

# MUST WE TRAVEL THE MOSCOW ROAD?

By Rev. W. L. Clegg, Maxton, N. C.

The following resume of the thought-provoking address of Mr. Kirby Page at Duke University has been in our hands several weeks, but it is still timely. This very week the nomination of Upton Sinclair for governor of California again brings the minds of the people to the contemplation of the matter discussed by Mr. Page, the possibility of securing an adequate distribution of the goods that can be created in so great abundance. Mr. Clegg's resume follows:

I am giving you this week a review of a lecture by Kirby Page delivered at the Institute of International Relations at Duke University. His topic was: "Must We Travel the Moscow Road?"

In order, to arrive at a decent economic order, must we adopt the strategy of Communism. The Communist answer is that you can build a new society only after having torn down the old, and that this must be done by a violent seizure of power. Can we, without a violent revolution, build a society? With all my soul I believe we can.

What is the matter with the present society? Why do we want something new? First of all, because we divide income unequally. The workers do not get enough income to buy back the goods they have produced. In 1923 there were in the United States approximately 70 million adults and 25 million heads of families. Under the income tax law, only those unmarried adults who received incomes in excess of \$1,000 and the heads of families who received more than 2,000 were required to pay income tax. It is a significant fact that only 4 millions or one adult out of seventeen paid an income tax. Remember that this was in a comparatively prosperous year.

A good clue to the economic health of a nation is the rate of interest. It is true that only a month ago the government borrowed money at the rate of one sixteenth of one per cent per year. The reason is that there is more money in certain places than can be invested. Only as much money can be invested as is required to produce the goods that can be sold. If too much is invested, there will be overproduction, and when this happens, industries shut down and men are thrown out of work. Too much money in some places produces want in other places.

A second ill of the present society is that we do not use our resources adequately; there is waste on a colossal scale. At one period during the past year, the United States Steel Corporation, America's greatest steel combine, was producing only one-sixth of its capacity, and industry throughout the country is utilizing less than half its equipment. The reason is that the people can not pay for the products—they haven't the money.

There are two types of efficiency, one of which is technological "on the spot efficiency," such as is seen in the workings of a mine or mill or factory. But if there is this highly developed efficiency, why do industries produce only about 40 per cent of their capacity? The other kind of efficiency is the coordination and correlation of all these technologically efficient plants in the aggregate—the coordination of one industry with others, with the purchasing community that buys the products. At this point we are utterly inefficient, because of an obsession that has gripped us about private property in the means of production and distribution. There is a great waste because the plants are owned privately and operated for private gain, and can be operated only so long as there is profit for the owner, and therefore adequate correlation of industries is impossible. The reason why the mass of our people is near hunger and millions are destitute is that we have the system of private property in this nation.

A third trouble with modern society is that we consume ourselves in struggle, strife, conflict, and warfare. These are unavoidable as long as we maintain the system of private property organized for private gain, and has competition as its channel of operation. People compete for their bread and for sustenance and for life. Consequently there is bitterness, hatred, war and devastation. These are precisely what our present economic order produces, and they will continue as long as we have the system of private property.

The workers organize against the employers, and we have class war. Then the workers and employers unite as citizens and are pitted against the workers and employers of another nation in international war.

Is this the best that we can do? To admit this is to admit our intellectual and moral bankruptcy and that we deserve to perish. However, if we wish to improve our condition, there are certain things that need to be done. First is to transfer ownership of natural resources and the heavy industries from private to public hands. Wherever there is ownership there is power and privilege. There is too much at the top and too little at the bottom. We

need not private but collective ownership, and this is the corner stone on which any successful economic structure must be built. That is not saying that all property must be publicly owned, but only the heavy industries, such as banking and credit, electric power, transportation, communication, minerals and mines, and the chief means of production and distribution. These things must be operated for the use of all the people. The second important step to take is to provide approximate equality of distribution. If a minimum income were to be \$2,000 a year, then the maximum should range from \$5,000 to possibly as high as \$20,000 a year. A third and important thing is to have an adequate motivation for working in a system where private property in the big industries no longer exists and where there is a large degree of equality of distribution. You ask why anybody should bother to work, if he were to get a fairly equal share of the income anyhow? There are nine important reasons why people would work in this type of society. The individual would get a fair income. There would be the possibility of a slight difference in income for the harder worker. There would be safety and security, backed by insurance which would make misfortune fall not on the back of the individual but on the organized society. There would be a sense of responsibility which would make the individual feel his necessity to work. There would be the joy of creativity, though this might not exist in all fields. The worker would enjoy appreciation and praise from his fellow men and meet disapproval and wise punishment when he fails to work. Finally, he would work from a sense of "oughtness," a sense of patriotism given to construction and creativity.

We could have available plenty for everybody. We have resources, skill, brains, men, and heart—the makings of a decent society. But we are held back by inertia, fear, vested interests, and greed. There are three major things that we must do if we would gain this improved society. First, we must educate; change people's minds. Deliverance awaits changed minds. Then we must organize the workers into labor unions, the buyers into co-operative societies, and the voters who believe in the new society, not into the old, but into a national Socialist party. And finally we must run risks and take consequences. We cannot build a new society with timidity. We can not transform a pagan community into the Kingdom of God on earth without sacrifice. Pioneers leave bloody tracks. Although going beyond and ahead may be dangerous, still it is thrilling and exhilarating and joyous. If we want to live fully and abundantly, we must rise above the level of the present society to a new level where the common welfare is the highest aim.

