

Net Streets and Page Ads

The NAM is at it again!
It is expounding another of its remarkable economic theories—and NAM expounds best in page advertisements.
Here, in NAM's own words, is the theory:
"Wet streets no more cause rain than high prices cause inflation. Wet streets are the result of rain. High prices are the disastrous result of inflation."
It's a beautiful theory. The only thing wrong with it is that it is completely misleading.
Remember what NAM said in its page ads back in June of last year? It was:
"If OPA is permanently discontinued, production of goods will mount rapidly, and through free competition prices will quickly adjust themselves to levels that consumers are willing to pay."
Well, prices have been "quickly" adjusting themselves for about 18 months—adjusting upwards, that is.
We didn't have unreasonably high prices and we didn't have dangerous inflation until after NAM helped kill OPA. Now we've got both.
Maybe we don't understand why NAM would try to convince the public that exorbitant prices and juicy profits were the result, not the cause, of our inflation.
Furthermore, we'll bet our last subscription blank that NAM wouldn't argue that reducing prices would make our inflation worse!—CIO News.

Nuts to Demagoguery

It seems we've mentioned this before. If so, we want to repeat that we have no sympathy with those people who sneer about the high profits that industry's owners take for themselves but who do nothing to help Socialists scrap the profit motive and put a use economy in its place.
Frankly, we don't find it possible to hate the profit-takers very much. At least two mitigating facts occur to us when we see them being attacked on moral grounds. One is that this is the profit system we're living under. The other is that the number of people who wouldn't take all they could get under this system is so small as to be negligible.
We don't care what the corporation managers do; we've never written a single line intended for their eyes. Our appeal is to the working people—to the people whose chief interest is the interest of wage earners. And since they not only are the victims of the profit system, but also the people who must institute another order if they are ever to be free from exploitation, it is they who offend and frighten us when they refuse to accept—and vote and work for—the Socialist program.
Sure, industry's owners take all they can for themselves; that's in keeping with the rules of the game that workers approve. Certainly the owners wouldn't invest a single cent without expecting to reap a profit for themselves; neither would any other individual.
But those are very good reasons for changing from individual enterprise to social enterprise. Condemning the people who play the game according to the rules may be good demagoguery. But it is poor education. The people—that is, the workers who are the majority—must accept responsibility for their own decisions. And up to now they have decided that the profits of owners shall remain the power that moves and directs the nation.—Reading Labor Advocate.

REFLECTIONS

By Raymond S. Hofses

By this time it should be plain to even the least-informed American that all the talk they have been hearing about "free enterprise" during and since the second world war is strictly bunk. It is simple charity to concede that "freedom of action" prevails in today's economy even in the case of individuals who conduct their own businesses. Even they are subject to controls, and the larger the operation the more clearly it appears that we are constantly—and necessarily—heading into an era of bigger and broader controls.
Nobody knows that better than the people who manage the nation's biggest businesses—the economic rulers who, even before war made the collapse of "free enterprise" official, formed cartels to control production and trade on an international front. And nobody is more satisfied, yes determined, that controls shall be imposed upon, on national and world economy—provided only that THEY do the controlling.
One can recognize the pattern of control in the demands issuing from the recent convention of the National Association of Manufacturers. How can a moratorium on wage demands be established unless the workers of the nation are hobbled? How can industry-wide collective bargaining be banned, in the face of the fact that industry itself functions on a national and international front, unless the government imposes controls which will favor corporate employers and hamstring individuals and organized workers?
And even that great Republican leader and self-confessed apostle of "freedom," Senator Robert A. Taft, is now speaking the language of economic and social controls as he presses for speedy anti-inflation legislation—which to be effective at all must define, limit and inevitably destroy individual freedom?
I have been making a point of the necessity and certainty of economic and social controls because it is necessary for the little people of America—members of the working class and middleclass—to recognize the facts and do something about them along independent and positive lines.
The charge that a controlled economy necessarily must destroy human freedom has been worrying and befuddling the people too long. And all the time the people who shout that alarm are setting the stage to control absolutely the workers of the nation and of the world.
What must be done to end wage demands . . . to limit collective bargaining . . . to stave off, or at least compensate for the effects of, inflation? How can those things be accomplished—in a manner that will still leave the basic wealth and the wealth-producing resources of the nation in the possession of private owners and without destroying the ability of those owners to extract profit from working people?
The answer is that the government must be made to function to that end: it must fulfill its role as the executive board of a dominant economic group. That describes the quality and character of the controls that a class economy now needs in order to function.
And so it is that the beneficiaries of private profit—together with their dupes on all social and economic levels—are planning for or agreeing to the kind of controls that profit-takers need.

