

WAR PROFITEER PUBLIC NUISANCE

No Extortion to Be Tolerated, but Liberal Disposition Toward Business Needed.

Shrinkage of Values Would Curtail Capacity to Provide Sinews of War.

"Conscription of Men, Conscription of Money," Analyzed.

By OTTO H. KAHN.

Much is being said about the plausible sounding contention that because a certain portion of the young manhood of the nation has been conscripted, therefore money must also be conscripted. Why, that is the very thing the government has been doing. It has conscripted a portion—a relatively small portion—of the men of the nation. It has conscripted a portion—a large portion—of the incomes of the nation. Capital and business pay more than four-fifths of our total war taxation directly and a large share of the remaining fifth indirectly.

If the government went too far in conscripting men the country would be crippled. If it went too far in conscripting incomes and earnings the country would likewise be crippled.

Results of Conscription of Capital.

I would ask those who would go further and conscript not only incomes, but capital, to answer the riddle, not only in what equitable and practicable manner they would do it, but what the nation would gain by it?

It is true that a few years ago a capital levy was made in Germany, but the percentage of that levy was so small as to actually amount to no more than an additional income tax and that at a time when the regular income tax in Germany was very moderate as measured by the present standards of income taxation.

Only a trifling fraction of a man's property is held in cash. If they conscript a certain percentage of his possessions in stocks and bonds, what would the government do with them?

Keep them? That would not answer its purpose, because the government wants cash, not securities.

Sell them? Who is to buy them when every one's funds would be depleted?

If they conscript a certain percentage of a man's real estate or mine or farm or factory, how is that to be expressed and converted into cash?

Are conscripted assets to be used as a basis for the issue of Federal Reserve bank notes? That would mean gross inflation, with all its attendant evils, dangers and deceptions.

Would they repudiate a percentage of the national debt? Repudiation is no less dishonorable in a people than in an individual, and the penalty for failure to respect the sanctity of obligations is no different.

The Thrifty Would Be Penalized.

The fact is that the government would gain nothing in the process of capital conscription and the country would be thrown into chaos for the time being. The man who has saved would be penalized, he who has wasted would be favored. Thrift and constructive effort, resulting in the needful and fruitifying accumulation of capital, would be arrested and lastingly discouraged.

I can understand the crude notion of the man who would divide all possessions equally. There would be mighty little coming to any one by such distribution, and it is, of course, an utterly impossible thing to do, but it is an understandable notion. But by the confiscation of capital for government use neither the government nor any individual would be benefited.

A vigorously progressive income tax is both economically and socially sound. A capital tax is wholly unsound and economically destructive.

It may nevertheless become necessary in the case of some of the belligerent countries to resort to this expedient, but I can conceive of no situation likely to arise which would make it necessary or advisable in this country.

More than ever would such a tax be harmful in times of war and post-bellum reconstruction, when beyond almost all other things it is essential to stimulate production and promote thrift, and when everything which tends to have the opposite effect should be rigorously rejected as detrimental to the nation's strength and well-being.

There is an astonishing lot of hazy thinking on the subject of the uses of capital in the hands of its owners.

The rich man can spend only a relatively small sum of money unproductively or selfishly. The money that it is in his power actually to waste is exceedingly limited. The bulk of what he has must be spent and used for productive purposes, just as would be the case if it were spent by the government, with this difference, however, that, generally speaking, the individual is more painstaking and discriminating in the use of his funds and at the same time bolder, more imaginative, enterprising and constructive than the government with its necessarily bureaucratic and routine regime possibly could be. Money in the hands of the individual is continuously and feverishly on the search for opportunities—i. e., for creative and productive use. In the hands of the government it is apt to lose a good deal of its fruitifying energy and ceaseless striving and to sink instead into placid and somnolent repose.

There need not be and there should not be any conflict between profits and patriotism. I am utterly opposed to those who would utilize their country's war as a means to enrich themselves. The "war profiteer," as the term is generally understood, is a public nuisance and an ignominy. Extortionate profits must not be tolerated, but, on the other hand, there should be a reasonably liberal disposition toward business and a willingness to see it make substantial earnings.

For, taxation presupposes earnings. Our credit structure is based upon values, and values are largely determined by earnings. Shrinkage of values necessarily affects our capacity to provide the government with the sinews of war.

The Conscription of Men.

