

What Will History's Verdict Be On Franklin D. Roosevelt?

THIS is so admirable a summary of the achievements and policies of President Roosevelt that we print it in full. It is from our valued cotemporary, *Progress*, of Melbourne, Australia.

The eyes of the world are concentrated upon the United States of America. There is seen a concerted attempt to meet locally the universal depression which threatens in its course the very existence of the great Republic. A current story, if true, shows the serious climax already reached there. Said one of Mr. Roosevelt's friends to him regarding his Recovery Plan: "If this thing wins you will be the greatest President in history." He replied: "If it loses I shall be the last President in history." He also has said: "Unless there is a drastic change we cannot go through another winter." One newspaper writes: "If Roosevelt's programme fails we have not yet seen anything in the way of depression and collapse."

Fear of the future is so great that it has arrested political partisanship. The historic Republican Party is dumb; erstwhile free-spoken Democratic leaders say, "Yes, Mr. Roosevelt," while the President, his Brain Trust and the National Recovery Administration, known as N.R.A., are looked up to and obeyed by the multitude as an orchestra follows the baton of the conductor.

The appalling seriousness of the whole situation lies in this practically general passive acquiescence, for, if after all this display of confidence and obedience on the part of the great majority, and surrender of opponents, N.R.A. culminates in a disastrous breakdown, then must follow a reaction. Turmoil and chaos will shake the U.S.A. to its foundations, the effect of which will reverberate throughout the world.

That the programme must fail to restore prosperity seems inevitable for it is only a rehash of superficial experiments tried more or less elsewhere without success. For instance, regarding the N.R.A. policy of putting unemployed upon public works. Mr. Runciman, speaking on behalf of the British Government last July, said: "We have terminated our scheme for dealing with unemployment by way of capital expenditure works. We shall not reopen those schemes. We are abandoning this policy once for all. We have in recent years devoted about £100,000,000 sterling to schemes of this kind. For every £1,000,000 sterling expended we have employed 2,000 men directly and about 2,000 indirectly. It is expensive, and it is not an experiment we intend to repeat."

Another N. R. A. scheme, that some should work less hours, to enable others to obtain work, evades the labor problem which hinges on the question of justice: on the mal-distribution of wealth, and not on the distribution of labor hours. Schemes to raise prices and provide employment are now in operation, cancelling each other, such as rooting up cotton—which means less employment in cotton spinning and contingent industries, less transport activity, etc. Allotting \$200,000,000 to hog growers for curtailing their output, and sacrificing 5,000,000 hogs to raise prices means so much less employment in the food industry. The reclamation of 2,000,000 acres of land while other land is being put out of cultivation, and while \$150,000,000 is paid as rental to farmers for leaving portions of their corn lands idle; also reducing oil production by about 350,000 barrels daily, must mean more unemployment in the long run. Such vast expenditures cannot go on indefinitely, but these lunatic activities are in the meantime accepted as the highest wisdom. Up till now in the programme the land and taxation questions, preeminent over all others and the underlying cause of the trouble, have been ignored with the exception of \$25,000,000 being allotted for the purpose of setting a certain number of families of the unemployed upon the land—another outworn idea.

One wonders whether Mr. Roosevelt with his intellectual capacity knows the real remedy for the depression, and whether he hopes that after the trying out of the present schemes the people will divert their thoughts into the right channel? Whether he has in the back of his mind, "You have faith in the present nonsense. Nothing will satisfy you till you have experimented with it. Go ahead! Having learned how NOT to do it, you may then listen to reason and try the right course."

On protective tariffs we know Mr. Roosevelt's mind. In his candidature for the Presidency he said:

"In the past the proposition has been laid down with great boldness that high tariffs interfere only slightly, if at all, with our export or our import trade; that they are necessary to the success of agriculture and afford essential farm relief; that they do not interfere with the payments of debts to us; that they are absolutely necessary to the economic formula for the abolition of poverty. The experience of the last four years has unhappily demonstrated the error of every single one of these propositions; that every one of them has been one of the effective causes of the present depression, and finally that no substantial progress or recovery from the depression, either here or abroad, can be had without forthright recognition of these errors."

On the land question he is evidently a student of Henry George, for he frequently quoted him when Presidential candidate, and we read in American papers he has written of Henry George as the "Master mind." Mr. Roosevelt then surely should know the true remedy, the abolition of the colossal collection of the People's Land Rent by private individuals, and that it should be turned into the public treasury, with the coincident total abolition of the vast network of taxation blighting the country's industry.

What a blessing would it be, ere it be too late, were Mr. Roosevelt to tell forth the truth and become a modern Moses, showing the way to the Promised Land, flowing with milk and honey. Thereby would he become not only the greatest President of the United States, but one of the greatest men in world history.

Or will he, presuming he has the knowledge, like others in high position who know the way of Justice and Freedom—we have them in Australia—fail to dedicate himself to his high task, and as President leave behind him an unhonored name, and his country weltering in misery?

What is the verdict awaiting Franklin D. Roosevelt?

Equality of Opportunity

OUR leaders of thought and action in the community are disappointingly slow in presenting a logical cause for the distressing social condition that the people of all countries have been groaning under for the past three years, or any safeguard against a recurrence when the present storm has passed. Surely, no subject that engages men's attention could establish a stronger claim for intelligent action than this. Much money and effort have been devoted to research in recent years, the purpose for the most part being to increase the profits of capital. Can it be said that it has a superior claim to that of human welfare and security against such conditions as now prevail? It is evident that we need not hope for our legislators to do anything to point a way through. From the head of the national government down to the humblest councilor, they are busied in looking up new sources of revenue and, incidentally, new burdens for the people whose interests they are supposed to represent.

As a matter of reducing the city's idle throng a plan has been evolved of moving families to the hinterland of the province, where the land speculation does not yet seem to have been attracted. Still another plan is to arrange for the unemployed to have temporary plots of land in the city where the landlord spider has spun his little web and is waiting for his hungry human fly to come in. Those who have had their sympathies drawn to the dire results of the game that is being played and have had to come to the aid of their suffering neighbors, might