

\$100,000,000 Moore-Sponsored Bond Swindle Throws Its Shadow on Vice President Curtis

By Marcet Haldeman-Julius

The oil scandal of the Harding administration is likely to be thrown into the shade by a gigantic bond racket which has flourished viciously and brazenly under the capitalistic regime of Hooverism. Investigations of it are now being conducted in various cities by the United States Department of Justice. These investigations, which come after a long and conspicuous delay, reveal a far-extended, unscrupulously operated scheme, running into the one hundred million dollar graft figure. The scheme is based on selling bonds and, in case after case, regaining by fraud and chicanery the property represented by the bonds sold to a trusting multitude of small investors. The tens of thousands of victims are helpless in the face of crookedness backed by the powerful machinery of capitalistic piracy.

The gigantic theft has been carried on in the name of the American Bond and Mortgage Company with headquarters in Chicago and its subsidiary company, The Long Acre Engineering and Construction Company of New York. William J. Moore, the head of the American Bond and Mortgage Company, and his son Charles, head an infamous ring of swindlers who boast the friendship of senators, of representatives, of Cabinet members and —of the Vice-President of the United States, Charles Curtis. The men in this ring have become peculiarly adept in selling bond issues on real estate promotion schemes involving hotels and apartment houses which later, through a systematic juggling of holding corporations and trusteeships, they manage dishonestly to manipulate into their own hands. Among these hotels is the Mayflower hotel in Washington, D. C., where Curtis lives in an eleven-room suite for which he pays the astonishingly small and suspicion-provoking amount of—\$5.35 a day!

Vice President Gets \$144.65 Graft Per Day

He pays \$5.35 a day for a suite for which Harry F. Sinclair paid \$150 per day during his trial for contempt of the United States Senate! Why is this absurdly cut rate given to the Vice-President of the United States by the hotel magnate who is the leading man of this marauding band of modern high-powered brigands? Possible answers come to one's mind:

Is it because the honorable Mr. Curtis, as senator and while occupying the dignified office that he now holds, has rendered valuable personal and political aid to these bond grafters of which William J. Moore and his sons in control of this Mayflower hotel are the heads?

Is the rumored disinclination of Curtis to run again for Vice-President and presumably his wish to become again United States Senator from Kansas (where "Charlie" Curtis can do no wrong) animated in some part or in chief part by this impending scandal of startling national proportions?

For more, much more, than the loss of most of the savings of the investors in the Moore-sponsored bond issues is involved in this scandal which throws its shadow on even the Vice-President of the United States! It has a dark and sinister side. Suicides—and perhaps even the strange and as yet unsolved disappearance of former Supreme Court Justice Joseph Force Crater—have been the direct or indirect result of the activities of these racketeering friends of Curtis who entertain him with such strange generosity at a thirtieth of their regular rate while they greedily snatch the savings of more than 50,000 investors and the interest on almost \$100,000,000 of bonds sold by the American Bond and Mortgage Company in default. But, although the first complaint against the Moore ring was made to the Department of Justice more than four years ago, the government has been curiously silent. It has made no effort to check these disgraceful operations that have involved millions of dollars in loot, that have left death and ruin in their wake and that have brought losses to all who have been inveigled into the net of these plundering bandits. It is only within the last six months that official investigations have been begun. The ugly reports of the American Bond and Mortgage Company's depredations grew too numerous and too loud to be totally ignored, no matter how influential its friends.

The theater on which this hotel-wrecking-property-grabbing-ring has staged its shady transactions has been wide. It has reached from Maine to Florida. The scenery has shifted often but the grim drama has been practically the same whether it has centered around the \$5,000,000 White Hall Hotel in Palm Beach, the \$5,000,000 Longwood Towers in Brookline, Mass., the \$3,000,000 Mayfair Hotel at Philadelphia, the \$3,000,000 Hudson Towers (part hotel, part hospital) at 72nd and West End Avenue in New York City or the \$15,000,000 Park Central Hotel at 55th Street and 7th Avenue, also in New York City. In each of these cases—to mention only a few—the original owners or bond holders were left to hold the sack while Moore and his gang walked off the richer by a valuable property.

Did Curtis Protect this Gang of Financial Pirates?

One of the members of this slippery bunch is the notorious ex-convict, Al Gross, to whom Curtis is indebted for valuable support at a critical moment. In the 1928 pre-convention campaign Gross was active in helping Matthew Q. Glazer manage the Curtis-for-President-Club, with headquarters at the Mayflower Hotel. Gross was one of Curtis' most persistent and enthusiastic boosters. Inevitably the question arises in one's mind:

Has Curtis shown his gratitude by helping to spread the cloak of silence over this plundering gang while unmolested they went on their terrible, tragedy-trailing way?

For the Libby Hotel swindle drips with tragic implications. Many of New York's East siders invested in it and when the very American Bond and Mortgage Company, which had induced them to put their savings in it, foreclosed a \$1,500,000 mortgage on this hotel, these people—more than 3,000 of them—lost everything. They lost while Mary Lyons, a stenographer in the office of Martin Lippman, the attorney for the American Bond and Mortgage Company, made a mysterious profit of \$1,000,000.

Joseph F. Crater became its receiver and—disappeared never to be seen or heard from again. It is said that Al Gross, who so conspicuously

aided Curtis in the last campaign, had made threats against Crater, who had cost him (Gross) a cool million by a decision he had rendered.

"I'll ruin him if it's the last act of my life," is what Gross is reported to have said and has never publicly denied.

When Mrs. Crater was going through her husband's papers, by this time a Supreme Court Justice, she found this memorandum:

"Libby Hotel—There will be a very large sum due me for service when the city pays the \$2,350,000 in condemnation. Martin Lippman will attend to it. Keep in touch with him."

Lippman, who has been Moore's representative in many of these scandalous transactions, has declared that there was no foundation for this statement of Crater's; that his fee was to have been only about \$10,000. But it was pointed out later that there had been another occasion on which Crater had been involved in condemnation proceedings in real estate property in which the American Bond and Mortgage Company was deeply interested.

For one of the favorite methods of this cheating gang, so friendly and so suspiciously generous with Vice-President Curtis, has been to deal in mortgages on property about to be condemned. It is obvious what easy pickings this has meant for their adroit light fingers.

What Does Pres. Hoover Think of This Scandal?

One wonders what Herbert Hoover thinks of it all. Certainly, in view of his own record as a promoter of shady mining stock, one is justified in suspecting him of sympathizing with this kind of racket. The bald fact is that the sucker traps of these friends of the Vice-President of the United States are startlingly like the sucker traps of the President of the United States before he assumed that office. The Moore gang bait their traps for the unwary with the mortgage bonds of swanky hotels and million-dollar apartment houses which they have their subsidiary company build and many of which never pay. Herbert Hoover baited his traps with phony mining stock. He, too, used to sponsor a concern, squeeze it, kiss it good-bye, and pocket the profits. That's how he became a millionaire.

