

# SENATOR BYRD...

## On the Rise of Radicalism in this Country:

In this year 1944, as the days pass, it will be the endeavor of The Times-News to present from time to time matters which will aid subscribers in their understanding and appraisal of public affairs, political conditions and the present and future prospects of the country. This we consider an obligation to our public and it is a privilege to serve our readers in this way.

The nation is in a serious, even a precarious situation. We make that statement in reference to the internal affairs of the country. It would be true if peace reigned in the world and the United States was not at war. War conditions add to the perplexities and burdens of the nation. We suppose that intelligent, patriotic citizens are deeply interested in the matter of obtaining all possible light on conditions as they actually exist in the nation today. They desire to know the truth and to be thoroughly informed about public matters. It has always been the policy of this newspaper to make the largest contribution it finds possible to the spreading of such information as may serve this purpose.

In pursuance of this policy The Times-News will find space in these columns for an article by Sen. Harry F. Byrd of Virginia, which has previously appeared in Forbes Magazine and in some of the newspapers. The title of the article is "Four Milestones to Totalitarianism." We have seen no other writing on the subject of present governmental conditions which was as comprehensive and convincing as the article by Senator Byrd.

It is unnecessary to introduce Senator Byrd to Times-News readers. He has a record as a private citizen which is unequalled by any other loyal and successful American. He has a long and honorable record in the public service of Virginia and in the United States Senate. His character, integrity, and his ability as a business man and public servant, are such as to place him in the forefront of national leadership today.

Of Senator Byrd it may be said that his bitterest enemies have not been able to establish that he is narrow or prejudiced in his political attitude or is controlled by any purpose except unswerving determination to serve his State and country in all sincerity and honesty.

Senator Byrd presents conditions in Washington as they are—as they are known to exist by thousands of other citizens, in and out of public life. No confirmation from any source is needed to substantiate his estimate of the national governmental situation, but the case probably has never been so comprehensively and impressively presented as by the distinguished Senator from Virginia.

### FOUR MILESTONES TO TOTALITARIANISM

(By Sen. Harry F. Byrd of Va.)

"It can't happen here" is wishful thinking. So let's face facts—now!

For 10 years now, the U. S. has been alternately cajoled, threatened, wheedled, promised and finally pushed down the path to dictatorship. The milestones on this road have not always been clearly discernible as we passed, but in retrospect they loom large.

The first milestone was the control of government. Our founding fathers, fearful of totalitarianism, carefully designed a system of checks and balances by which, theoretically, no man or group of men could gain control of the government. This they did by establishing three co-equal parts: The legislature, to make the laws; the executive, to carry out the laws; the judiciary, to enforce the laws.

#### The First Step

From the very start of his administration, President Roosevelt sought to dominate these three branches. He first attempted to "pack" the U. S. Supreme Court by increasing the membership with new appointments. Congress thwarted the scheme. Still, by reason of the administration's long term of office, all except two of our justices have been appointed by President Roosevelt.

The President next attempted a Senatorial purge, designed to prevent the re-election of those who did not see eye to eye with his policies. That he did not succeed in removing Sen. Tydings of Maryland and Senator George of Georgia, among others, is a tribute to the public's ability to discern patriotic and able statesmen.

Had this effort of the President succeeded, he would have continued his purge to drive out of public office every member of the Congress who dared express disagreement with his wishes.

Falling in these devices, he attempted to reorganize the various departments of the government. He asked for the abolition of the comptroller general; the government's only independent auditing office; sought control over the Civil Service Commission, which, in effect, would have endangered our entire merit system; proposed complete executive control of the quasi-judicial agencies, FCC, FPC, ICC and PTC.

Balked by a narrow margin—in these, too, an ingenious method by-passing Congress was conceived. As everyone knows, the real power of Congress over the executive department is the control of the purse—the power to give or deny appropriations. The New Deal has overcome this handicap by creating government corporations which, once a blanket authorization has been secured, are allowed to issue bonds and disburse public funds as the President sees fit. There are 57 of these corporations and the \$30,000,000,000 which they have spent—many times involving important controversial appropriations—has never been authorized by Congress. It has never even been audited by the comptroller general.

#### 3,490 Executive Orders

Supplementing this detour of legislative authorization, the President has resorted to another method of executive law-making, that of executive order. In 10 years he has issued 3,490 executive orders, many of legislative or quasi-legislative content. These are not laws passed by Congress; they are laws passed by a single bureaucrat.

