

Production: A Modern Prometheus

By FRANCIS NEILSON

Scientists tell us man has been on the road to his destiny for something like half a million years. A long journey! It is now agreed by the thinkers of the world that he has again reached a crossroad of civilization. The time is here when man must choose whether he will take the road to liberty and well-being or the road to economic slavery and despair.

For man's undoing the State has always used two weapons: the one, war; the other, taxation. Heretofore, man, the worker, the producer, has not known clearly how these two weapons of the State have been used to reduce him to servitude. Does he know now how they are being used? Does he know what the State is? Does he know what the functions of government are? It is the duty of every taxpayer to take the trouble to learn how it is possible for the government to make him either a freeman or a slave. It is for him to decide whether the State shall work for the good of its subjects, that is, to protect the individual's rights and interests as a producer, or whether it shall set up a vested interest in a bureaucracy of non-producers, to the detriment of all those who are engaged in the production of wealth.

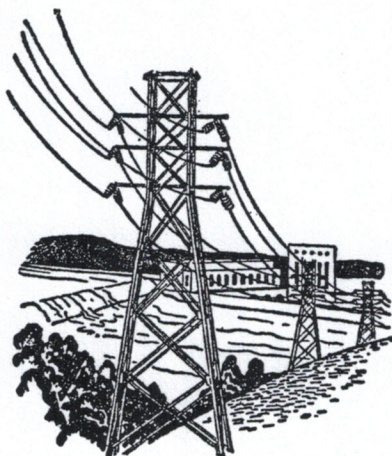
Do the workers understand the danger in which they have placed themselves? Are they willing to be used as pawns in a game played by their leaders for their own political and social aggrandizement? Does labor realize that every time it pays a sales tax, it has less money to spend on other articles? The burden of taxation that falls on industry not only reduces the purchasing power of wages but, at the same time, lessens the demand for labor.

Is it with knowledge that labor and capital have consented to the government's raising the debt of the country to over sixty billions, which must be paid by the wealth-producers of future generations? Surely we have reached the time when it

is necessary for men engaged in production to examine closely the conditions which now prevail in our country!

The present tax programs must end by enslaving labor, and thus does the circle come full around; whereas Lincoln and his party emancipated the black slaves, the present Executive and his party are enslaving the white folks. In plain terms, it comes to this: that if the government is to remain solvent, all labor—men, women, yes, and children too—will have to produce the wealth that will meet this bill. If, on the other hand, the government has the courage to declare itself bankrupt and regards repudiation as necessary, it will be forced to do one of two things, perhaps both: it will regard the money that is owed to the people, who have lent it, as a capital levy and tear up the paper, or the government will tear up the paper, and then institute a capital levy on what is left, to replenish the coffers of the treasury. For, having started in the paper making business, it will be forced to carry on with it, so long as it can gather the money that is necessary for bribing a sufficient number of the electors to give it a majority at the polls.

Once in the paper making business, it is not easy to get out of it.



And every time the Executive tells his voters that he will not let them down, he makes it the more difficult for the wealth-producers to get up. I suppose it is quite all right, in his political code, to cry to those he has put upon their backs that he will not "let them down," because it is not to be supposed for a moment that those who are prone know that they are not standing on their feet.

Now, it may be presumed that among the many products of our law schools who have gathered around the Executive, there must be one who has read, perhaps in a desultory way, some of the controversies which arose concerning the interpretation of the Constitution. There are books enough (some of them even written by professors of government at our universities) which deal with the whole matter of these disputes, from the "horse and buggy" days down to the present time. No doubt some of the students, when they were at law schools, heard of a person of considerable significance, called John Taylor. He was a leader in Virginia politics and had a good deal to say about the paper-making business. Singularly appropriate to the present financial chaos, are his words set down in a document which attacked Hamilton's financial system. Taylor said:

"A constitutional expulsion of a stock-jobbing paper interest, in every shape, out of the national legislature, can alone recover the lost principles of representative government, and save the nation from being owned—bought—and sold. . . ."

No one distinguished the tangible source of wealth from the intangible paper of government so clearly as Taylor did. He said:

"Political property is distinguishable from natural property. Land cannot be increased by law—paper money may. Land, being incapable of an artificial multiplication, cannot by increasing its quantity, strengthen its influence—with paper the case is different. Land cannot in interest be in enmity with the public good—paper money is often so. . . . (Government paper) is an usurpation upon the constitution, respecting both the rights of numbers, and the rights of property."

That's the way they used to talk in the "horse and buggy" days! And these were the principles that animated the Democrats of the time—the Jeffersonian Democrats. No one saw so clearly as Taylor the iniquity of enslaving a nation by issuing paper, which must be honored by the producers of wealth. Equally well did he recognize the danger to democratic institutions from would-be

Caesars and self-appointed Messiahs, when unenlightened peoples, having elected men to be their public servants, "unexceptionally convert these servants into masters and tyrants."

The present administration in Washington have done more to enslave the wealth producers of this nation than any power on earth did in a generation of war and conquest.

Every principle that was held dear by the men who laid the basis of a democracy safe, as they thought, against a despotic ruler or a tyrannical junto, has been violated by this administration. This can be easily proved by comparing the principles held by such men as Jefferson, Taylor, and Abel Upshur, with the acts that have been committed by the Executive and his Congress.

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