

The Freeman

A Monthly Critical Journal of Social and Economic Affairs

The Rape of Democracy

The betrayal of Czechoslovakia is indicative of the immorality of monopolists and privileged groups in all countries. Our own landlords will act likewise when their privileges are threatened.

The Chamberlain government and the Daladier government agreed—while their respective parliaments were not in session—to the partition of a country which is not theirs.

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With whom was this agreement made? With a madman to whom the monopolists of Germany have entrusted their vested rights because, being mad, he is capable of that inhumanity which best serves their selfish ends.

Why was this atrocious agreement made? Because Chamberlain and Daladier are themselves tools of monopolists who fear the effect of war on their privileges. Increasing war taxes may be levied on their rent-income to such an extent that there may be nothing left, and they may have to go to work. Worse than that is the hideous spectre of revolt. Arms in the hands of their long-robbed nationals may be turned from the new enemy without—to the ancient enemy within.

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Those who own the earth and charge others for the privilege of living and working on it have one code. Greed. It is their international language. It is blazoned across their universal flag in letters of blood. In spite of their veneer of gentility, the niceties which their fawning victims enjoy vicariously, they are rotten at heart, their moral fibre is decayed, their sense of real decency

completely gone. They live on rent, for rent. To get more and more is their primary passion.

The gangsterism of landlordism is demonstrated in the present European situation. Hitler, Mussolini, Chamberlain and Daladier have torn away the mask of refinement. The machinations of the monopolists were somewhat undercover in the rape of Spain. In Czechoslovakia the job was done unashamedly.

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This is no plea for war. We who know that only through democratic institutions can economic freedom and human happiness be attained, realize that war may bring about a slavery under bureaucracy far worse than the present slavery under landlordism. We know too well how the masters entrench themselves behind the smoke screen of war hysteria; how to dislodge them afterward is to fight the battle for liberty all over again. Whether war brings on Fascism or Communism is immaterial; in either case humanity is crushed, civilization is set back.

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But, the solution of these international problems is not in conflict—it is in freeing mankind, in letting people alone to work out their happiness. If Chamberlain and Daladier want a real solution of the European problem all they have to do is to break down their tariff walls. Let the people of Germany buy butter and bread and the raw materials they so sorely need. Flood Germany with the things the German people want, and Hitlerism won't have a leg to stand on. His "self-sufficiency" conomy would melt before his astonished eyes. With what would

Germany pay for these things? With what Frenchmen and Englishmen want. Germans would go to work making these things, instead of making instruments of war.

But, suppose Germany insisted on maintaining tariffs even after France and England had removed theirs, it may be argued. She could not. For the only way to liquidate international bills is with goods. Germany could not sell unless she bought. Hitler could not resist the clamor of his industrialists, his workers, for an opportunity to get to these markets, and the only way to do so would be to break down his own tariff walls. The way to defeat Hitler is to do business with the German people.

The free exchange of goods between peoples is followed by a free exchange of ideas. Cultural values are the inevitable by-product of trade. Isolationism breeds a distrust of other peoples; commerce brings mutual understanding. The crazy ideology of fascism would dissolve into thin air if brought into direct contact with the ideals of democracy.

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But no. The monopolists whom Chamberlain and Daladier serve do not want a solution of the problem that may put ideas into the heads of their people. Seeing that free trade between countries is a good thing, the people might ask for free trade among themselves—free from monopolists, free from tax-gatherers.

To avoid this danger to their privileges they calmly offer to their more arrogant fellow-gangster part of a country which they are morally and legally bound to protect from aggression. But they know no law save privilege, they recognize no code of morals which serves not their selfish interests.

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Americans, beware! Beware the landed aristocracy!