Nor is this all. In the stress of the national crisis, the President was granted an emergency fund of over \$100,000,000. While only a small portion of this sum has been spent, all of it has been allocated to various agencies. In effect, it places tremendous power in the hands of the President—power which the Constitution formerly reserved to the Congress.

This bureaucracy perpetuates itself far from the scrutiny of the citizenry, behind a veil of complex, overlapping and duplicating agencies whose policy-making personnel is intent upon regimenting American life from the professional armchairs of economists and sociologists in Washington. In many instances their sole aim is to recruit and appoint only those persons who have the same ideological concepts as they have.

This undemocratic selection process has been so ingrained through usage as to become an accepted procedure. In violation of civil service regulations, more and more personnel are added to federal payrolls. The activities of these bureaucrats completely confuse and thwart congressional investigators.

The second milestone was the control of business. The control of business, of industry, of the professions, of free enterprise, of the American way of life itself can be destroyed in one of three ways: (1) By government competition with private business; (2) by senseless and unnecessary regimentation; (3) by excessive and exorbitant taxation.

Competition with private enterprise has long been a government method of weakening private business and industry. Begun as an emergency experiment in 1933, government competition has mushroomed so that now, although the emergency has passed, the government has control, or is seeking control, of every enterprise. Directly concerned with business, there are nine federal housing and construction agencies, 16 federal business and banking agencies, and four federal transportation and power agencies. There are numerous others, some saving

of government monopolies, such as in the synthetic rubber industry, the aluminum industry and parts of the banking business.

There is a bill before Congress which, according to the National Physicians Committee, will abolish private medical practice by instituting public medicine, dentistry, nursing and hospitalization under the direct control of a federally-appointed surgeon general. It will cost an estimated \$3,000,000,000 a year.

At present the government is attempting to prove, through the courts, that all insurance—fire, indemnity and life—is commerce between the states, which obviously it is not. Once this is established, all insurance will be subject to direct government control.

In the past three years, the government has spent \$25,000,000 in building plants and facilities for industrial production. The title to most of these properties is in the government. Of the 1,500 plants which RFC alone has built and financed, 521 were aviation plants; 54, aluminum plants; 120, steel plants; 50 high-octane aviation gasoline plants. The steel plants owned by the government represent 20 per cent of the entire country's requirements, the machine tool facilities one-half of the country's requirements, while 92 per cent of all magnesium produced is taken from government plants. Government investments are responsible for the production of one-third more rubber than was ever produced before.

In all, this vast industrial machine represents one-fifth of the nation's industrial capacity, a measure of control undreamed of by the country's greatest industrialists. This control is vested largely in over 57 government corporations. Many of these, notably the RFC, do not operate under control of Congress. This gigantic corporation refuses to have its books audited by the comptroller general, despite the recommendation of the Secretary of the Treasury. Declares Jesse H. Jones, head of the RFC:

#### Jones: "Wisdom Needed"

"Obviously the government will be in a position to smother private industry in the manufacture of magnesium, and also to dominate more than enough capacity to supply the entire peacetime needs for aluminum. These situations will require wisdom and fairness by government, otherwise private investments in these industries would be destroyed."

In effect, such corporate government agencies represent unconsciously the holding companies for Totalitarianism, Incorporated.

The recent coal strike indicates the trend toward government ownership of industry and control of the people. The miners desired higher wages. They struck. When the government took over the mines, through Senator Ickes, the miners were granted the same raises in pay which had been previously refused.

Examples have come to my attention where industries have given up new projects because the estimated cost of preparing questionnaires, reports and forms would be greater than the estimated profit. At least 7, 715,229 reports and questionnaires (not including rationing forms) have been issued in one year by the government.

What's more, these bureaucratic government agencies issue thousands upon thousands of directives, many of which actually supersede congressional laws already on the statute books. These directives and questionnaires, burdening the citizens and placing unreasonable obstacles against the war effort, was not done by legislative enactment. Congress is not to blame for them.

Don't blame Congress, either, for the coercion and threats used by the administration and its agencies to force many businessmen into binding contracts with labor unions providing for the closed shop. This was not done by Congress; it was done by the bureaucrats setting into practice a policy of which I am certain Congress disapproves. Nevertheless, it is whitewashing down the strength of private enterprise.