Just how many government officials and exactly who among them have been getting rake-offs from these crafty deals of this \$100,000,000 racketeering gang is not yet known. But the fact that this band of pirates has been allowed to go unassailed so long by the federal government tells its own disgraceful story of quiet, influential official pressure brought to bear at the right place and the right moment—whenever the clamor for an investigation has become too insistent.

The independent bondholders of the \$5,000,000 White Hall Hotel at Palm Beach raised more than a clamor. They brought suit before Federal Judge Halsted L. Ritter and exposed all the details of the Moore gang's crookedness in connection with that hotel, showing how the Longacre Construction Company, the subsidiary of the American Bond and Mortgage Company, of which George Thomas and Robert Beck are the leading spirits, was given the contract for building the hotel on a cost-plus basis; and how Moore's sons, Charles, Kenneth and Harold, acting as trustees for mortgage bond holders, juggled the property into their own hands, wrecking all but the Moore interests. These independent bond holders explicitly charged:

"A fraudulent scheme, collusion, and conspiracy of the trustees with William J. Moore and the American Bond and Mortgage Company, through which it was desired to obtain control of the hotel and its income."

For once these million-dollar thieves were frightened into dropping some of their swag. They offered to pay the independent bond holders, represented by S. L. Rankin of Palm Beach, one hundred cents on the dollar in cash if the charges of fraud and collusion were dismissed. On this basis an agreement was reached and the profitable White Hall Hotel property remained in the Moore gang's hands.

The complaints after the \$3,000,000 Mayfair Hotel in Philadelphia had been juggled back into the hands of Curtis' crafty friends brought from a Pennsylvania judge the severest censure of the Moores. In the judge's statement, made from the bench, he gave it as his opinion that they should never be permitted to enter and do business in Pennsylvania.

Why Does Curtis Enjoy the Favors of Crooks?

Yet Curtis, Vice-President of the United States (and ex-officio President of the Senate), who most certainly is well aware of these facts, complacently remains at the Mayflower Hotel where—to put the most charitable and unlikely interpretation on the strangely low rates he pays—he is the honored guest of these dishonorable hosts.

Why should the Vice-President of the United States accept a gift of practically \$145 a day from a ring of crooks? As the days march by this runs into a princely sum. To the average person this cannot be other than an accusation. Is it a bribe for protection? Does it mean that Curtis is a part of the actual ring and this is one way of paying part of his share of the rake-off? These questions should be answered.

This \$10,000,000 hotel, the Mayflower, in Washington, D. C., is now the Moores' own headquarters. It represents another one of their transactions which has been steeped in tragedy. For Senator Frank B. Brandegee's losses connected with this property caused him to commit suicide. And when shortly after the manipulations which put the Mayflower into the Moore ring's hands, its first owner, Allen E. Walker, threatened to expose and prosecute them—as the Florida independent bond holder did—and Walker suddenly died! By those in a position to know the facts, his death is considered, to put it conservatively, mysterious.

Brandegee's suicide is not the only one definitely known to have resulted from the operations of these financial thugs. When Augustus Leverich, the founder of the \$5,000,000 Leverich Towers, in Brooklyn, found himself wiped out by the Moore ring he, too, killed himself.

But some of the bond holders of Leverich Towers are made of sterner stuff. Through the law firm of Donovan and Raichle, they have started proceedings in Federal Court to prevent the sale of this \$5,000,000 property for \$860,000.

An "independent protective committee" has been formed to salvage what they can for the Moore ring's luckless victims. They have issued

a circular letter to the bond holders of the American Bond and Mortgage Company. Part of this circular reads:

"After carefully studying the situation, the committee has concluded that certain practices of the American Bond and Mortgage Company in connection with the promotion, sale and subsequent disastrous history of many of the bond issues are open to criticism and need to be investigated. In many instances it is believed that these practices are partly responsible for losses with which holders of defaulted bonds are now confronted."

"The committee is of the opinion that until these practices have been investigated thoroughly and the responsibility either of the American Bond and Mortgage Co. or of its former officers, have been determined, no plan of reorganization can be expected that will be at all satisfactory and fair to the bondholders. For this reason, certain of the plans of reorganization that have already been promulgated by the Chicago committee are opposed through legal action by the Independent Committee."

At last the fat is in the fire!

Representative Fiorello H. LaGuardia has made public a letter received by him from Assistant Attorney General Nugent Dodds, acting head of the Criminal Investigation Division of the Department of Justice. It is dated Washington, D. C., October 20, 1930, and reads:

"Replying to your letter of the 16th instant, concerning the American Bond and Mortgage Company, I beg to advise that an investigation of the affairs of this company has been under way for more than two months. Accountants of the Bureau of Investigation personally attended a hearing on the matter of appointment of a receiver, at Augusta, Maine, about six weeks ago; and since that time we have been collecting information with the assistance of postoffice inspectors."

This investigation is now rapidly coming to a head and it is understood that Assistant Attorney General Dodds has called a conference of legal talent from the different cities where the Moore ring's fraudulent operations have been projected.

Meanwhile, as United States Attorney George G. Medalie, in New York is announcing that he was preparing to have his chief assistant, Thomas E. Dewey, leave New York on April 21 to join this conference, Boston lawyers were having a little conference all their own.

Boston "Contributes" \$20,000,000

For Boston was a happy hunting ground for these really bandits. That city received them with joyous abandon, liked the personalities of Charles, Harold and Kenneth Moore and liked George Thomas and Robert Beck, of the Longacre Engineering and Construction Company which it was the practice of the American Bond and Mortgage Company to recommend for its construction ventures. They were jolly good fellows, good mixers, who dressed well, knew how to give a good time and how to enjoy one. Boston boosters surrendered enthusiastically to their personalities, listened to the Moore-Thomas-Beck rainbow promises, formally presented them, through their Mayor James M. Curley, with the golden key to the city and—by purchasing securities for hotels and apartment houses which these guests planned—poured some \$20,000,000 into their itching palms. In other words these jolly, but shrewdly calculating racketeers, made one grand "hit" with the people they were about to rob.

For there was method in their fun. They are, evidently, practical psychologists who understand how difficult it is for the average man to mistrust those with whom he has dined well, been more or less drunk and made whoopee in general. He remembers the good times shared in common and his heart warms to his "friends" whom he finds it easier to believe than to doubt.

Besides, the Moores, Thomas and Beck seem to have made their whoopee on a grand scale. They were careful to see to it that beautiful girls, experienced in giving pleasure to politicians jaded with cares of state and to tired but wealthy business men, came down from New York to join and glorify the parties in Boston, in Washington or wherever they happened to be held. These parties and the sense of well being, of expansiveness, of optimism which they induced made new projects look so much more inviting, or acted as an anesthetic to those victims whose suspicions were beginning to be aroused. Therefore the bigger the venture to be launched, the larger the party; the more impressive the structure to be sold, the more prolonged the revels. The beautiful girls made the work of the high-powered salesman in the party so much easier and so much more effective. As James Henderson, of Boston, who is credited with introducing the Moores to that city, is reported as saying, it was "damn good salesmanship."