Warns of Fascism

Charging that a "sinister and vicious" lobby seeks to tax cooperatives to death, Representative Wright Patman of Texas declared: "Every fascist-minded person in our country is against cooperative." Instead of investigating consumer organizations, he said, Congress should look into numerous so-called "educational" groups that act as fascist propaganda mediums.

THE MARCH OF LABOR



How NAM "Platform" Was Written

As a rule, the men who edit the financial pages of daily newspapers sing praises of Big Business. One who sometimes dares to be different is J. A. Livingston, financial columnist for the Washington "Post."
The other day Livingston exposed the National Association of Manufacturers' "12-plank anti-inflation program," which most papers have been treating as though it were gospel from on high.
"Here's my plank-by-plank score on the NAM program," Livingston wrote.
"Three of the proposals will do what the NAM says they will. They're deflationary, will tend to curb the price rise."
"Two of the proposals are inflationary," and "will do just the opposite" of what the NAM claims.
Others "are lovely generalizations," and one is "irrelevant."
"This mixed-upness is understandable. The members of the NAM resolutions committee are manufacturers. Each has carried through life certain conceptions and misconceptions about economics, labor, capital, or taxes. Few, if any, are experts on inflation."
"But that does not stop them from resolving. They've got to produce a platform, so they do."
The NAM men sit in a "smoke-filled room," Livingston says. One of them "mentions" one of his pet grudges. "Another becomes irate about it. A third demands action."
"Finally, they turn it over to resolutions specialist" and tell him to "language it up." He does so, and another "plank" goes into the NAM "anti-inflation program."—Labor.

OF TIME AND RADICALS

There are several things we like about the public observance of John Peter Altgeld's birth one hundred years ago today.
One is the reminder that liberalism—or radicalism, if you want to call it that—has a way of outliving its enemies. John Peter Altgeld, governor of Illinois, was a radical in his day. When he was alive, conservatives talked about him the way they did about Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Lincoln, and Jefferson, in their lifetimes.
Lincoln and Jefferson have now been dead long enough to be adopted by the conservatives. Judging by the list of sponsors for the Altgeld celebration, this is what's happening to Altgeld. F. D. R. will make it too, given time.
Probably nothing can be done about this. Some people will always believe that the only good radical is a dead radical. But it is comforting to see the dead radicals come into their own.
Some of the same people who honor Altgeld today would be denouncing him as a wrecker of everything good and beautiful were he now governor of Illinois. These are the people who would have been federalists in Jefferson's time and pro-slavery state's righters in Lincoln's time. They were anti-New Dealers in the Roosevelt era.
Despite the most strenuous efforts of each generation of conservatives to do it in, the liberal tradition lives on. Somehow new Altgelds, new Roosevelts keep rising up. And as each runs the gauntlet of conservative vilification, each can be reasonably certain that the abuse will turn to respect some day when he is safely dead.
We like that feature of the Altgeld celebration, and we also like its special suitability to these times. Altgeld towered among his contemporaries because he had the courage and the strength of conviction to champion the political dissenters of his day.
He pardoned the despised anarchists although majority sentiment counted them enemies of the "American way of life." Altgeld believed that even such enemies were entitled to a fair trial. That is what the American way meant to him—it meant free thought and toleration of dissent; it meant law and civil rights and personal dignity.
Those who honor Altgeld today can hardly escape noticing that it is these very convictions of his which are under fierce attack right now.
With our Thomas committees, our loyalty tests, our animus toward communists, the nation is expressing today the very intolerance of dissent, the hatred of the unorthodox, the desire to suppress unwelcome ideas, which Altgeld opposed.
It is valuable indeed to remember that when the current hysteria has subsided we shall honor not those who led the witch-hunt but those who rejected it.—The Chicago Sun.

Social Note

Proxy Gent: "This liquor won't cause any damage to my liver, will it?"
Rusky Bartender: "Not if you've got the money to pay for it."
Correct
A farmer wrote to a rural paper to ask "how long cows should be milked."
"Why, the same as short cows, of course," advised the editor.
Give me the benefit of your convictions, if you have any; but keep your doubts to yourself, for I have enough of my own.
Goodbye.
"If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants."—Sir Isaac Newton.