Even government competition and regimentation of private business might not render it impotent were it not for the

excessive taxation which threatens to remove profit, "seed money" and invested capital alike. Heavy taxation is necessary to carry the financial burden of winning the war but it need not destroy private industry to balance its books.

Branching into the field of property ownership, the federal government has acquired for war purposes, inclusive of public lands, 43,000,000 acres of land in the past five years. This comprises an area equal to the size of Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Vermont and one-half of Maine. The government has in fact, become the country's leading real estate operator. The War Department alone has acquired 557 hotels, some of which have been purchased, all of which, unless the government continues to hold them, will be dumped on the market with disastrous effects on local economy.

#### No Field Free

There is not a single field of private endeavor in the whole country which is not tethered to the post of administrative directive! Yet without free enterprise we can only have government by State socialism. There is no alternative.

The third milestone was control of food, the creating of federal agricultural bureaus and agencies which are competing with private enterprise. In the field of agricultural lending alone there are 20 of these federal agencies, some of which are divided into as many as 12 separate corporations. They constitute a federal lien on the entire production of food the country over. Despite the fact that there are ample lending agencies outside the government sees fit to preserve, even expand, these 20 duplicating and overlapping agencies.

When you complain about the high cost of food, think twice, for you shall pay twice, as the appropriations and loan authorizations for the agricultural program for this year total almost \$1,000,000,000. Much of this cost is needlessly exorbitant. We are still paying for the 151 administration-sponsored resettlement projects started in 1935, which, having failed utterly, have cost the government \$137,000,000. We are paying, too, for bureaucratic control of agriculture, for 100,000 Agricultural Administration committeemen, for 2,175 separate local offices of the Farm Security Administration, a relatively small bureau containing 8,375 committeemen.

Despite the fact that farm income today is 260 per cent of what it was in 1939, the administration is attempting to control the cost of food—and incidentally food production—by repeatedly seeking subsidies in the amount of \$800,000,000 annually. A subsidy is not a loan; it's a gift, a dole which indures the recipient by perpetuating his dependence on the government. It is State Socialism bottled under another label.

#### COMPROMISE PROPOSED BY NEW DEALER

John Temple Graves, newspaperman of Birmingham, whose special articles appear in newspapers elsewhere, is a new dealer who takes the position that the time has arrived to call a halt on new dealing.

Mr. Graves would retain the vast structure of new dealism, radicalism and socialism, foisted on the nation in the past dozen years by the Washington administration, but he would not add to the structure. He would curb new dealing with priorities and ceiling prices—for the time being, at least—but Mr. Graves ought to know that is all that would be accomplished by his proposal—it might be momentarily curbed by that course, but it would not be destroyed and work would speedily be resumed on the structure if the new dealers maintain control of the national government and the nation.

To change the figure—Mr. Graves believes the new deal is a good thing—but is convinced that the country has had enough of this good thing and does not desire to see it continue growing and swelling to larger proportions. He would preserve the fruits of the new deal. Would he destroy the new deal orchards. If not, how would he prevent future yields of new deal fruits? And if new

deal fruits are all to the good, who wants to destroy the trees or the crops?

Mr. Graves is convinced that a majority of American citizens have either turned against or are going on with the new deal or stand ready to program of the past decade. He fears that all may be lost by this course, and is crying out in order that something may be saved through compromise. The compromise would be based on retention of all the date. An armistice would be new dealers have accomplished arranged and after that had served its purpose the new dealers would spit on their hands and resume their labors.

We are not suggesting these things as Mr. Graves' ideas and plans. We are suggesting what we know will happen if his counsel prevails, because we know the character and purpose of new deal leadership and the way—the only possible way—new deals develop.

The country cannot be saved from the new deal by Mr. Graves' program. The injury done the nation by the new deal cannot be repaired that way. The danger from totalitarianism and dictatorship, and the certainty of destruction of the Republic if new dealism continues to dominate the nation, cannot be avoided by that course.

If it correctly estimates the views of the American people, but few of them will endorse Mr. Graves' proposal for compromise with the new dealers. We think the people on both sides would greatly prefer a fight to the finish to determine whether the United States is going to continue to exist as the American Republic or shall be transformed into a centralized, totalitarian, socialist government.

The fourth milestone was control of the people. It is axiomatic that if control can be established over the shape of ideas which go into a man's head and the amount of money which flows into his pocket, there is little to fear what will come out of his mouth. In just these ways totalitarianism is being foisted on the people of America.