Christian Statesmen Like Whoopee!

It was salesmanship that has been carried on often at one time or another, in the sumptuous suite that Vice-President Curtis now occupies and many have been the officials and members of Congress (as well as visiting officials) who have participated in the torrid parties.

Of course, no one with a civilized point of view grudges any of these lords of creation a moment of relaxation. It is strictly a matter for each one's own personal judgment. But, to say the least, their flagrant hypocrisy has a humorous aspect. Officially, most of these worthy gentlemen believe in Prohibition; in the impudent laws which attempt to regulate the sex conduct of grown men and women; and many even (always officially, remember) approve of the Blue Laws which make it difficult in such states as Kansas to have movies on Sundays. One gets a mental picture of quiet, abstemious, church-going, faithful husbands who in true Biblical fashion abhor all that is "evil" and cleave to that which is "good." Contrast this fiction with the facts! Why do they want to appear as pigs when they are so warmly human?

The answer is not far to seek: political expediency, real or imagined. It is the cause of startlingly incongruous alliances and endless shifty deals between imposingly "respectable" politicians and all sort of racketeers. It is taken for granted by everyone concerned that special privileges and political favors will be given in return for political support—privileges and

favors which in turn are sometimes repaid by the chance "to get in on the ground floor" of this or that business.

There is little question, for instance, that Curtis' activities in behalf of the Spa Chemical Company in New York, which had been refused a permit for alcohol, were motivated by his wish to oblige his staunch supporter Matthew Quay Glaser, an ex-saloon man and Cincinnati politician, who for reasons of his own bestirred himself to enlist Curtis' aid for this company. Although he is a well-known "dry," Curtis kept at the matter

until the Spa Chemical Company received their permit. When this same company asked for permission to increase the amount of alcohol and was refused, Curtis again swung into action. A month later government agents caught this company illegally removing from its plant a truck load of the alcohol for which it was indebted to the good offices of "Dry" Curtis from "Dry" Kansas. It is a typical example of the lack of mental integrity, the shiftiness of those long in the political racket.

How far has this attitude led Charlie Curtis? How deeply has it involved him with the Moore Bond ring?

Representative La Guardia has been active in an effort to have these swindlers thoroughly investigated. Senator Blaine, of Wisconsin, in a report accompanying Senate Resolution 58, severely criticized and analyzed the methods the ring used in financing the Mayflower Hotel. Yet Curtis has continued to accept this hospitality of these men whose schemes he well knows have been as brazen as they have been unscrupulous. He has continued to ally himself, at least by inference, with these adepts in fraud and graft who have stolen millions from the people Curtis as Vice-President of the United States is sworn to serve and protect.

SMALLER BANK PROFITS BUT LARGER DIVIDENDS

Although hundreds of thousands of depositors lost heavily through bank failures in the United States in 1930, there was a remarkably large distribution of dividends among the stockholders of the one hundred biggest banks in the country. These banks made a record in dividends of 72.1 of the total earnings, comparing with dividends of 56.9 percent in 1929 and 58.2 percent in 1928. This amazing record in dividends was made in spite of the fact that profits were 17.1 percent less than in 1929.

The profit decrease with a remarkable dividend increase is explained by the merging of banks into larger organizations. There were 192 such mergers in 1930—large mergers of important banking institutions.

This concentration of wealth means a financial economy that redounds, not indeed to the benefit of the general run of depositors, but to the benefit of those owning stock in the merged banks. Whether in the form of profits or dividends, the significant thing is that the banks prosper at the expense of the masses. When they are more carefully managed as the result of mergers, stockholders and not depositors reap the advantage.

No matter how well the banks are run from the viewpoint of the owners, they are inevitably ill run from the viewpoint of the common people. This is of course more dramatically and disastrously revealed in the case of bank failures—1,900 such failures being of record in 1930. Mismanagement of banks is one of the outstanding scandals of capitalism in America; but there is not much hope in better management for private ends, as this merely confirms the control of banking in the hands of fewer owners, who serve their own interests rather than the public interests.

The lesson of bank mergers, as of mergers in other lines of capitalistic activity, is that the wealth of the country and consequently the real rulership of the country is being grouped autocratically into a less number of powerful owners. It means that the common people are more and more helpless in the face of plutocratic combination and domination. Money rules—or, to be more exact, a minority of moneyed men rule the country.

What escape is possible? It is foolishly naive to imagine that this rule by a minority will be wise or benevolent or even approximately fair in its aims and practices. The owners of industry and the financial plutocrats will run things for their own selfish ends; and obviously, as this ownership becomes more concentrated, the result is that a smaller and smaller minority is being loaded with prosperity and power to the injury of the great majority.

Public banking must come as one necessary aspect of the socialization of industry. We are not dogmatic about it—but frankly we can see no other escape from the growing evils attendant upon the concentration of wealth and control in a few private hands. Society must protect itself; and the only way that we can see is for society to own and control the great necessary machinery for the safe functioning and freedom and prosperity of social life.

RUSSIA proposes to buy machinery from Canada and to pay in gold and coal. Capitalists who are interested in factories producing machinery declare that the arrangement would be highly beneficial—for the country of course. Capitalists who own coal mines say that the arrangement would be very detrimental—to the country of course. Look carefully, friends, and see if you can find the economic motives represented in this difference of opinions.

THE GREAT majority of workers are not idle from choice. They are willing to work. They are eager to work. They are being made to suffer extremely for conditions that are in no sense their fault; and then this there can be no greater injustice.

In the World of Books

Weekly Reviews and Other
Literary Ruminations
Isaac Goldberg

A NEW ISM

From Claude Kendall, publisher of New York City, comes a volume by Charles Fort called by the monosyllable "Lo!" Mr. Fort, we learn, has also written "The Book of the Damned." Around the iconoclastic figure of Mr. Fort has gathered a society of the elect, which seeks to erect the object of its admiration into a sort of cult. Perhaps this is a generous attempt to advertise a meritorious fellow author into substantial sales. If so, it is as good a racket as any other. Among the eminent of the Fortean Society are such disparate personalities as Booth Tarkington, Ben De Casseres (see his rhapsody in "The Thinker" for April, entitled "The Fortean Fantasy"), Harry Elmer Barnes, Theodore Dreiser, John Cowper Powys and Ben Hecht.

Yet not even this array could, with the assistance of Burton Rascoe in the literary columns, get much of a rise out of me. In fact, their influence served as a boomerang. One opens such a book with rather high expectations; one closes it with a feeling of disillusionment. In sober fact, Fort had better fight shy of the Forteans. Friends may sometimes do worse by one than one's enemies. What Fort needs at this moment, I should say, is some stiff opposition. He himself is a free lance in the field of thought, as wary of scientific dogmatism as of the more ancient dogmatism called theological. He delights in compiling data that mocks at science. He tends to reestablish the autonomy of intuition. This is always a dangerous process. The very word intuition takes its color from its age. One's intuition after being subjected to the course of modern science—however dogmatic that may be—is a different entity from what it was before such a discipline.

