

\$10 Billion Cash Dividends Make 1949 a Banner Year

The Department of Commerce reported that the cash dividends paid in 1949 by corporations which make reports of such payments totaled close to \$6.5 billion. This is the highest total in the history of the country.

The report said that only 60 to 65 per cent of all dividends are reported, so the total of all dividends in the year may have exceeded \$10 billion.

The automobile industry was the leader, with 1949 payments showing a 10 per cent increase over 1948. Finance, communications and utilities were among others with sizable increases.

'Loyalty' on Thin Ice

When five employees of the Stewart-Warner Corp. were fired several weeks ago for refusing to sign a non-communist oath, we pointed out the dangers of carrying such a procedure too far.

Non-communist union leaders have now joined the Chicago division of the American Civil Liberties Union in opposing the practice of employer-enforced "loyalty oaths." They are giving the community a good lesson in how communism should be fought. They are reminding us that adoption of communist methods is NOT the way to fight communism.

The employees who were fired at Stewart-Warner were members of a left-wing union which has been expelled from the CIO on the charge it was communist-dominated. CIO officials like Michael Mann, Illinois regional director, and AFL officials like Thomas Slater, secretary of the carpenters, obviously are not interested in rescuing the UE union. But they are showing an intelligent interest in preserving the principle that no man should undergo a political test in order to keep his job.

Once employment is conditioned in any instance upon acceptance of the non-communist ideology, the door is open to require in other instances acceptance of some other ideology which, in practice, may turn out to be as bad a doctrine as communism. The only safe and the only American rule is that every man is entitled to work without discrimination as to race, creed or political belief.

Stewart-Warner and other employers had based their "loyalty oaths" on a Defense Department directive intended to protect military secrets. The department has now clarified the directive by stating that security clearance is required for no workers except those with access to classified material, and that even when security clearance is denied, the department does not demand that the employee in question be fired.

What this means is that employers have no need to take the enforcement of security regulations into their own hands in order to qualify for military contracts. That enforcement should be left to the government, and it should be amply safeguarded as to hearings, appeals, and the right of cross-examination.

When employers undertake to administer loyalty tests, they endanger the political independence of all workers and open up opportunities for antiunion discrimination in the guise of "security."—Chicago Sun-Times.

History, \$9 AT&T Dividened March On

1923—French and Belgian troops began occupation of the Ruhr . . . 76 burned to death in Camden, S. C., school fire . . . Hitler wounded in Bavarian revolution . . . Yankees beat Giants in World Series. American Telephone & Telegraph Co. declared \$9 dividend.

And AT&T did the same thing in 1928, 1929, 1930 and 1927.

1928—Trotsky and four other exiled from Russia . . . Los Angeles dam collapsed, 450 lives lost . . . First all-talking picture shown in New York City . . . New smaller sized paper money first printed . . . Raleigh Count won Kentucky Derby . . . Arnold Rothstein shot to death in N. Y. . .

American Telephone & Telegraph Co. declared \$9 dividend. And AT&T did the same thing in 1928, 1929, 1930 and 1931.

1932—168,000 telephone workers were laid off by Bell Telephone . . . Lindbergh baby kidnapped, later found dead . . . Bruno Hauptmann arrested, tried, convicted, electrocuted for crime . . . Swedish "Match King" Kreuger committed suicide in Paris . . . Sino-Japanese war began, Japanese marines land in China. . .

American Telephone & Telegraph Co. declared \$9 dividend. And AT&T did the same thing in 1933, 1934, 1935 and 1936.

1937—Italy withdrew from the League of Nations . . . Gas explosion in Texas school killed 294 . . . Dirigible Hindenburg exploded and burned at Lakehurst . . . Paris Exposition opened.

American Telephone & Telegraph Co. declared \$9 dividend. And AT&T did the same thing in 1938, 1939, 1940 and 1941.

1942—Coral Sea naval battle fought . . . U. S. Air Force made first attack on Italy . . . 491 killed in Coconut Grove night club fire in Boston . . . WPA liquidated by Roosevelt.

American Telephone & Telegraph Co. declared \$9 dividend. And AT&T did the same thing in 1943, 1944, 1945 and 1946.

