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C O P Y

A STUDY TOWARDS THE SOLUTION OF INDUSTRIAL
PROBLEMS. IN THE NEW ZIONIST COMMONWEALTH.

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Some years ago there occurred in the United States one of those periodic monetary panics which seriously affected every industry, and trade in general, throwing many workmen and mechanics out of employment, and checking new enterprises that had been begun in the hope of gain and of future successful operations.

Many thousands of honest mechanics and workmen walked the streets in search of something to do, in order that they might keep their wives and children from want and suffering. Almost any wages were accepted because in those years living expenses were not high and good food was obtainable at what would today be considered ridiculously low prices.

The well-to-do and those who had substantial savings accounts, easily weathered the storm, but the spectacle of so many fathers of families willing to work but unable to find employment showed a lack of adjustability in the social and economic fabric which appealed to every thinking person who desired the real progress of the race towards a better social justice.

What was at that time unemployment on a large and threatening scale is a continuous menace even under our more improved modern financial conditions and credit systems. When not long ago I approached the labor leaders at the Headquarters of the American Federation of Labor in Washington for the purpose of getting such advice as might be applied to future industrial legislation in the new State of Judea, their spokesman admitted that they had no definite program which would constitute a general panacea for the solution of industrial labor problems. He said, however, that if we could do away with unemployment it would go far under reasonable good wages and labor conditions - to bring about peace and contentment among those who toiled with their hands in order to earn an honest living. He also pointed out that one means for attaining the reducing of unemployment consisted undoubtedly in the stimulating, by the State, of farm development, by offering every inducement to draw people away from the Cities that they might become producers of food and of raw products in the country.

The fact that an organization, which had made the solution of industrial labor conditions a life study for so many years, had not arrived at a definite program which might be applied to a new state, proved that some new tack had to be suggested and tried. Any Ship of State which was seeking a satisfactory method of adjusting the claims of the different elements that constitute the body politic, has little to hope from past experiences. The whole field is still a blank in spite of an enormous amount of study which some of the greatest thinkers of the world have devoted in attempts to find a proper labor adjustment in that turmoil of muscles and brains, theorists and practical men which together means what is known as Civilization.

Based on these assumptions and without considering critically all previously attempted theoretical solutions towards the same goal, I desire to submit - what may not be a complete panacea - but the direction which may perhaps open up new view points or new vistas, or new combinations of all advices put together differently into what seems to me to promise some kind of a success on which further progress may be based.

From the start I accept the dictum given me by the

American Federation of Labor that the reduction of industrial unemployment and the favoring, by the State, of a movement towards the farm, are desirable trails to follow.

To this I would join certain axioms, some of which have been many times laid down by writers and students of labor problems in the past. Let me enumerate some of them:

1. - The material success obtainable by any individual is based:-

(a) On his personal ability,

(b) On the existence, in the world around him, of many people who will buy the products of his ability and pay him a profit over the cost of making them.

2. - The prestige and success of every State and Commonwealth rests on the labors of comparatively few leaders, of exceptional men, who have the ability to rise above their fellow-citizens by virtue of superior wisdom, greater initiative and more evident originality of thought.

3. - It is a desirable policy of every State, or Commonwealth to recognize, encourage and reward superior ability, the possession of which among its citizens alone advances the progress of the State and its prestige among the nations of the Earth.

4. - Any system of social or industrial legislation which is so paternal that it dampens or discourages personal initiative or opposes the rising, in the community, of exceptional individuals who may benefit the State by their leadership, enterprise or applied genius, lacks foresight and wisdom and is of very doubtful expediency

5. - All nature revels in variety, and any attempt to level human beings by ultra-social and paternal legislation is unnatural and therefore doomed to ultimate failure; it is opposed to the best interests of the community because it would depress people into a mass of commonplace individuals whose minds would become stunted because their native originality and initiative remains unencouraged and unrewarded.