We must be careful to distinguish between science and the individual scientist. It is not so important to distinguish between theology and the individual theologian. Theology, in its very premises, reeks of fantasy and falsehood. Science, on the other hand, stands as an eternal corrective of the illiberal adherent who may, being human, overstep the bounds of scientific humility.

I have my doubts—though I am something of an intuitionist myself—about any ism that, in order to establish itself, must—as De Casseres does—ridicule Einstein the scientist. It saddens me slightly to find that Fort's neo-skepticism may be misemployed as a spring-board whence to leap into the darkness of spiritualism and other symptoms of mental disintegration. The true scientist is always skeptical even about science. One of the most lovable traits of Einstein is a self-doubt that may easily be misinterpreted as shakiness.

On the whole, then, I shall not apply for membership in the Fortean Society. Being cursed with a liberal dose of skepticism I shall even step back onto the side lines and watch what happens to this advertising, adulatory group. If science cannot solve the supposed mysteries that Mr. Fort has catalogued, certainly intuition can offer no help. Intuition is largely knowledge that has been integrated unconsciously. It is a wonderful land for artists and poets; it has its place even in the laboratory, but never as ruler. It works best in harness with sound, sober, factual knowledge. It is a beautiful companion but a dangerous master, serving as excuse for most fanciful folly.

If I recommend "Lo!" it is as a test of your own values, scientific and intuitional. I cannot pretend that the book has at all shaken me. It is, by the way, beautifully printed, and imaginatively illustrated by Alexander King. It sells for \$2.50 and should

give you that amount of entertainment.

OUR NATIONAL MUSIC

From Thomas Y. Crowell's New York, comes an imposing volume entitled "Our American Music" by John Tasker Howard. It runs to 713 pages, has a battery of appendices, is very generous with illustrations and is heavily documented. Histories of the national music, as those of you may testify who have had to consult them, are not the most exciting sort of reading. Many of them, in fact, are as dull as the writing that they chronicle. I am getting a little tired of hearing that we are a very young nation and that people should really not expect too much of us in the way of musical composition. I am also definitely weary of that moralistic attitude which suspects lively music, no matter how good, of being unworthy, while pompous academicism somehow achieves esthetic status because of its very correctness and dreariness. We have at last begun to break new paths in music and it is high time that our historians caught up with our creators.

Mr. Howard is a generous host to the numerous talents that he has assembled. It may as well be said at once that his critical acumen falls below his industriousness. His book will discover its real value as a work of biographical and documentary reference. One cannot suppress a smile to read with what deference he treats so trite a tune as "The Rosary." My own opinion is that the denizens of Tin Pan Alley have turned out dozens of tunes superior to this combination of piety and molasses. This is but a single instance of Mr. Howard's willingness to consider, and to award disproportionate emphasis to, material essentially unworthy. He seems to be unduly impressed by prize compositions, and by opus numbers.

On the other hand, we should not deny him our gratitude for making his chronicle lively. He is not a stylist; his writing is too frequently journalistic and pedestrian. Nevertheless, the book brings the story of our American music a stage further and offers to the student a solid basis upon which to build his own investigations.

TWO RECONSTRUCTIONS

Samson and Delilah. By Felix Salten. New York. Simon & Schuster. \$2.50.

The Forest Ship. By Arnold Hollriegel. New York. The Viking Press. \$2.50.

Each of these tales in kind has an interest for readers who appreciate style as well as subject matter. The first retells the tale of the world's strongest man and the world's wildest woman, in an originality of both matter and manner. The second manages to interweave the story of the discovery of the Amazon with a tale of contemporary travel. It is an injustice to a story with sufficient inherent merit to insinuate comparison with Don Quixote. Hollriegel's narrative is slow-moving but cumulatively attractive. Salten's reconstruction of the biblical tale is done in the suave style that was so happily introduced to American readers with his animal tale, "Bambi."

WOULD NATIONALIZE THE LONDON TRAFFIC SYSTEMS

Another forecast of victory for the principle of public ownership is seen in the news that the English government plans to nationalize all the subway, street railway and bus lines in the city of London. The success of the measure, while not final, seems assured by the fact that the MacDonald Labor government is determined upon the move and has strong support from Liberal members of Parliament. Naturally the idea is opposed by the Conservatives; and after passing the House of Commons, where it has carried on its second reading, it must run the gauntlet in the House of Lords. The Commons can make a bill into law by passing it three times over the objection of the Lords.

The various traffic lines of London, which would be combined into

one system by the act of nationalization, carry four billion passengers a year and their value is estimated at 650 million dollars. The inefficiency and waste of private operation is indicated by the fact that these traffic lines are now run by nearly one hundred different companies.

Under the plan of national ownership, the traffic system would be managed by a board of five men appointed by the minister of transport. The government would operate the system strictly on a cost basis, without profit, as a public service.

Conservatives with private business interests would not, it seems, have a very convincing effect upon the majority of London citizens when they condemn this enlightened measure as socialist.

If the London traffic lines are united in one system, as planned, they will constitute the largest system of the kind in the world—run by the government for the benefit of the people.

ATHEIST CANNOT BE BARRED

Alabama Passes Bill Admitting Non-believer as Witness

From the Arkansas Gazette.

The court of appeals of Alabama reversed a lower court's verdict because the dying statement of a professed atheist had been admitted as testimony at the trial. This decision led to the simultaneous introduction in the state senate and house of bills to validate the testimony of such witnesses. Without using the word "atheist," both measures explicitly provide that there shall be no exclusion of any witness or his testimony, or of any dying declaration of any deceased person, on the ground of disbelief in future reward or punishment after death, or of religious belief or disbelief of any nature.

The author of one of these bills said in comment that in his opinion the validity of testimony, so far as the witness' religion is concerned, should be determined entirely by the jury. He also expressed a doubt whether religious scruples necessarily determine the verity of testimony.

The constitution of Arkansas makes a person "who denies the being of a God" incompetent to testify as a witness in any Arkansas court, and further forbids any such person to hold any office in the civil departments of the government.

It is obvious that the disability to bear witness in court which the constitution or statutes of many states impose on professed atheists may under certain conditions be in destructive conflict with public policy. It might easily happen that a professed atheist would be the only available witness to prove guilt in a murder case. The testimony of a professed atheist might constitute the proof in a case involving property rights. If such evidence is blocked from admission, how is justice to be done?

Bigoted Pastors Flay New Move by Freethinkers

(Special to The American Freeman.)

El Paso, Texas.—A movement to organize freethinkers and liberals in opposition to theology as an enemy to personal liberties is being met in the Southwest by denunciation of the more bigoted clergy.

With its headquarters in El Paso the Southwestern Rationalists association is seeking to organize the army of liberals. The association exposes theology as the historic enemy of progress and as anti-social in its result; it opposes churches as interfering with the rights and liberties of others.

Numerous yoke-baiting pastors in New Mexico and western Texas, where the association is being organized, characterized the movement as "the blaspheming of persons who are trying to disrupt religion."

