

a "forlorn hope" for the manufacturer to put out such a plea under present circumstances, and with no *strong medicine* as a corrective to bring about the realization of the Brookings' recommendations.

As Dr. Virgil Jordan, head of the National Industrial Conference Board, said, "This is a revolution, and you cannot compromise with a revolution. You can only cooperate with it or be liquidated by it."

Mr. Smith's idea, and that of his national committee, as the writer understands it, is to *go on from this point*, and as one angle of their work have some such concern as the advertising company mentioned, dramatize and show pictorially (for the first time), how taxation of a *non-punitive* and of a *constructive* nature *mostly on the land*, and relieving or exempting business and improvements would work towards *opening up* use of our land and natural resources, *more production*, far better use of our technological and other advances, and the straightening out—(painfully of course to some people) of these economic maladjustments, and thus, if proper support can be secured, start a great movement towards real and lasting prosperity, also the warding off of the results of what now begins to look like an onrushing and most hopeless situation as it concerns our future.

Mr. Smith has the backing of "The Tax Relief Association," a national body which has emerged from the "Action Committee" and deliberations of the Henry George Congress. Let us hope that our great corporations and business leaders, on the other hand, can be brought to the acceptance of true economics and to see that the choice is something paralleling the importance of the Civil War issue we once had in this country. This time, with aid to start with of an easily understood exposition of "what it's all about," a pictorial plan as contained in simple but well prepared booklets, plus newspaper advertising and other modern day publicity matter (including moving picture films), etc., readily understandable to all, thus get the message "over" in the light of recent happenings. We should then all do our part in carrying through to better things without the errors, rancor and futility of the late "Sixties." Such modern day examples as the Spanish situation might well (before it is too late) be examined *realistically* in its relation to land. That need not be injected into the issue, however, except as a warning note to both sides.

The participation of such brilliant writers as Louis Wallis, a copy of whose "Lop-Sided Taxation" article induced these comments, holds promise also for better things, and certainly the whole matter seems to be at a stage where, as *The Financial World* editors indicate, intelligent taxation and action must be given consideration, or else it seems there is little chance to avoid catastrophe and an ultimate embracing of "collectivism" of some kind.

It might be said that Mr. Smith and the Georgeist

National Committee, after considerable study, are planning to concentrate their activities in one state as a starter. Mr. Smith, in a recent letter, uses the homely illustration that a man might take a ton of lead in the form of *bird shot* and go to Africa to shoot elephants, and upon finding an elephant, might shoot the ton of lead into the side of the elephant without causing him to stop eating; but on the contrary, one bullet of the right size and put in the right spot, would kill the elephant dead. Until they get a little further on, no announcement is being made as to the Committee's programme; however, it would seem to be the part of wisdom and self preservation for business men and leaders of industry to study from every angle, and with an open mind, *The Financial World* "Lop-Sided Taxation" article, and along with this the matters here indicated as the next step to a solution of the great problem along individualistic, "American" and common sense lines.—WILLIAM E. CLEMENT, New Orleans, La.

The Dilemma of Communists

THERE is much gnashing of teeth these days among the Marxists. The Trotskyites gnash over the "perfidy of Stalin." The Stalinites gnash over the "betrayers of the revolution," as they confess and are shot.

But the gnashing is most pitiful among the "intellectuals," who, free from emotional bias (except in so far as they adhere to the faith), find in the debacle of the Russian Economic-political experiment a fundamental fault in the heretofore unassailable thought-ritual. The orthodox Marxian state is fallible. That is a bitter pill to swallow. And the gnashing of teeth among these Marxist pundits results from the feverish attempts to rationalize away a previous rationalization which experience has confounded.

It must not be assumed that faith in the Marxian shibboleths has weakened. Before the altars of "class warfare" and the "dictatorship of the proletariat" these fact-befuddled priests still bend a dutiful knee. But they cannot ignore the complete collapse of another Marxian theory—another crumbling of the pillars upon which the beautiful structure of Marxian ideology has rested these long years. The Marxian theory of the state has fallen.

What is this theory? The state is an instrument of class oppression; it will therefore disappear with the disappearance of classes. Quite simple, isn't it? All we have to do is to wipe out class distinctions, and the state which is used by one class, in control of it, to oppress the other class, will vanish into thin air. But, how are we to wipe out these class distinctions? Ah! there's the rub.