The number as well as the shape of these ideas may soon be rationed if the propaganda specialists have their way. The creation of OWI was a step in that direction. However, the recent cut in its appropriations indicates that Congress is aware of the danger of a central federal news dispensary.

#### Free Press, But—

Frequent administrative attacks on the free press of America are too well known to necessitate comment. The freedom of the press is one of our last remaining democratic bulwarks.

Even public school education is threatened by administrative control. It was through fear of a government subsidy, which might ultimately grow into government control of all learning, that the Senate refused to give the administration a springboard to absolute power over the thought of the youth of America.

Control of the people by economic means is much simpler than through control of ideas. This in large measure has already been accomplished by means of public employment, guarantees of security, public doles and a colossal debt which the people—not the government—must ultimately pay.

At present some 3,000,000 civilians are employed by the federal government—a larger number than the state and local employees of all 48 states. An additional 2,500,000 employees work in construction projects financed in whole or in part by federal funds. Nor does this take into account the many millions of industrial, manufacturing and agricultural workers indirectly paid by the government in the form of contracts and subsidies with employers. All of these people directly or indirectly look to the federal government for support.

Moreover, the government supports uncounted millions more through grants in aid to states and through other cooperative arrangements. This will in itself cost the government over \$4,000,000,000 for the fiscal year 1943.

Not content with this, the

President has announced a guarantee of financial security to every American citizen from the cradle to the grave. This is a guarantee from 130,000,000 Americans to 130,000,000 Americans of social security. While it's the duty of the government to extend aid to those in distress, it is inconsistent with the very idea of democracy to guarantee financial security to every citizen.

As a necessary corollary to this is the new Machiavellian economic philosophy which advocates an ever-expanding public debt as not only justifiable but also healthy in a country with a "mature economy," such as the U. S. Thus printing-press money would supplant hard work as a means of subsistence. Such a procedure, once introduced, would result in disastrous inflation and, ultimately, government control of all finances. The democratic idea that the people support the government would be revised; the government would support the people.

Whether the government's refusal to practice economy is an attempt in this direction the reader must judge for himself.

#### The Public Debt

The public debt is now \$171,000,000,000 or \$3,500 for every taxpayer in America. It is nine times the total debt at the end of the last war. To repudiate this debt would be to repudiate democracy, to pay it would re-establish our Americanism. But this can only be done by free men engaged in free enterprise.

The question has often been asked, "What can be done to check this tendency, these growing evils, this march to totalitarianism?" The answer is manifold.

Congress must first of all reassert its Constitutional rights. It must refuse the chief executive the use of legislative power; it must abrogate the sweeping emergency powers it has given the chief executive as soon as the war ends; it must, in short, refuse to have its own legal authority bypassed by decrees of a single man.

Congress can't do this alone. The people must reassert themselves, too. Every citizen can and must exercise his right of franchise. This is not a privilege alone, it is a duty.

Every citizen should continue his eternal vigilance and keep Congress informed of his opinions. Congressmen don't disregard the letters and telegrams sent to them by their constituents and others; they welcome such expressions of judgment, for it is through these that they are made aware of current opinion. Congress represents the people; the people themselves should not forget this.

#### Must Work Together

Congress and the people, together, can rid the government of its bureaucrats. The bureaucracy represented by 3,000,000 federal employees must be dismantled. Qualified, competent employees who believe in our form of democracy, recruited under a competitive civil service system based on merit ratings, must be installed. The people and Congress must insist that the government be gotten out of business, that the government corporations competing with private enterprise be liquidated, that the 60,000,000,000 in government property be returned to the people.

The people must elect those who give more than lip-service to economy by actively advocating the enactment of constructive legislation. They must insist that the 16-year-old deficit be checked, and a simple and equitable tax policy be introduced. They must insist upon the elimination of duplicating agencies and personnel, upon the elimination of gross extravagance and waste in the executive branch of the government.

The American people must realize that their one remaining hope is in Congress, for it is the only body of the government whose membership is dependent upon the will of the people. Members of Congress should be told when they are wrong, and they should be supported when they are right. They, elected by the people, are the last defenders of representative democracy, a democracy now swiftly retreating down the twilight road to totalitarianism.

This space contributed by  
an Independent Voter of Macon County