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## WHOLESALE PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT BECOMING A PERMANENT POLICY

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**An Industry Which Can Be Operated by a Portion of the People Cannot Absorb the Whole People. The Surplus Not Needed in Productive and Associated Activities Must Be Employed in General Betterment Work. That Means That the Government Must Tax as It Has Never Taxed Before, But in a Painless Way. Plenty Produced for All Assures Possibility of Withdrawing Plenty for the Public Employees and Leaving Plenty for the Privately Employed.**

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There were several courses by which an attempt at rescuing the country from the economic morass into which it had fallen, might have been made. An assumption of the control of production and of distribution by the government was the short way out, but the country was unprepared for such a procedure.

The course actually adopted was one of quasi-control plus immense public employment with borrowed money.

The control, as comprehended in the NRA and other organizations, cannot be considered a gratifying success, as whatever of improvement in business conditions has occurred is largely due to the expenditure of borrowed money in direct relief and in government employment.

Let the expenditure of borrowed government funds cease today and the country would again be in the depths of depression.

Not only do the developed plans promise no full private employment of the millions now either employed by the government or being in some measure supported by the government, but the logic of the situation forbids such an outcome by any scheme one may conceive.

### The Alternatives

It has been long conceded that a portion of the people with modern machinery can produce all the goods marketable in this country, even if consumption were at full tide. In that case, the alternatives are:

First, a division of the work of production among all the people by making the days unreasonably short. That process would mean, also, the reduction of acreage under the control of the individual farmer to such area as would be merely large enough to produce partial subsistence directly and to furnish the cash through sales to finish the support of the family. That is a poverty program. It also contemplates a nation of piddlers. America, it should be hoped, will never adopt such a scheme. It is also almost certain that it will never again be satisfied with the haphazard scheme which is the author of the anomalous sight of poverty rampant in the midst of superfluity of goods.

The other alternative is to leave the production and distribution of tangible wealth to the number necessary to produce PLENTY, working a reasonable number of hours daily or weekly, and for the rest of the people to be employed by the government in the general betterment of conditions.

Such a program means all the goods we should have under the former scheme and, in addition, the results of the general betterment work of millions.

In fact, it seems reasonable that the fewer necessary, without undue hardships, to produce and distribute all the wealth needed for all the people, the better it would be—the more would be free to give their energies to making a paradise of America.

### Borrowing No Fit Support for Such a Program.

The administration thus far has made appropriations and borrowed funds upon the assumption that the appropriations for relief and public employment are but emergency appropriations. Mr. Roosevelt himself estimated that the government income upon a basis of present levies would be sufficient with the full flow of business to pay back the borrowing within a very few years. But if that full flow of business may not be expected without a full consumption, and if that full consumption cannot arrive without full employment, and if full employment can only come by the government's employing the otherwise idle millions in general betterment work, it is plain that appropriations, perhaps larger ones, must continue and that the emergency appropriations become the ordinary.

The borrowing regime is an emergency measure. But there is no hope, under the present regime or that promised, for a discontinuance of government employment, even if such a discontinuance were desirable. And it is anything but desirable if the production and distribution of wealth may be accomplished by only a portion of the population. Common sense, in that case, demands that the portion unneeded in industry, including every form of production of wealth and its distribution, be employed in general welfare work.

With the emergency program become the ordinary, it is evident that it can no longer depend upon borrowed funds for support. The country in that case must come to a pay-as-you-go basis. The budget must be actually balanced. At present it is considered "balanced" if the income is sufficient to pay the ordinary expenses of the former regime and to meet the payments of interest on all government debts and to pay off any bonds falling due. Nobody has as yet thought of providing for the payment of the huge principals outstanding.

Anyway, borrowing for a permanent program of general welfare work employing, say, 50 per cent of the people would no longer be feasible. A huge annual income would be necessary—sums incomparably greater than any ever collected under previous levies.

### A Division By Three.

Under the old regime, the wealth produced by the co-operation of labor and capital was theoretically divisible between capital and labor. However, it is too well known that middle men, speculators, and every kind of imaginable parasite succeeded in appropriating a goodly share, if not the lion's share, of it.