The heretofore irrefutably logical formula for abolishing classes was to elevate the oppressed class, who, by virtue of their having been oppressed are endowed with holy

motives and vested with divine intelligence to the position of power. These new rulers, made superior by Marxist ideology and overalls, will then proceed to eradicate from the body politic all vestige of "capitalistic" culture—which means, roughly speaking, the elimination from men's minds of any idea of satisfying their desires with the least effort. Human egoism is not, according to this theory, congenital, but is rather the product of a bad class organization of society. We are "conditioned" by this form of society to want things for ourselves.

Now—continuing the theory—the new rulers will recondition society. This re-conditioning period and process is called revolution. "Social control," consisting of propaganda and bayonets, is the instrument of re-conditioning, and the process must be continued until "all need for force will vanish . . . since people grow accustomed to observing the elemental conditions of social existence without force and without subjection." (The quotation is from Lenin.) With the appearance of the communistic society the state will disappear.

What has gone wrong with this anarchistic Utopia—in Russia? (Of course, there are many who claim that the revolutionary process there is far from complete, that the Stalin purges are a necessary part of it, and that it will take several more generations of slaughter and education before the ideal of no-state through all-state will be achieved. Quite a few, however, have been disturbed by the turn of events, and it is with their mental plight that we are concerned.) The bureaucracy of workers which was supposed to eradicate the cause of bureaucracy—classes—seems to be more firmly entrenched than ever, its power seems to be growing, and its enemy is no longer the arch-demon capitalism but the dissident offshoots of the Marxist ideology from which they, the bureaucrats, stem. Here's a how-de-do! Whoever thought that the establishment of a communist society would have to be built upon the bones of communists? (Again it is necessary to point out that among the blindly orthodox, these bones did not inhabit real communists, but only traitors, spies, fascists, Trotskyites; but among "intellectuals" this rabble-rousing rationalization doesn't go far.)

The Moscow trials reveal the error in the Marxian interpretation of human nature and of the state. The opposition to the bureaucrats in Russia is inconceivable in Marxian theory. "The dictatorship," writes one of the disillusioned, "exists in theory to suppress capitalist foes, not to suppress communists who have other goals and principles than the ruling faction." Thus, the state which was established for the purpose of abolishing the state, and vested with absolute power therefor, finds itself using that power to suppress all shades of thought, even those that are opposed to capitalism. In other words, for any excuse, the all-state that was to become the no-state is digging itself in.

Which is the way of all power. Only a mind befuddled

by Marxist dialect could naively accept the idea that a state invested with unlimited power would destroy itself. Such a thought is contrary to all historic fact, violative of all logical reasoning. And so, Marx's dream of a "free association of workers" that would arise from the "dictatorship of the proletariat" has been wrecked upon the fact that force, coercion, power feed upon more of the same, that freedom is not born from the womb of slavery.

The way to freedom is more freedom. And freedom is essentially individual, not social, in character. It cannot be achieved for society as a whole until it is secured for and assured to the individual units of that society. The political mechanism which we establish for the purpose of enabling us to satisfy our desires with the least effort is merely a "necessary evil," an instrument which must be watched, curbed, restricted to its most elemental function—that of protecting us from one another.

It is not through any political instrument that we can attain freedom. In fact, freedom and state are antitheses; the one belies the other. On what one simple fact does freedom rest? Is it not the ability to earn one's living and to enjoy undisturbed the fruits of one's labor? If so, then the way to freedom is not through any scheme of politics, but through the science of economics. Somewhere in the study of this science will be found the solution of our riddle. And only there. It is because Marxism is essentially a political scheme (its "economics" a manufactured thing to bolster up this scheme) that it has failed to achieve freedom in Russia—its great laboratory.

FRANK CHODOROV.

Impossible

THE New York State Constitutional Convention now in session convened on April 5, 1938. Up to the present very little has been accomplished. The indications are that it will continue until early in September. Under the Law of the State of New York, the proposed new Constitution prepared by the Convention must be submitted to the people, for a popular vote, not less than six weeks before election. Election will be held on November 2.

The best "minds of the state" comprise the delegates to the Convention. Here we have an illustration where the amendments will be considered for over five months and the voters are expected to digest the mass of amendments in six weeks and vote intelligently on them.

Is it possible that this can only happen in a democracy?

HUMAN beings are overworked, are starved, are robbed of all the light and sweetness of life, are condemned to ignorance and brutishness, and to the infection of physical and moral disease; are driven to crime and suicide, not by other individuals, but by iron necessities for which it seems that no one in particular is responsible.

SOCIAL PROBLEMS.