are represented as insurance, and taxes collected to support them, in the case of "unemployment compensation," are sometimes spoken of as insurance premiums. Actually they are nothing of the kind. The scheme bears little resemblance to insurance, for benefits paid bear little relation to contributions made; and "premiums" paid, instead of being reserved to meet obligations promised, are turned into the general treasury to be used for any and all purposes. The government does set aside bonds in exchange for funds used, but note: when these bonds fall due or are used in paying benefits, those whose contributions paid for them will again be taxed to pay the bonds and interest on them.

These programs are honeycombed with fraud and iniquity, and, as investigations have demonstrated again and again, terribly abused. Apple pickers go to Florida for the winter and orange pickers go to New England seashores, where neither group can get employment in their new resorts at their usual crafts, so they are out of jobs and get unemployment pay! A babe in arms, shown in the movies, gets unemployment compensation when the picture is finished, for the baby can not get another job! All this is just exactly what the communists are after, for *it makes increasing numbers of our people dependent upon the government* instead of upon their own efforts.

There are plenty more instances, literally thousands, which show the trend to communism. A bureaucracy regulates every detail of business, the allowed output, purchase of materials, wages, hours and conditions of employment and unemployment, who can be hired, to what union he shall belong, prices at which products can be sold, the terms of sale and practically every step in business.

If you think these regulations aim only at that terrible octopus "big business," read of the persecution of the veteran of the navy who bought and publishes the Downingtown (Pa.) *Archive*, a little journal which, after a long struggle, has attained a circulation of almost three thousand copies a week! Read of their visit from a representative of the Labor Department—of course with no search warrant! He threatened dire punishment because the two major owners of the newspaper—the veteran and his wife—did not pay themselves, out of their empty till, a minimum wage of forty cents an hour with pay and a half for overtime, when the only way they could do so was to borrow the money needed to pay themselves. The Washington snooper objected to their letting "twenty-six kids" fold papers—school-boys the publisher was keeping off the streets, and rewarding for their labors with cider, cookies, radio programs and general good times—but they had no working papers! He held that the struggling little print shop was in interstate commerce because envelopes and letter paper printed for a customer might be used in interstate correspondence! If that kind of thing, the inquisitorial snooping, the nosing into the personal affairs of a man, with no warrant and the complete upsetting of a small struggling business, conducted by a veteran with five years of service in our armed forces, is not on a par with what goes on in Russia we do not know what is.

Another instance of seeking socialist ends by high-handed means, which always go with totalitarian philosophy, is the "Grab of Fallbrook," a little town in southern California. The federal government bought some land, with its water rights, near Fallbrook, where a military camp was established, drawing its water from the Santa Margarita River. They alleged that all the water in that river belonged to the government and that those who owned property bordering on it had no right to use the water. For many miles the river flows underground, sometimes two hundred feet below the surface. Water can be obtained only by drilling wells, and the government is after some 14,000 citizens, young and old, for using water from their own wells on their

own property, hailing these people, their associations and even their churches, into court, basing the government claim on the "paramount sovereign rights" of the federal government, ignoring entirely the rights of "residence sovereignty" which the Constitution recognizes as vested in each state.

Bullying these people, mostly gardeners and ranchers, and ignoring old, well-established water rights, the representatives of the Attorney General maintained that the people have no rights that cannot be suspended by the federal government. He, astute lawyer though he may be, was apparently ignorant of the fact that the United States is a federation of independent, sovereign states, that the powers of the federal government are closely circumscribed and that those which are not delegated to the federal government are reserved to the states. This was under a former administration, but who can say when such oppressions, if tolerated, may not be repeated?

QUESTIONS

Do governments generally tend to encroach more and more on personal liberties?

Is the primary object of government to protect the lives, liberty, and property of its people, or to take from some to give to others, or to take from all to give to foreign countries?

Is it the duty of the people to support the government or of the government to support the people? Which attitude is the most conducive to development of character, self-respect and self-reliance?

If individuals will not earn what Mr. Roosevelt proposed to give them, is there any way in which these guarantees can be kept except by taking from some to give to others?

Would such a policy mean requiring some to work to support others?

Does government exist for the sake of its people or do the people exist for the sake of government?

In spite of man's frailties do you think it is better that all details of his life should be fixed by the political machine of government or that he should carry his own responsibility and be free to work out his own life?

Considering our social security, unemployment benefits, minimum wage laws, and similar legislation, and the statements of Cleveland and Franklin Roosevelt, are there indications that we are drifting toward a concept of our government entirely different from that upon which it was built?

Are we subordinating the natural rights of the individual to political control?

Has every man a *right* to demand a standard of living adequate

for health and well-being, food, clothing, housing, medical care and security or should he be given, just as far as possible, a chance to earn these things?

Do you see any danger in a greatly increased number of our people on our federal payroll, dependent on politics for their livelihood?

Was Whittaker Chambers right when he said that the New Deal and the Fair Deal were in line with communism? Earl Browder rejoices in twenty-two recent changes in our government, welcoming them as essential features of the Marxist theory. Are we drifting closer and closer to the Marxist philosophy?

Which is better for the government to give us, opportunity and security in what we have earned and produced or "social security" guaranteeing us benefits to be paid for by others?

Does the increasing power of government tend to perpetuate in power established political machines and individuals?