It is true that there will be, under paternal legislation, less care and struggle for the individual, but will any thinking person assume that the struggle for existence is of necessity a disadvantage? When we take care of public utilities and in addition thereto provide for the neglected or widowed mother and her children, when we look after old age following a life of honest toil, and when we, maybe, provide not only for State controlled sanitation, but for medical aid as well, we have gone, I think, as far as is expedient. To go beyond this is to make socialism and paternalism a curse instead of a blessing to the people.

I subscribe most emphatically to that part of the Pittsburgh Zionist program which advises that all public utilities be State-owned and State-controlled. I would go further and punish unloyalty of State employees severely. I would designate for instance an organized strike or other action which would cripple a public utility as treason against the State, and I would place participants under Statutes that would operate as promptly and severely as Martial Law. On the other hand I should compensate loyal services to the State by special annual premiums and by distinctions and marks of honor.

I take it that the adoption of the complete Pittsburg program is not prescribed as a necessary premise to the work of this committee. It is too radical in its scope and would frighten many desirable people from settling in Palestine. Its provisions cater too much to those radicals who are inclined at all times to throw overboard well tried and proved institutions because not everything of the present is as just and equitable as it might be.

I submit that to struggle under handicap and to achieve a goal of distinction by straining one's initiative and fighting quality is preferable and gives greater satisfaction than when you are pampered, and thrown overboard with a lifeline around your waist. On the other hand we must provide that superior ability may not become a menace, that groups of men may not monopolise capital or necessities and demand an unjust tribute or profit from their fellow citizens.

In the case of patents which are an encouragement and a stimulus to the development of new contrivances of value, the State should have the right of purchase when inventions become public utilities or practical necessities. I would, however, further provide that after, say, ten or twenty years from such purchase the inventor shall have the privilege, in equity, to demand a further, a final compensation should his patented idea have proved of greater importance and public service than the State conceived it to be at the time of purchase.

As to all else that may concern the enterprise of individuals I would rely on the present law of supply and demand and on free competition for curbing abnormal profits, and I should subscribe to such measures against restraint of trade and unfair competition as have proved themselves in accord with justice both to the creating individual and the consumers benefited by him.

Now thus far I have proposed nothing which would prevent the accumulation of privately held large fortunes and of unearned or unjustly earned increments. And I would here introduce, in a modified form, the remedy which has often been submitted, which has been in a measure applied already and which will operate whenever an individual dies, leaving a large fortune behind. I propose either that nobody be permitted to leave by Will more than a certain maximum amount, or that a certain percentage, of increasing proportions as a fortune is larger, be deducted and be turned over to the State.

And I further propose that the State accumulate these incomes into a special fund to be used only for the construction of public works or utilities, and that whenever a worker, or a class of them, find themselves caught by unemployment they shall be able to immediately obtain work from the State at a minimum wage for different activities or labor which wage amount, however, shall always be less than the average wage for similar work paid by private citizens. And a permanent Special Commission shall be competent to terminate such employment by the State, after due notice given in advance, if such notice and termination appear to such commission to be warranted.

There remains the possibility notably at the beginning of operating such a law, that the State may not possess the funds to help out unemployment. This is to be remedied by special taxation or by the creation of an emergency fund as part of the Budget of the State whenever the Industrial Commission above mentioned reports the advisability of creating or adding to such emergency fund.

Parallel with such a policy, the endeavor, by the State, to stimulate the development of farms will no doubt minimize the danger of unemployment. This I am told, has been the effect in New Zealand, where industrial reforms have been

tried on a large scale.

To recapitulate: I am against the slightest check put on individual initiative and ambition. I would allow full scope to enterprise and have the individual enjoy the fruits of his labor while he is living. But I would have the State take over a large portion of his earnings above a certain amount after his death and use them for the production of public works and utilities and primarily for the purpose of tiding over the honest individual who is caught for a while in the net of unemployment without any fault of his own.

This proposition is a mere sketch submitted for the consideration of this Committee and I beg to suggest that it be carefully measured as to what it might lead to when applied and embodied in the legislative system of the new Zionist Commonwealth.

Washington, D.C. June 1919.