Those urged to join the association are "all such persons as are opposed to sumptuary and restrictive regulations, such as Sunday blue laws, and believe in the right of every person to do as he pleases every day in the week to the limit of non-interference with the rights and liberties of others." Special privileges, such as the exemption

of church property from taxation, are opposed by the association.

Ulysses S. Goen, El Paso attorney, is president of the society.

Patrioters Have New Racket

(Special to The American Freeman.)

New York.—The Patriots are at it again.

Jacob Cash—"Jake" to intimates—is at it again, too.

Cash is the man whom Mike Gold characterized in the Paterson mill strikes several years back as "a Gideon bearing copies of the Constitution."

Now he is again engaged in his patriotic and very profitable work of spreading the propaganda of nationalism and fighting Socialism, communism and allied "red dangers."

Cash's return to this field was made after a brief interlude in Tammany Hall politics, in which he was expelled from a city marshal's job for alleged crookedness.

Now, in this time of unemployment and distress, when men are carried to extremes by hardship, he is trading on his vocation as a patriot to extract money from the gullible to fight "red menaces."

Cash was expelled from a position as city marshal by Mayor Walker on 29 charges. Later Mr. Cash accused Martin J. Healy, a Tammany district leader, of taking away his job because Healy had not been paid an "installment" of several thousand dollars for obtaining the position for him, and also claimed that he (Cash) had already paid several thousand to Healy to get the job.

The case came to a head when Cash publicly served papers on the mayor in the midst of a demonstration at City Hall. Cash benefited greatly by the publicity which accrued, but the mayor stood by his statement that Cash was expelled from his marshaling on 29 charges of crookedness—and has not to this day made public the specific 29 charges, despite demands that he do so.

The Cash episode in the affairs of Tammany Hall soon blew over when Cash himself quietly wrote to the mayor, discontinuing the action begun against him, and seeking only to be restored into the good graces of Tammany Hall. Now he awaits another opportunity to secure more such city appointments—and probably by means similar to the unexplained "gift" of several thousand dollars to a Tammany district leader and "gifts" of diamonds and bracelets to the Tammany district leader's wife.

In the meanwhile he is hiring under-paid newspapermen, students and hack writers, to turn out "patriotic" booklets, and securing through political aid the right to have salesmen foist them upon pupils in schools at so much per copy. The booklets cost very little to print, and Mr. Cash takes his percentage in the name of The United States Patriotic Society, Inc.

Federal aid, too, is being sought by Mr. Cash. The real reason why he suddenly "blew the lid" off his relations with Tammany district leader Healy (who was at the time under other charges as well) was that he had been granted an interview with the President through the aid of Mrs. Ruth Pratt, Republican Congresswoman, for the Patriotic Society which he runs.

If you meet Mr. Cash he will proudly show you letters of indorsement from high officials, from prominent men and civic leaders; but if you get closer to him he will exhibit more interest in how persons with funds can be gathered into his organization, be made to contribute that these booklets be distributed more widely, and aid the U. S. Patriotic Society financially.

Like most such professional patrioters, "Jake" has moments when he feels blue, when the checks keep coming less frequently, when people begin to think about some of Jefferson's statements that Mr. Cash forgot to include in his notes on the Republic—and then he talks "not for publication." At such times he is almost a Socialist, or a communist. He sees the red menace coming on wings of steel, and he has quaverings of the heart. For his country? No.

Mr. Cash quavers for himself and his pocketbook.

When communism comes, Mr. Cash will be on the side of might. Perhaps he will be distributing little red leaflets to pupils in the Proletschools; he will most certainly be trying to get the financial aid of "high-ups."

But in the meanwhile he is very much occupied with such patriotic organizations as Tammany Hall and the National Republican party. They have something to offer him for "doing his bit" to keep the workers' minds from unemployment.

O Patriotism, what sins are committed in thy name!

Wants Famous Liberal Classic Reprinted

Editor, The American Freeman: I recall reading an announcement somewhere in one of your publications recently, wherein you stated your editorial policy henceforth to be a desire to republish in popular form the great classics of free thought, providing of course there be a responsive appeal from your great reading public.

Apparently you have met with success, hence the publication of the works of Erasmus, Mill, Gibbon, Nietzsche, etc.

Appropos thereto, I am going to offer a suggestion which you may look into for what it is worth. It is this: I have, within the last four months, vainly tried to obtain a copy of Baron D'Holbach's "System of Nature." The publishers to whom I had made inquiries for a copy, replied that the work was out of print and unobtainable. Why not republish this great classic yourself? I am sure that the demand therefor among your thousands of readers would more than reimburse you financially for the undertaking. And what a great cultural service you would render to enlightened readers everywhere! Its beneficent influence would be incalculable. I do not know to whom else I could make the appeal but to you, America's most fearless editor, and the incomparable one of the publishing world.

This classic was highly recommended by Ingersoll, who, speaking of it, said that it was "one of the greatest books ever written. It never was and never will be answered." Joseph McCabe, in his recent work, similarly referred to its great merit. I sincerely hope that you will act favorably to this suggestion and resurrect this great eighteenth century classic from the limbo of oblivion. Sincerely, John L. Brund, Louisiana.

[The suggestion is an acceptable one and will be acted on in the near future. It is our plan to proceed with the work of reissuing all available liberal classics, of which we have at least a dozen in mind for early publication.—Ed.]

A WORD TO NEW READERS

This week at least 5,000 men and women will see their first copy of The American Freeman.

We welcome you. We hope you will like the frank and blunt speech of The Freeman. We are under-paid newspapermen, students and hack writers, to turn out "patriotic" booklets, and securing through political aid the right to have salesmen foist them upon pupils in schools at so much per copy. The booklets cost very little to print, and Mr. Cash takes his percentage in the name of The United States Patriotic Society, Inc.

The Freeman has great work before it, and with your help it will reach its goal. This paper wants to grow in influence during the next few months so that it will be in a position to enter the 1932 political campaign with the most powerful and annihilating attacks on the evils of Hooverism. That's why we welcome you as a reader and hope you will help us get at least four new readers. Give us enough clubs of subs and we will have a paper big enough to swat the exploiters of the masses.

The Freeman is not afraid of the facts, and it does not hesitate to give its readers all the facts.

The Freeman is worthy of your support. Do not judge it by the quality of its paper, etc. We leave "looks" to the mouthpieces of Wall Street. We prefer to print this newspaper on newsprint, because that enables us to keep the subscription price low and at the same time not depend on the big advertisers for our revenue. The Saturday Evening Post can beat us all hollow on cash in the bank, on dividends, on high-hat appearance. We have enough trouble getting out a paper in black ink let alone trying to print it in four or five colors. But we are satisfied with our humble appearance. The important thing—from our viewpoint—is not how we look so much as what we print, and we claim that you won't find a single paper in the entire country that will dare print ALL THE FACTS

in the way The Freeman gives them publicity.

