

Thyssen Tells a Tale

THE OPINION has somehow got abroad that

Fascism was invented by the plutocrats as a bulwark against Communism, whereas sufficient evidence has disclosed that these "shirt" movements were essentially middle-class supported. The numerical strength of these semi-capitalistic collectivism came from the very poor, the hopelessly enslaved economic group. But the merchants and the small manufacturers, the professional and "white collar" brigades, ardently fell in line when the threat of being depressed into the lower brackets faced them. It was hoped that a system of governmental regulation might keep them from complete proletarianism, which the decaying economies of Italy and Germany threatened.

The middle classes, unaware that privilege is robbing them of their possessions and their position, seek for themselves some privilege which will save them from disaster. They sense that all privilege stems from government. It is therefore to government they turn for help. Note how in this country merchants' and manufacturers' associations maintain in Washington and in the state capitals lobbies demanding legislation from which they hope to derive profit.

It is obvious that government cannot give any group an advantage except at the expense of other groups, that every disadvantage thus arising must reduce, through taxation, the purchasing power of the taxed, and that this increased load of government must reduce purchasing power. But all this is conveniently overlooked for the immediate advantage gained by a pressure group. The guiding principle is always to "get while the getting is good."

Every privilege given by government strengthens government. More and more groups demand help, more and more citizens are willing to barter their independence for a "mess of pottage." And government feeds on the power thus gained.

As this power grows the needs of government increase. Having no source of income save taxes, the monster reaches out in every direction for more

taxes to satisfy its insatiable hunger. Eventually it must gobble up the very groups which came to it for help.

Last month the newspapers reported that Fritz Thyssen, who in early Nazi days gave Hitler invaluable financial support, had exiled himself from Germany. This prominent industrialist, who lent aid to Nazism probably out of a hope that it could be controlled for the benefit of industrialists, now finds his industry expropriated, his tenure of life made uncertain, by the very system he helped create.

Fascism, in which the form of private capitalism is retained, is the open sesame to State capitalism, or communism. Thyssen found that out. Americans with fascist leanings may profit by his example.