Reverting now to the subject of the conscription of men, I know I speak the sentiment of all those beyond the years of young manhood when I say that there is not one of us worthy of the name of a man who would not willingly go to fight if the country needed or wanted us to fight. But the country does not want or call its entire manhood to fight. It does not even call anywhere near its entire young manhood. It has called or intends to call in the immediate future perhaps 25 per cent. of its men between twenty and thirty years of age, which means probably about 4 per cent. of its total male population of all ages. But it has called from incomes, business profits and other imposts falling principally on the well to do, approximately ninety per cent. of our war taxation, not to mention the contributions to the Red Cross, the Y. M. C. A. and other war relief activities.

Let me add in passing that the children of the well to do have been taken for the war in proportionately greater numbers than the children of the poor, because those young men who are needed at home to support dependents or to maintain essential war industries are exempted from the draft.

Our Laws Favor Sons of the Poor.

The draft exemption regulations discriminate not, as in former wars, in favor of the rich man's son, but in favor of the poor woman's son.

I realize but too well that the burden of the abnormally high cost of living, caused largely by the war, weighs heavily indeed upon wage earners and still more upon men and women with moderate salaries. I yield to no one in my desire to see everything done that is practicable to have that burden lightened. But excessive taxation on capital will not accomplish that; on the contrary, it will tend to intensify the trouble.

Taxation must be sound and wise and scientific and cannot be laid in a haphazard way or on impulse or according to considerations of politics, otherwise the whole country will suffer. History has shown over and over again that the laws of economics cannot be defied with impunity and that the resulting penalty falls upon all sections and classes.

The question of the individual is not the one that counts. The question is not what sacrifices capital should and would be willing to bear if called upon, but what taxes it is to the public advantage to impose.

I do not say all this to plead for a reduction of the taxation on wealth or in order to urge that no additional taxes be imposed on wealth if need be. There is no limit to the burden which in time of stress and strain those must be willing to bear who can afford it except only that limit which is imposed by the consideration that taxation must not reach a point where the business activity of the country becomes crippled and its economic equilibrium is thrown out of gear, because that would harm every element of the commonwealth and diminish the war-making capacity of the nation.

POTASH INDUSTRY KEEPS ADVANCING

New Companies Are Being Formed For Development of Lakes Which Have Been Lying Idle.

Interest in the potash industry of western Nebraska continues to increase in spite of the fact that a year ago many people were of the impression that the limit had been reached in this field and that all of the available deposits were being worked at that time. Continued testing of lakes and lake beds as well as of dry deposits has unearthed excellent deposits which were passed over in the early days of the industry in this section. New reduction plants are being erected to work lakes which at first were thought to be unprofitable. Within a year the output of the western Nebraska fields near Alliance will be probably trebled.

At Antioch the American and Nebraska reduction plants are going full blast. The American plant has recently added new equipment and increased its output. The Nebraska, which has been operating only one unit, has nearly completed the installation of its second unit. This will double its output of potash salts.

The Alliance plant, financed by Alliance capital, will be operated under the direction of J. G. Dole of this city who accepts the position of superintendent, resigning as master mechanic of the Burlington railroad shops at Alliance. This plant is nearly completed and will soon be operating. It will pump brine first from the Sturgeon lake, lying southeast of Alliance.

The National reduction plant is being rapidly constructed and before long will be taking brine from the lakes on the Beck ranch, south and east of Antioch. Messrs. Haines and O'Brien, who head this company, are installing some new and unique machinery including some boilers of the marine type which have been pronounced as being very successful. It is reported that the new United States plant will be erected directly north of the National plant. This plant will take brine from the lakes on the Everett ranch, where it is reported that some very rich finds have recently been made by thorough testing of the lakes.

The new company organized last week—the Antioch reduction plant, will probably be erected in the vicinity of the National and United States plants. This plant will take brines from the south district.

Chamberlain's Cough Remedy a Favorite for Colds.

J. L. Easley, Macon, Ill., in speaking of Chamberlain's Cough Remedy says, "During the past fifteen years it has been my sister's favorite medicine for colds on the lungs. I myself have taken it a number of times when suffering with a cold and it always relieved me promptly."



The Pirate.

"—Sh! What would happen to me if I were your kid? Well, if you're not acquainted with Calumet Baking Powder you don't know what a good excuse I have. I Can't Help Helping Myself—they're so good! Good for me too, because Calumet Baking Powder is wholesome and easily digested. Millions of mothers use

CALUMET BAKING POWDER

because of its purity—because it always gives best results and is economical in cost and use.

Calumet contains only such ingredients as have been approved officially by the U. S. Food Authorities.

You save when you buy it. You save when you use it.