You can't get the truth about economic and industrial conditions from your local newspaper. The press is controlled by Wall Street. The press is part of the vast conspiracy to keep you in ignorance regarding political and economic conditions. The press is an agent of Wall Street, and the press has only one thing in mind—to keep you mentally enslaved. If you want to break your chains and free your mind, then The Freeman is the paper that deserves your undivided support.

The Freeman does not tell lies about its enemies. The Freeman believes in the strength of the truth. It does not exaggerate. It does not over-state in the slightest. It prefers the plain, unadorned truth, and if that kind of plain fare pleases you then here is a paper that deserves your warmest support.

The Freeman welcomes you as a new reader, but it hopes you will want to be more than a reader. The Freeman also wants you to be a WORKER. By that we mean that The Freeman expects you to give a little of your time to introduce our paper to your friends. If you like The Freeman and want to see its policies become nationally known, then by all means get The Freeman a club of at least four subscriptions. All you need do is to write four names and addresses on a plain sheet of paper, send them to THE Freeman accompanied by \$1, which will enable us to put each name on our subscription list for 25 weeks. If we can get enough of our readers—new and old—to do this simple, little service in the cause of social justice then it will be a short while before The Freeman will have a quarter of a million subscribers. With your help we can reach that objective. And when we get there we will take the next big hop for the million mark! That's talking big, but then please bear in mind that we are dealing with big issues in a big way, so it is reasonable to expect big support from the only people who count—our readers!

WHAT IRONY to call capitalists the leaders of industry when at the first sign of trouble they desert industry, leave their workers in as cowardly and dishonorable a manner as a general might run away from his soldiers on the battlefield, and thrust upon private charity the responsibility for their defection. Industry will not have real leadership until it has social leadership.

THE WORLD will never be very pleasantly managed until men learn to think more about happiness than about what they call—narrowly—by the name of morality. A truly moral action, of course, is an action that produces results of happiness. That is the realistic, as opposed to the religious, view of morality.

NEW and old readers of The American Freeman should keep in mind that we are always ready to serve them through our Little Blue Book department. If you haven't a list of our 1636 titles just drop us a post card and ask for a complete catalogue, which will be sent to you free of charge.

WAR, the greatest threat to civilization, can be ended only by stopping the world-wide industrial strife that inevitably leads to the climax of military strife. Men must learn to cooperate in the daily pursuits and processes of peace before they can have hope of preserving peace.

WE ARE anxious to increase the size of The Freeman to six pages. It will take another 25,000 readers to make this improvement possible. Will you help us put that many names on our subscription list? A club of ten subs at 10c each or a club of four at 25c each will help a great deal.

AMERICA is the richest country in the world; and in this country millions suffer from extreme poverty. This is the paradox of "economic individualism."

SOCIAL principles of conduct are far more important than individual notions of morality.

E. Haldeman-Julius Continues Fight for Recreational Sunday

A Reply to Kansas Governor's Statement That He Does Not Intend to Enter Blue Law Controversy

Governor Harry H. Woodring, State House, Topeka, Kans.

Dear Mr. Governor: Again I am amazed by a statement from you, which is entirely out of character with the true responsibilities of your office as governor. In the Topeka Journal of April 11 I read that "Gov. Harry H. Woodring declined today to be drawn into the Sunday movie controversy." But consider, my dear governor, that this controversy is one respecting law and liberty in the state of Kansas. It relates to one of the biggest present issues in the state. It strikes directly at leading questions of government, custom, law enforcement and public opinion in Kansas. And you calmly announce that you will ignore this issue!

I cannot conclude that you are so dull and unprincipled that you have no interest in this issue. Undoubtedly you do have an interest and probably—or so I wish to believe—you have an interest, personally, on the liberal side. But can you really persuade yourself that you have no public interest, as governor, in the question of Sunday movies and the question—which I have forcibly brought to the attention of you and the attorney general—of the bold, shameless discrimination practiced in applying this law in all its severity to only one class of violators of the Sunday blue law? I assure you, my dear governor, that you have misconceived your duties and responsibilities. I repeat that this is a public question. It is, to put it on the low and immediate plane of policy rather than the high and far-seeing plane of principle, a question of law enforcement. As the chief executive of Kansas, you are obliged, as the governor if not as a man, to express an opinion and to begin an action on this issue of justice and liberty in direct relation to a well-known, albeit obnoxious, law.

Let me put the matter quite simply. Granted that you may refrain as governor from stating an opinion about the desirability or the rightness of the Sunday blue law—that is officially and politically proper though not personally brave or candid. But it is different when we consider whether you as governor can properly remain silent and inactive when the question is whether the law is to be fairly and honestly enforced. Are you resolved upon taking the sensational position that you are indifferent to the laws of Kansas? It is quite as plainly your duty to be concerned with the fair enforcement of one law as with the fair enforcement of other laws.

I regard the Sunday blue law as foolish and tyrannical and as class legislation of the most brazen type—legislation in favor of the business interests of the Kansas preachers' organizations. It is still more brazen, however, that this law should be enforced against one class of citizens with particular and exceptional harshness—namely, against the movie show owners.

Filling stations, garages, soda fountains, news and tobacco stands—all violate this law yet go unmolested.

If Kansas will not be civilized regarding this question, it ought at least to maintain a decent consistency. I trust that, upon reflection, you will realize that you as governor cannot be indifferent to and cannot ignore the question of whether any law in the state of Kansas shall be enforced with fairness, making one class of citizens equal with all others. If the governor of the state is not interested—and amazingly declares that he is not interested—in the enforcement of a law, how can the citizens be expected to have such an interest?

Sincerely,

E. Haldeman-Julius

In a Letter to Attorney General, Freeman Editor Charges He Is Pawn of Kansas Preacher Bigots

Attorney General Roland Boynton, State House, Topeka, Kans.

Dear Mr. Attorney General: Your statement appearing in the Topeka Journal of April 11 is not a refutation of my facts, submitted to you, about the discriminating application of the Kansas Sunday blue law. I challenged your previous assertion that movie show owners are "the most flagrant violators" of the blue law, pointing out that on the contrary the most extensive violation of this law is committed by filling stations, garages, soda fountains, news and tobacco stands—inasmuch as these businesses, and more "flagrantly" the filling stations, are operated all day Sunday and Sunday evening. From one end of the state to the other, in every city and town and village and almost at every crossroads point, the filling stations are all lit up more brilliantly than the churches in pursuit of what, under the present law, is their illegal trade. These are well-known facts. No man can dispute these facts. It is significant that you, as attorney general, do not presume to dispute these facts.

Your astonishing reply, as given in the Topeka Journal, is as follows: "Attorney General Boynton said it was his contention most of the complaints concerned alleged violations of the Sunday laws, which construe as misdemeanor offenses certain labor and business activity on the Sabbath, were against motion picture shows." Not attempting to deny the facts, you have the audacity to remark, in your official capacity, that you are moved by special, class pressure rather than by a general and impartial interest in the facts of law violation and law enforcement. Nothing could be more plainly

implied in your statement than that you are enforcing the Sunday blue law unequally and oppressively at the instigation of the preachers' association. You are taking orders from Kansas preachers, interpreting and enforcing the Sunday blue law in compliance with their class interests, and you are ignoring the far wider application of the law to filling stations, garages, soda fountains, cigar and news stands which are openly violating the same law that is enforced with such severe, although even in this instance not consistent and complete partiality, against movie show owners.