A Message from the United Committee of South-Slavic Americans

The domestic and international situation which affects the life of every American has been deteriorating so rapidly that our great ship of state, having lost its wise and skillful pilot Franklin Delano Roosevelt, is being driven today toward disaster. This ship carries not only our lives but also the priceless cargo of our great democratic heritage—our sacred human rights—our civil liberties—our inalienable right to think, speak, criticize freely, in accordance with the dictates of our own conscience.
Surely it is of supreme importance to have this ship brought back onto its true course—toward a future of increased freedom and well-being for all. Otherwise angry winds and waves will dash it to pieces on the cruel rocks of reaction. Only the collective effort of all wide-awake lovers of true democracy can accomplish this. For although it is obviously impossible to reverse the direction or turn and go back to past conditions, that is exactly what reactionaries are always trying to do, with disastrous inevitable result, for it is an attempt to ignore the laws of nature.
This attempt to return to the past is only too evident today. Powerful forces are today at work attempting to whittle down, or even eradicate, the manifold improvements in the lot of the common man gained with the help of Roosevelt's enlightened leadership. Passage of the Taft-Hartley law showed clearly that the enemies of organized labor have never reconciled themselves to labor's legitimate gains—resulting from the provisions of the Norris-LaGuardia-Wagner laws—and have used the first opportunity to reintroduce the judicial power of injunction in order to cripple labor's power through curtailment of its right to strike.
The insidious method of intimidation is being used unscrupulously by entrenched privilege and its stooges to force acquiescence, if possible, by frightening, smearing, defaming all those who dare to stand up in defense of the American constitutional rights of all citizens irrespective of their racial and religious background, their color or their political beliefs.
The President's ill-conceived loyalty directive has been used to impugn the honor and patriotism of American citizens, branding them for the rest of their lives as subversive elements, endangering their means of livelihood, without according them ordinary protection by due processes of law. Arouse public opinion has forced the State Department and other governmental agencies to modify their arbitrary procedures to the extent of permitting employees accused of disloyalties to defend themselves against specific charges before the Loyalty Review Board, but these agencies still arrogate to themselves the right to dismiss individuals no matter what the verdict of the Loyalty Review Board may be. These highhanded tactics, coupled with the Attorney General's arbitrary condemnation of various organizations as subversive, without warning, without proof, without a chance to reply, clearly demonstrate the tendencies of government agencies to set themselves above the law.
Another indication of the same tendency is provided by the recent investigation of some of the most prominent Hollywood writers and producers by the House Committee on Un-American Activities. Not one shred of evidence of disloyalty was presented at these hearings, and yet the powerful American movie industry was frightened into summary dismissal of some of its most valuable talent, merely because these men were valiantly defending the right of every individual to the privacy of his own personal beliefs. Those of us who were in Europe and witnessed the rise to power of Mussolini and Hitler recognize with mounting horror the emergence of the same pattern in these United States: the daily growing power of the military with their insatiable demands for ever greater expenditure for "defense"—the deliberate promotion of fear with its attendant scapegoat mentality, which blames all the troubles in the world on the Communists, the Russians, the Slavs, or the Jews—the rapidly rising racial tensions with increasing discrimination against all national minorities, shown by the recent cancellation of many foreign lan-