## PRESENT-DAY CITIZENS OF HILLSBORO

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tax supervisor for six years, coming to the position soon after his graduation from the school of commerce at the State University. Like Mr. Claytor, he is a native of Orange. Mr. Ray tells me that Orange has not defaulted upon a cent. Only 18 1-2 per cent of the 1933 levy is still unpaid. The tax rate for 1934 is 78 cents, nine cents lower than last year's. Mr. Ray estimates that he has discovered unlisted property to about the amount of \$20,000 since he came to his position. This is one of the most promising young men I have met in a survey of many counties.

### Veteran Office Holders.

Mr. W. S. Andrews and Mr. A. W. Kenion have become veterans in the Orange court house. The former has served several terms as sheriff and several as register of deeds. He is of the family of the Orange Andrews from which the sheriff of Chatham is sprung. The Andrews store in Chapel Hill was long one of the village's chief marts.

Mr. Kenion has been farmer, teacher, bookkeeper, deputy sheriff, register of deeds, and is finishing up his second term as clerk of the court. He didn't even have any opposition for the nomination this year. I had missed Mr. Kenion on my former visit, and it was a pleasure to have the privilege of meeting him, though a busy court day gave little time for acquaintance.

Assistant to Mr. Kenion for five years has been Mr. E. M. Lynch. He is a native of Guilford county. I remember him very pleasantly from my former visit, and expect to find him on the job or in a better one on my next call. Mr. Andrews has a new assistant, but I regret that I did not record his name and cannot now recall it. I deem his ability to be such that his chief can be spared some day to take such a fishing trip on Black River that I suggested as having possibly more important results than a string of fish. That fine assistant would make a good suc-

cessor if Mr. Andrews should become a farmer in his elderly years.

Sheriff W. T. Sloan is a native of Lee county. He served several years as chief of police at Chapel Hill, and that means that he is broadly known. That session of court kept me from meeting him. He was first elected in 1928.

Mr. C. H. Jones is now the county squire. Orange has no recorder's court. Squire Jones does most of the magisterial work of the county. He came from his farm for a four-year service as register of deeds and found it too pleasant in Hillsboro to return.

Mr. T. E. Sparrow (that is a common name in Orange) was possibly the youngest man to become postmaster of an office of the importance of that at Hillsboro. His father, Mr. T. E. Sparrow, was the Hillsboro postmaster. Upon that gentleman's death, his 22-year old son filled out his term as acting postmaster and was appointed for a term, being succeeded by Mr. Shepperd Strudwick less than two months ago. Mr. Sparrow, unlike many who lose their public positions, lost no time in getting to work. He has a good store in West Hillsboro, and I predict that he will make good. He was born at Chapel Hill where the Sparrows thrive and multiply.

### Our Lieutenant-Governor.

Of course everybody knows that Lieutenant-Governor "Sandy" Graham lives at Hillsboro. That big case in which he was engaged allowed only a few moments for a chat with him. It is not beyond peradventure that Mr. Graham will be a candidate for governor two years hence. But he has another session of the senate to preside over before his term as lieutenant-governor expires and it is very fitting that he is not declaring himself as such, if at all, before that duty has been performed. He is one of the best known and most liked men in the state and, located as he is in the center of the state, has a very broad acquaintance. If "Sandy" does run, somebody will know about it when the race is over.

Mr. Graham's office is a one-story building of stone, which I infer is the very building in which W. W. Holden served his apprenticeship in the printer's



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trade. As stated elsewhere, he lives in one of the historic homes of the old town. There is no man in the state with a richer heritage than North Carolina's lieutenant-governor.

Associated with Mr. Graham in the practice of law is young Bonner D. Sawyer. Of course, a Sawyer must almost necessarily come from down east. This bright young lawyer hails from Pamlico. He graduated at Chapel Hill in 1924 and got his law license the same year, but spent six years in the business office of the University before beginning practice with Mr. Graham in 1930.

### A Pleasant Visit—Going Again.

Having ridden seventy miles that morning after a late start and leaving Hillsboro in time to see a few people in Durham the same day, and then back home, don't be surprised that I am not able to introduce you to more of Hillsboro's good citizens. But I did meet Mr. C. H. Jones, a nephew of our friend George McNeill, of Fayetteville, who holds down a job in one of the cotton mills; also the promising young son of Postmaster Strudwick, who has a summer job with Auditor Ray. Some day we hope to go back and get more broadly acquainted. It was a pleasant trip. I even got to howdy Judge Cramer. These judges are hard to catch for renewals, and when Judge Cranmer asked, "What are you doing here?", I replied, hunting for money—gimme a dollar", I got it.—And his honor was on the bench too. I didn't expect to collect, under the circumstances, but he gave me too good an opening to neglect.

Old Summer has at last taken a vacation of a few days, or at least eased up in its persistent effort to outdo all its forerunners.