The fact is that the preachers of Kansas use this law as a club of bigotry and you swing the club at their command. It seems you are willing that the law shall be violated, as it is in more than thirty Kansas towns and cities, so long as the preachers do not object. When the preachers in any community object, then you jump at the crack of the clerical whip. You permit the preachers to force you into an arbitrarily discriminatory policy, enforcing the law against one business that the preachers wish suppressed and not only failing but refusing to enforce the laws against other businesses which the preachers are not interested in suppressing. Apparently they are not interested in suppressing the filling stations and other businesses that operate illegally on Sunday.

It seems clear to me that the preachers are against the enforcement of the Sunday blue law with regard to filling stations and the other businesses. Partly this is due to the fact that the preachers also wish to buy gas and oil on Sunday. There is also, I suspect, a bit of policy in this discrimination. The preachers perhaps realize that a complete and severe enforcement of the Sunday law, against the filling stations and against all illegal businesses without favoritism, would develop such a tremendous campaign of public sentiment against the law that it would certainly be repealed at the next session of the legislature; and that probably it would, by common consent or as the result of powerful popular pressure, be dropped in fact within a short time and without waiting for legislative action.

In short, the preachers of Kansas have a convenient class club against the one set of business rivals that they specially resent—the movie show owners—and they do not want the law to be enforced generally. You are doing what the preachers want done and thus are grossly untrue to the duties of your office. More shame to Kansas—that we have an attorney general who enforces unfairly the law only when and where and in the way that the preachers tell him. With regard to the Sunday blue law, it may be said that the law does not rule but the preachers rule in Kansas.

Sincerely,

E. Haldeman-Julius

POLITICS AND PROFITS

It is a simple and sufficiently true explanation of political life under capitalism, to say that it is directed, first and last, toward protecting and promoting private profits. Politicians are brazen in their capitalistic bias. They oppose measures of service to the people which are not at all involved nor debatable—which are concrete and easily understandable cases of economic justice—and which are resisted solely because the sound establishment of such measures would reduce the profiteering in human misery.

A very clear-cut instance of this alliance between politics and profits is afforded in Wisconsin, where the city of Milwaukee tried to obtain legislative permission to engage regularly in the food-marting business. The idea was

especially timely during this depression, with millions of people going hungry and prices, even when lowered on some commodities, still cruelly high—and of course it is obvious that any price is a high price for a workman who is jobless and broke.

Milwaukee, which has a Socialist city government, wanted to remedy this situation—or help toward the remedy. Their proposal was that the city should be empowered legally to buy and sell food, serving the people at cost instead of charging excessive profits. After the World War, the city of Milwaukee temporarily, as an emergency measure, engaged in the food business; the result of this temporary experiment was that profiteering prices were at that time forced down and, while supplying food at reasonable prices,

the city made a profit of about \$7,000, which, through investments, has now been increased to about \$10,000.

It was contended by the Socialist city government that the success of this experiment in social welfare suggested not merely the possibility but the need of a permanent application of the measure. It is obviously a just, humane policy. No decent argument can be made against it. Why it was defeated is obvious. There could be only one reason—profits had to be protected. Capitalistic politicians in Wisconsin again registered their decision that private greed is more precious than public need.

BREAD PROFITEERING

One of the most flagrant and anti-human among the scandals of Hooverism has been the maintaining of steady high prices of bread in the face of remarkably falling prices of wheat. With the country struggling under the worst depression in years, and with the country deluged with appeals for private charity, with millions of people actually in acute want—under these conditions, the price of bread has been kept at a high, extortionate level. There can be no two opinions about the situation; it does, without exaggeration, consist of criminal extortion. In their greatest suffering the American people are being robbed outrageously by the banking profiteers.

Politicians do not like to speak about such really important issues. They wish not to offend the powerful moneyed interests. Conventional support for the established system of commerce and government is the time-dishonored policy of politicians. They were, however, compelled to notice this evil in the state of Pennsylvania. A bill demanding an investigation of bread prices was introduced by a Socialist member of the state legislature—Darlington Hoopes. Twice the legislature was forced to vote on the bill—and twice the bill was defeated. This was such an unpleasant scandal that the Republicans, controlling the legislature, had as a matter of political self-protection to change their attitude and favor the measure. A Republican representative recently introduced a similar bill and it was carried by an almost unanimous vote. Yet this would never

have been accomplished excepting for the persistent campaign made by the Socialist representative.

In supporting his bill, Mr. Hoopes offered preliminary facts which emphasized the need for such an investigation. Among other things, he showed that ten-cent and twelve-cent loaves of bread represent a case of profiteering to the extent of 50 and 82 percent—that figures being based, of course, upon a comparison with the prevailing price of wheat. Here is an example of robbery that is indefensible; and we remind our readers that this is not an exception, not a peculiarity which seldom occurs, but is the persistent and typical line of conduct that is followed on a general scale under Hooverism. Can the ordinary man fail to see that the penalty of supporting Hooverism is to starve and be robbed?

FREEMAN ARMY IS IN ACTION

The American Freeman is unique in the entire world of journalism. It employs no subscription agents. It conducts no circulation contests that involve expensive motor cars and huge bags of gold. Occasionally it gives its subscribers a book or two, but this is done always with a view to education. The Freeman has no fat advertising accounts. The Freeman is not subsidized by a Raskob or an Owen D. Young. It gets no support from Wall Street. The Hoover administration would rather see The Freeman choke than give it so much as a 25-cent subscription. And yet—

The Freeman's circulation is growing rapidly. At present we are putting on new subscriptions at the rate of 5,000 per week.

Why is this? The answer is: The Freeman Army!

The Freeman Army consists of Freeman readers who believe in its militant policy and show their approval by hustling subscriptions among their friends. They work without pay—in fact, we frequently costs money out of their own pockets to support The Freeman's policies. But they do this gladly. The Freeman Army is a voluntary "association" of socially-minded individuals. They "join" by the simple process of getting at least four of their friends or acquaintances to take a Freeman subscription at only 25c each, which brings them The Freeman for 25 weeks. As soon as such a remittance is received from a Freeman reader, his name is put on the card index of The Freeman Army. If his name is already there, we then enter the date, remittance and purpose of the new order. That's

all there is to The Freeman Army, but what a wallop it has!

The Freeman Army has made possible at least a dozen tremendously successful Special Editions of The Freeman. These Freeman reader-workers order bundles of special issues at 2c per paper, never ordering less than a bundle of 50. Or they send us a list of at least 50 names, accompanied by 2c per name, which pays for sending special issues to their list. Or they send us the money for us to apply at the rate of 2c per name, sending copies of The Freeman to good names in our files—the names of more than a million buyers and readers of Little Blue Books.