1947—300,000 Bell Telephone workers walked off the job on strike . . . Selective Service Act expired . . . Atomic Energy Commission formed . . . Al Capone died . . . So did Mississippi's Senator Bilbo.

American Telephone & Telegraph Co. declared \$9 dividend. And AT&T did the same thing in 1948, 1949 and 1950—and will keep on doing the same thing as long as possible.

Atomic Energy May Have Some Beneficial Aspects

Cancer still eats its painful deadly way into the bodies of thousands and thousands of people throughout the world.

This goes on while governments vie with another in blackmailing scientists into using atomic energy for the most destructive purposes.

Why cannot scientists call a world conference of representatives of Doctors and atomic energy scientists throughout the world with representatives from every nation to see how atomic energy could be employed toward wiping out cancer.

It would strengthen the belief of the world in democracy if the U. S. A. would lead in calling a conference on using atomic energy for the preventing of disease and the restoration of health.

And too, it might not be a bad idea to present the result on the cash register of powerful corporations and see how mankind could be benefitted by applying atomic energy to industry.

Can it be that the fear of this by large corporations brings the lurid talk of war in the desperation of being willing to destroy the world rather than lose or lessen their profits?

Let Down

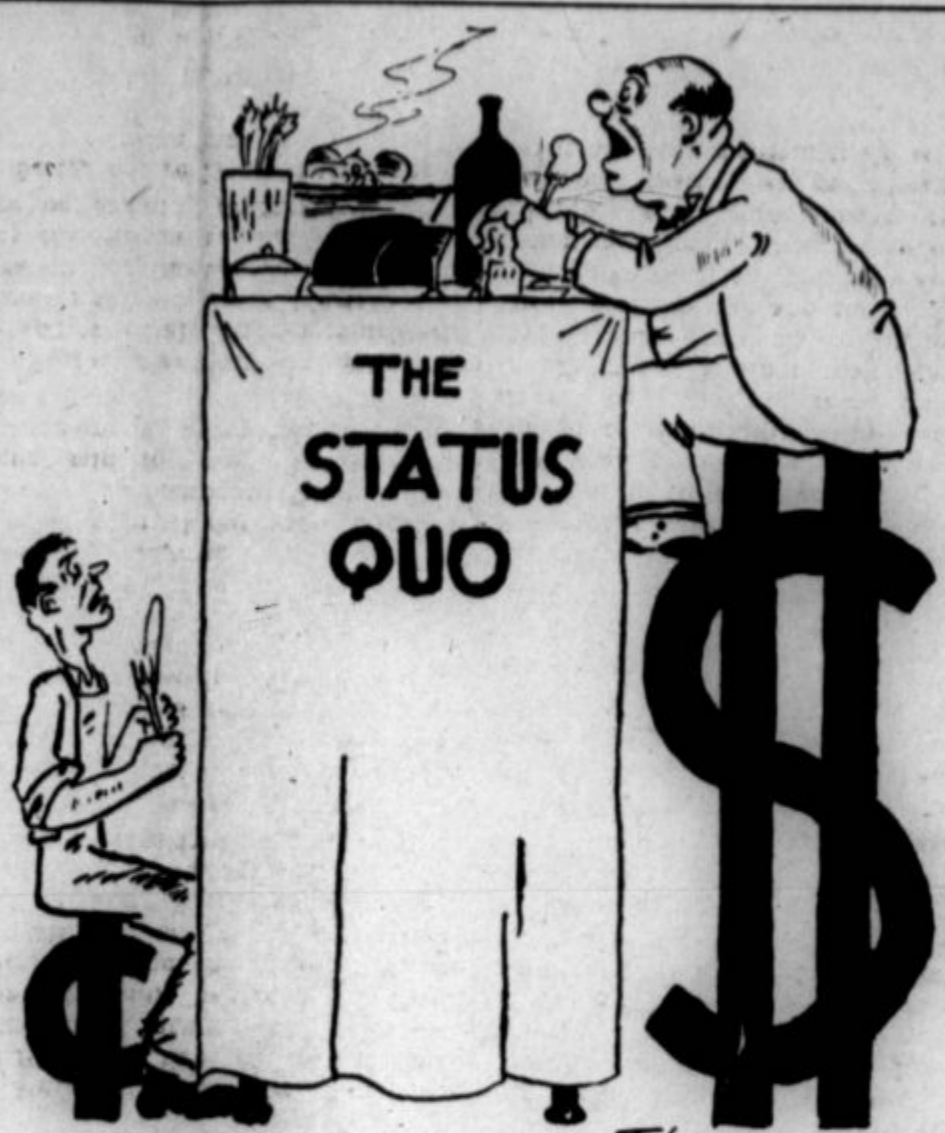
Patient (at lunatic asylum): "We like you better than the last doctor."