guage radio programs and the attempt to suppress foreign language newspapers—the crude attempts to intimidate the foreign born, especially those of Slavic descent, by threatening to refuse, or even revoke, American citizenship unless they give up membership in their cultural, social, or fraternal organizations—and, in the case of Yugoslavs, stop contributing to Yugoslav relief and publicly oppose the present Yugoslav Government, which, incidentally, was recognized long ago by the American Government.
These symptoms are more than sufficient to warrant the diagnosis "incipient Nazi-Fascism," but there are others equally evident in the field of foreign policy, where our Government actively supports any government, no matter how corrupt, tyrannical and unrepresentative it may be, so long as it is considered to be sufficiently anti-Russian or anti-Slav in general.
Chiang Kai Shek's China climaxed years of brutal tyranny by liquidating the Democratic League and executing many of its leaders. For this strange manner of "strengthening democracy" in China our Government rewards the Nationalist government by pouring more millions into the bottomless pit of Chinese corruption, which has already swallowed over four billion dollars of American taxpayers' money.
In Greece, which has for months been dominated by American advisers and dependent upon American money and war material, and where chaos, corruption and brutality increases from day to day, the government has decreed the death penalty for striking workers, whereupon our Government a few days later transferred six gunboats to the Greek navy. These were ceremoniously accepted the other day by the Greek Ambassador, Vassily Dendrakis, with the remark that his country "will never cease to fight as long as our democratic way of life is at stake." (N.Y. Times, Dec. 11, 1947).
This record of unsavory and undemocratic governments befriended by us could be added to almost indefinitely (Turkey, Franco-Spain, Argentina, Iran, etc.) and affords a marked contrast to the official attitude toward our proven friends and allies, one of which, Yugoslavia, has been singled out for specially unfair and unfriendly treatment. For instance, as the result of a particularly bad harvest in 1946, there was an acute shortage of food in Yugoslavia last spring. And yet the State Department refused to permit Yugoslavia to buy for gold even those surplus potatoes which were to be dumped, with the result that instead of helping to keep our valiant allies alive, these rotting potatoes became a serious health menace by polluting many of our rivers. This discrimination and ill will against Yugoslavia even goes to the length of stamping American passports "not valid for travel in Yugoslavia" and to refusing to release the Yugoslav gold which was entrusted to the United States for safekeeping at the beginning of the war, whereas our ex-enemy Italy has not only had her gold returned to her but has been subsidized to the tune of over a billion dollars.
This is a dark picture of potentially dangerous conditions which have developed because the American people were unaware of the rapid deterioration on all fronts following the death of President Roosevelt. But the American people still believe in freedom, they still believe in fair play and they still believe in the preservation of these freedoms in search of which we came to this country.
We Americans of South-Slavic descent must once more do our part—now in peace as we did during the war. We must help bring America back to sanity. We must refuse to be intimidated. Though we may speak English with a foreign accent, we must speak out boldly and clearly for the preservation of these freedoms in search of which we came to this country.
In order to play an effective role in the elections of the coming year we must be organizationally strong. Only so will be able to contribute toward the election to public office of men and women who are truly representative of the finest American democratic traditions and who

know that this great heritage can live and flower only in the climate of world peace based upon understanding and good will between men and nations.
The 27th of March is a most appropriate date for an impressive demonstration of our organizational strength—and of our political maturity—and of our determination to speak out in unison with a voice that will bring comfort to our friends and defeat to our enemies.
On and around this date we must hold public meetings from coast to coast, demonstrating that we are an important part of our militant American progressive forces.
It is imperative that the leadership of the Congresses and their units in local communities comprising the United Committee meet at the earliest possible moment to decide upon a concerted plan of action which will insure the total mobilization of our forces in the fateful election year of 1948.
Please keep in close touch with the national office of the United Committee and keep it informed as to the steps taken for prompt and effective action.
With the Season's Greetings!
Fraternally yours,
ZLATKO BALOKOVIC,
President.
Newlyweds, Teen Aged Target of Stockholm Co-op
STOCKHOLM (CNS)—Konsum, the local co-op serving this city of 700,000, is encouraging young people to join. Last year the largest group of new members were those 26 years old. The average age in the last three years has been 31.
To help this trend along, Konsum is opening most of its new shops in sections of town where newlyweds are most likely to settle. Study circles and lectures are being set up on such subjects as child care and home planning.
Free Insurance
Free accident insurance is given to the pre-school children of Konsum members. Exercise classes have been organized for children and mothers; there are three thousand housewives now taking exercises thru Konsum and small children are taken care of during the exercise period.
Cafes
Cafes and restaurants operated by Konsum also attract a good deal of patronage from young unmarried people. There are 36 of these establishments at present, with a turnover of about \$2 million a year. Patronage refunds are paid on most purchases, thus quietly educating the young people in cooperative methods.
Konsum now has 130,000 members.
Population
"Experts" who for years have been predicting a declining population for the United States will find no comfort in a report released by the Census Bureau.
It reveals that on October 1 Uncle Sam had 144,708,000 nephews and nieces, a gain of more than 13 million since 1940 and five millions more than in the 1930-1940 decade.
One of the largest increases was recorded for the metropolitan district of New York City, which now has a population of 13,800,000, a gain of more than a million since 1940.
Total savings by individuals for the first quarter of 1947 were less than half the figure for the last quarter of 1946 and the lowest since 1940.
Work injuries to 3,063,000 workers were reported last year, which means that more than 47 million work days were lost to production.
The Last Word
The true test of civilization is not the census, or the sizes of cities or crops, but the kind of man the counts turn out.—Emerson.