Under the new regime, if that regime is forced, as it seems it will be, to make permanent the support of a large percentage of the population either by direct relief or by actual employment for the general betterment, the middle men, speculators, and parasites must not be allowed to guzzle up such an immense share of the common wealth but must surrender their place as a wealth absorbent to the government.

### Tithing The Logical Course.

If the resources for the production of the needed wealth of the country shall be intrusted to a portion of the people with the understanding that the rest of the people are to work for the common welfare, it will be only just that the producers of wealth surrender the proper share for the support of the welfare group. It may be recalled that those who remained in camp and guarded the goods during the pursuit and battle shared, alike with the actual conquerors, in the booty obtained.

Let the government start a full tide of consumption by employment at adequate wages of all unemployed people and it will soon be manifest what portion of the people are necessary to produce the goods needed. That determined, it would be known what portion must be actively employed by the government or cared for because of age or infirmity. The percentage determined, the share of the wealth produced which it would be requisite for the government to seize is also determined.

### Sharing of Actual Goods Seems Wiser.

The payment of the portion needed for the welfare work should prove no real hardship. The assumption is that PLENTY has been produced—plenty for ALL. If so, plenty will be left when the welfare group's part is taken for the producers. And plenty is PLENTY.

The curse of the country has been the demand that all exchanges and all payments be made in money, with money as the measuring unit of good. In the case assumed, it would be more expedient for the

government to collect its share as far as possible in goods at the very source and distribute its benefits in goods. A bushel of potatoes in Florida, New Mexico, or Maine means the same thing as a unit of human welfare, but a dollar does not mean the same in all those States. The inequity of the dollar yardstick in the payment of workers should so far as possible be avoided. Moreover, if the government waited till commercial turn-overs should produce adequate cash surpluses to discharge the tithing account, it would never be able to collect its share.

### Plenty of Work.

There is plenty of general welfare work needed to keep millions busy. But as adequate funds should come to be general the demand for new products would so increase that a greater and greater percentage of the workers would have to be drafted for productive work. And by the time every man should be in sight of a cosy home, comfortable furniture, a decent automobile, essential means of recreation and self-improvement, the problem would possibly be to find enough men who could be spared from productive work to do the amount of general welfare work demanded. And thus, after all, the emergency appropriations might disappear. But that event is too far away to justify the expectation that a program of maintaining millions of men in government employ can be financed by borrowings.

In the above, I have looked along the course former developments and activities designate as the logical one to be followed. The contemplation of any other method of maintaining a full production and a full consumption and the benefit of the demanded restoration and general welfare work is to suggest a complete failure of the administration's program thus far and a new program utterly unrelated to conceptions and achievements of the past year and a third. If I see you board a southbound train, I am justified in assuming that you do not intend to go north. When I see you straightway going north, I must decide that you went as far south as you desired or that you have concluded that it is better to go north.

### Wholesale Government Employment a Permanent Policy.

In the case of the government, however, the goal has been set—"no person shall hunger or go cold in America." To stop government employment so long as that goal is not reached is necessarily a disavowal of an intention to attain the goal. And if two-thirds of the people, say, are able to produce all the wealth necessary or marketable in America, it is evident that the other third can be employed only in government work—work for the general welfare of the whole people.

Therefore it is evident that the wholesale employment of people by the government and the consequent expenditure of immense funds is a permanent policy of government, and that the next Congress may understand that it is time to begin to plan to levy taxes upon a basis that has never before been contemplated.

The death of few persons in North Carolina has called forth the regrets called forth by that of Mrs. Chas. G. Rose of Fayetteville. The Fayetteville Observer suggests that the confident faith and undisturbed equanimity of Mrs. Rose in the face of death of whose nearness she was aware was the best sermon preached in Fayetteville in a long time. And The Voice would say that the column which bore that editorial comment, under the title, "There Is No Death to Those With Faith," and another "Russia Educating Itself Back to God," carried two as real sermonettes as I have read in a long-time. I feel disposed to copy one or both.