New Doctor (flattered): "How is that?"
Patient: "You seem more like one of us."

Neat Evasion

"I just found out your uncle's an undertaker. I thought you told me he was a doctor."
"Nope. I just said he followed the medical profession."

Laws are like cabinets, which may catch small flies, but let wasps and hornets break through.
—Dean Swift.



(From Industrial Worker)

Party Politics in Washington

The other day Drew Pearson, the Merry-Go-Round columnist, gave forth with a discussion of the Brannan plan which should make many ordinary Americans scratch their heads in bewilderment.

The Brannan plan, advocated by the Secretary of Agriculture proposes that farm products, whose prices are "supported" by government money, should be set to market instead of stored in warehouses. The argument is that since the people's money is used to pay for the products the people should have the opportunity to eat them. If the supply is abundant, the price will drop. But since the government will pay the farmers the difference between what they get in the market place and the price decided upon by the government, the farmer would not be hurt and the consumers who pay taxes would be benefitted.

Pearson did not discuss the merits of the plan, and neither shall we at this time. What he did point out is that it has been kicked about as a partisan issue instead of considered as something that would be either good or bad for the people.

Specifically, he says, the plan was first embodied in the Hope-Aiken Act as a Republican measure. Then the Democrats were against it and the President later signed a repealer measure that killed it. Later it came out as an administration proposal. Then the Republicans opposed it and succeeded in preventing it from becoming a part of our way of life.

The chief point to the story is that economic planning, as carried out by our phony "free enterprise" politicians, is motivated by the advantages to be gained by partisan cliques and not by any consideration for the general welfare.

We are not surprised at that, although many people who accept politicians at their own valuation probably will be. We know that kind of thing is exactly what can be expected to happen so long as the people are controlled by officials who are committed to the continuation of the private-profit economy. For, being so committed, our politicians may speak much about serving people but must of necessity subordinate service to the primary task of cajoling and managing the people.

Capitalist politicians believe in a class economy. And, as such, they unavoidably must believe most of all in their own personal economy—if not the economy of the dollar, then of prestige and votes. And so positions are taken and decisions made, not upon considerations of right and welfare, but upon the considered judgment of where the greatest number of electoral votes can be garnered.

This is so because we have a class economy and because there is no such thing, in reality, as common interest. It is so because people have rejected the cooperative ownership and democratic management of the universally-needed means of existence which Socialist have advocated for so very long.—Reading Labor Advocate.

PEOPLE DO IT

By Henry Jones

Among the title of King Fon of Bikom—the 100 year old man accused of having 600 wives—is that of "Link between the Dead, the Living and the unborn." So are we all, and so is our educational system, and all else that we have for transmitting and changing our cultural inheritance.

King Fon doesn't feel he should change the polygamous system he inherited, and it seems his wives concur with his regal opinion. They figure the more wives, the less work for each, and wonder just how to make a living if they were freed. Even the United Nations mission studying the scheme to see if it involved some form of slavery, as marriage systems have been said to even by American monogamous wives of 1950, reports:

"Plural marriage in Bikom is a type of social security which will have to remain until Western civilization through education convinces the Africans that other ways are better and preferable."

Better not rely on the movies to do the convincing!

ANOTHER LINK is our songs, about which sundry great names are credited with having said: "I care not who writes the laws of a nation, if I may write its songs."

The Machinists Union has hired Gerald Marks from Tin-Pan Alley to write new songs for labor. President Hayes of the Machinists complains: "All our best songs, like 'Solidarity Forever,' have been purloined by the Communists, and people in the labor movement don't he?"

How's This for 'Wastefulness'?

In convention at Atlantic City, automobile dealers from all over the country revealed they are worried. The supply of new cars is outrunning demand. Many new cars are being sold in the "blackmarket" at cut prices. That forces dealers to grant large "cash discounts" on new cars, and big "trade-in allowances" on old ones. This reduces dealers' profits.