HIGHEST QUALITY AWARDS

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The Western plant is proceeding very rapidly, much of the steel work being already in place. This company is financed by Lincoln capital. The plant will be of steel and brick construction and will, according to the plans, be a refinery as well as a reduction plant. This plant will take brines from lakes both north and south of Antioch. It is reported that it will have a capacity of about 1200 tons of water per day for reduction purposes. Prof. Haldane, formerly of the Colorado School of Mines, will be superintendent of the plant.

Organization of the company to operate the Peterson lakes southeast of Alliance is proceeding rapidly. This company will include as members the Peterson family and Scottsbluff and Bridgeport citizens. A meeting of the organizers was held Monday afternoon at Scottsbluff.

Indications point to the erection of a large number of small plants throughout the district this summer on small lakes. Plants now operating of this nature are the Robbins and Murray plants south of Antioch. The small plant on the Wilson ranch is being rapidly pushed to completion and should be operating before long. Material has been ordered for the fifteen ton plant to be erected at Birdsell, seven miles east of Alliance. This plant will pump brine through small pipe lines to its location on the railroad.

The original potash plant at Hoff-

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KILLS PAIN

land, the first of all and the largest, continues to turn out immense quantities of potash salts at an astounding rate. The Potash Reduction methods for the saving of time and money and the increasing of the output. A new drying process has recently been installed for the preparing of salts for the refinery which this company is now operating in Omaha. The new set of five monster steam boilers, recently installed at Hoffland, has greatly increased the capacity of this plant.

The Hord Plant at Lakeside has recently purchased a large amount of new pipe line and it is reported that it will run several miles of new lines both north and south of the plant. This plant has steadily turned out a good quantity of potash salts.

OPEN NOSTRILS! END A COLD OR CATARRH

How To Get Relief When Head and Nose are Stuffed Up.

Count fifty! Your cold in head or catarrh disappears. Your clogged nostrils will open, the air passages of your head will clear and you can breathe freely. No more snuffling, hawking, mucous discharge, dryness or headache; no struggling for breath at night.

Get a small bottle of Ely's Cream Balm from your druggist and apply a little of this fragrant antiseptic cream in your nostrils. It penetrates through every air passage of the head, soothing and healing the swollen or inflamed mucous membrane, giving you instant relief. Head colds and catarrh yield like magic. Don't stay stuffed-up and miserable. Relief is sure.

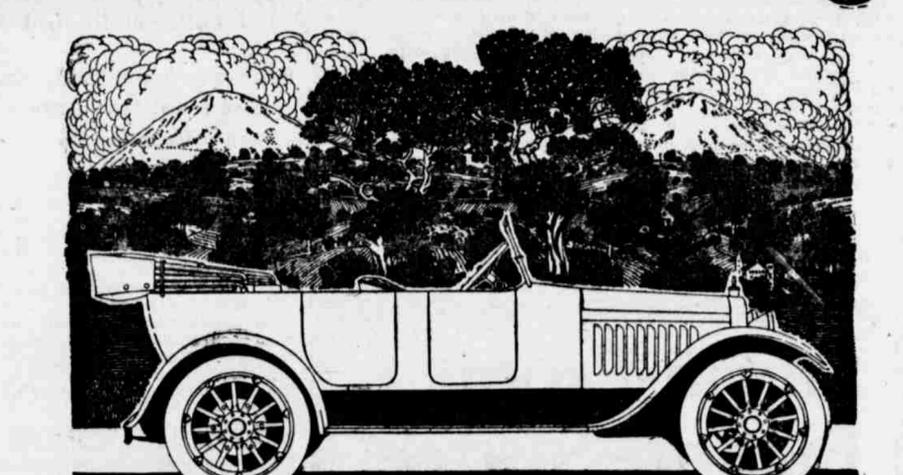
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Super-Deputy Hats represent the spirit of the hour and will do their bit handsomely. They are right in shape—right in quality and right in the favor of men of the middle west.

An early inspection of the Super-Deputy new spring shapes will be of interest to all our patrons.

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In the great Chalmers engine so very little in the way of unused or unburned gas comes out of the exhaust as to be almost negligible. The gas is used up—all of it—in the Chalmers.

The moment it passes from the throat of the carburetor it strikes the now noted "Hot-Spot" where it is heated and "cracked-up" and then rushed on to the combustion chambers via the "Ram's-Horn" Manifold.

When the spark touches it off there is translated a power such as a gas engine has never known; all the brute force imaginable, yet tamed down into a softness that is as smooth as deep water.

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