So what do you suppose was seriously proposed at the convention? A scheme like the "farm support" system, under which Uncle Sam buys and destroys foods to make them scarce and keep prices high, thus saving farmers from the results of "overproduction!"

The dealers' scheme is double-barreled. First, they and auto manufacturers would share the cost of buying and junking up to 17 million old cars, to "take them off the market." That would be hard on people who can't afford to buy anything but old cars, but it would boost new-car demand and profits. Just dandy for the dealers!

Second, the dealers want all states to pass laws requiring that the "title" to old cars be destroyed before they are sold to junkmen, so the latter cannot repair them and sell them to someone who needs cheap transportation.

Now, who do you suppose was the featured speaker at this convention? None other than Senator Harry W. Byrd of Virginia, leader of the Byrd-Democrats, and "pal" of the Taft-Republicans!

Byrd made his usual speech denouncing the Truman Administration for "wastefulness." What would he have said if Truman suggested wasting billions by junking millions of autos to keep their prices high? That proposal came from businessmen, however, so Byrd raised no objection.

Why Have A Coal Strike

There is only one reason why the American people are menaced by a coal strike which the President of the United States describes as a danger to the health and safety of the nation. It is because the coal mines are operated for profit instead of for service.

The same explanation applies to all strikes, as well as to many other social evils that afflict the population of this wealthy nation. Our capitalist private-profit economy has reached a stage of development in which the class antagonisms that are inherent in a profit economy are sharper than ever before in the history of the present era. Strife is a natural result of our kind of economy. It is also natural and inevitable that individual and group interests should take precedence over the general welfare. It is likewise inevitable that the powers of government will be used to control workers.

There can be no common interest in a nation in which one class owns the sources of wealth and by that ownership is enabled to exploit both resources and people for their own profit. Neither can there be internal peace.

If, as a result of the conflicts which Socialists have traditionally described as the "class struggle," individual freedom and democracy dies, that will also be the result of capitalism.

Soviet Russia has ended class conflict by oppression. America's Socialists would end it by social ownership, cooperative production and a democratically-managed system of distribution based upon service and not upon private ownership.

People must make their choice. They can go along with the capitalist private-profit system until it collapses. Then it may be too late for the Socialist cooperative commonwealth. Or they can use the freedom they have to socialize ownership and inaugurate a way of life that would make common interest a fact. That way lies abundance, security, peace and freedom.

THE LAST WORD

By Duffy

"What did you tell the man just now?"
"I told him to hurry."
"What right have you to tell him to hurry?"
"I pay him to hurry."
"How much do you pay him?"
"Eight dollars a day." (The original used shillings.)
"Where do you get the money to pay him?"
"I sell products."
"Who makes the products?"
"He does."
"How many products does he make a day?"
"Twenty-four dollars worth."
"Then instead of paying him, he pays you \$16 a day to stand around telling him to hurry."
"Well, I own the machines."
"How did you get the machines?"
"Sold products and bought them."
"Who made the products?"
"Shut up. He might hear you."

Senator Joseph O'Mahoney's 50 billion dollar plan to secure peace has aroused much hopeful comment, but no concrete action to put it into effect. The chief of the joint congressional atomic commission has suggested that the United States spend that much to improve conditions throughout the world, including Russia, as our part of an agreement to control atomic energy and prevent war.

Lasting peace, of course, would be worth much more than that, but there is no evidence in history that peace can be purchased.

A farmer brought home a parrot as a birthday present for his wife. Not understanding why the bird had a string attached to each leg she asked for the explanation.

"Pull one and see," her husband said.

She pulled the string on the right leg and the parrot said, "Good afternoon, Madam."

She pulled the string on the left leg and the parrot promptly responded, "Pleased to meet you."

"I wonder what would happen if I pulled both strings together," she remarked.

"I'd fall off my perch, you darn fool," said the parrot.

Mother (visiting camp): "Oh, father, that looks like our boy now."
"It does, except that he's working."

Food Prices to Fall

The Agriculture Department predicts food prices will be lower this year—not very much lower, but enough to notice.

Ideas are the great warriors of the world.—President Garfield.