And as we write this, reports come from our circulation department that The Freeman Army is now in full swing, sending us literally thousands of new readers for future issues of The Freeman.

We invite new readers of The Freeman to join this Army. All you need do is to send us a club of four subs at 25c each—\$1, which pays for four names each to get The Freeman 25 weeks; or if you prefer, you can send us a club of 10 names at 10c each, good for 10 weeks of The Freeman. By doing this you will be placed on our Army file and you will be sent special literature from time to time.

If you believe in what The Freeman is doing then please show your endorsement in a concrete way—show it by putting on at least 10 new readers on the subscription list of The Freeman. We need every new reader we can possibly get, in order to make our future campaigns more effective. Remember, we are getting ready for "big doings" during the 1932 political campaign, when it will be our job to expose the evils of Hooverism. We are out to defeat Hooverism, but that can't be done without the help of our readers—The Freeman Army.

Let us hear from you at once—Old Armyites, or new recruits!

PROSPERITY depends upon permanent production; and in turn it is obvious that permanent production depends upon the steadiness of consumption, inasmuch as the workers, when unable to buy the products of industry, are forced to be idle and unproductive. The fanatical name of over-production is given to what is really enforced and unjust under-consumption by the workers.

It is THE all-ruling motive of capitalistic government: to encourage the worst of all conspiracies—the profit conspiracy—against the common good.

NEED INHERITANCE TAX, SAYS SENATOR NORRIS

Progressives in Congress will demand an inheritance tax, says Senator George W. Norris, ranging to as high as eighty percent on extremely large fortunes. The proposed tax would be proportionate to the size of the inherited fortune. Moderate inheritances would be taxed lightly, while the greater sums would be more severely taxed with the object of breaking up immense, scandalous family accumulations of wealth and returning this wealth to the government and thus, theoretically at least, to the people.

It is the contention of Senator Norris that the inheritance tax will prevent the addition of other forms of taxation and thus constitute a relief to the majority of the citizens. "Some form of increased taxation will be absolutely necessary," he says. "The inheritance tax is the fairest kind of tax ever devised. It burdens the fewest number of people and inflicts no unjust hardship upon those whom it affects." It is the Senator's opinion that the building up of huge private fortunes is a menace to democratic institutions, and that is obviously a true, indeed an unescapable, conclusion.

The inheritors of such fortunes have done nothing to earn them. They are given a tremendously unfair advantage over other citizens. This sort of inequality, so flagrant and so dangerous, is not one that can be defended by any argument of superior brains or initiative.

To be sure, the basic inequality lies in the economic system that makes it possible for such private fortunes to be accumulated. An inheritance tax is perfectly just, but it is only a step in the right direction and will fall far short of a complete solution of the social question. The greater need is that the tyranny of private control over industry should be ended.

To FEAR ideas is to fear, and to confess oneself unequal to, the highest activity of life.

MAN HAS progressed, not through the use of faith or reverence or any such exaggerated quality, but through the use of intelligence. Fortunately, while the majority of the race were involved in dismal errors, a few thinkers and humanists went right on using their brains and the habit grew and consequently social life improved. We have not yet reached that ideal time when the great majority will deal intelligently with life. Error is still common and folly is cherished. But we must admit that there has been progress over a period of centuries; and it is our full aim to encourage and enlighten that tendency of progress.

THE SOVIET government has discharged 138,000 employees of government departments on the grounds that they are "ex-bourgeoisie, bureaucrats and incompetents." Other work, which presumably they will be capable of doing, will be found for them. This will seem the greatest tyranny of all to political jobholders in America. Bureaucracy and incompetency are virtues in our political system.

100 Sheets Paper--100 Envelopes

Both neatly printed with your name and address and sent postpaid free! Here, undoubtedly is the greatest bargain ever offered. No longer is Personal Printed Stationery a luxury because you can now have high quality Writing Paper and Envelopes, both printed with your name and address for less than usually paid for plain blank stationery. Just think, 100 sheets of good white bond writing paper, size 5 1/2 x 7 1/4 inches and 100 quality envelopes, both neatly printed with your name and address and sent postpaid for only \$1. Our low price does not allow any variation in printing. Name and address up to four lines, in rich black ink, printed at top center of sheet and flap of envelope only. Take advantage of this bargain now. Use order form below.

PRINTED STATIONERY ORDER FORM. Haldeman-Julius Publications, Girard, Kans. For the enclosed \$1.00, print name and address on 100 Sheets of Writing Paper and 100 Envelopes. Send postpaid to address below.

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I want to become a regular reader of The American Freeman and I am enclosing \$1 (\$1.50 in Canada and other foreign countries) for a year's subscription.

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Enclosed find 50c for which please send me, postpaid, a copy of Voltaire's great novel, "Candide."

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You are invited to join a National Friendship Club. For Ladies & Gentlemen. Big List of Descriptions (FREE) Send for One. American Friendship Society. Dept. 22. Detroit, Mich.

Senator Norris Proves Excessive Earnings by the Power Companies

Investigations Show Large Sums Spent on Propaganda to Poison People Against Publicly Owned and Operated Plants

Recent disclosures by the Federal Trade Commission show conclusively that power interests are not only liable to the charges of excess profits and attempts to control public sentiment by the purchase, directly or indirectly, of newspapers, but are liable to almost innumerable others along the same lines. Senator Norris (Rep.) of Nebraska declared in a statement for The American Freeman, "The trust has spent literally millions of dollars in various and divers methods to control public sentiment and to build up a sentiment in favor of the trust," he declared, "and in opposition to municipal ownership of electric light plants. They have done this secretly, by methods and means which are disgraceful and dishonest."

An authorized summary of the Senator's Freeman statement follows:

While the Federal Trade Commission in its investigation of the power trust is almost daily revealing some gigantic scheme on the part of that monopoly to control the generation and distribution of electricity for the people of the United States the trust is trying to divert attention from true conditions by continuing this nation-wide propaganda of deception.

Of course, every school child in the United States who has followed in any degree the disclosures made by the Federal Trade Commission knows that there is a power trust; that it is not only nation-wide, but that it is reaching out into various foreign countries.

I referred to a bill paid by the Florence Wagon Works of Florence, Ala., for one month. This corporation is located within the sound of the tumbling waters which go over the Muscle Shoals dam. It is supplied with electricity for power purposes by the Alabama Power Company, one of the constituent elements of the power trust. The amount paid for power in the bill which was sent to me for one month was \$322. This was for the month of August, 1929.

Rates Are Compared

I had this same identical bill

sent to the municipally-owned plant at Jacksonville, Fla. This municipal plant would have furnished the same amount of power for \$245.25, making a saving of \$76.75 in one month for one customer. The bill was also sent to the municipal plant at Springfield, Ill., and this municipal plant would have furnished the same power for \$203.35—a saving of \$118.65 for the same month. The bill was also sent to the municipal plant at Los Angeles, Calif.

This plant would have furnished the same power for \$179.50—a saving for one month to one customer of \$142.50. It was sent to several other municipal plants. For instance, the municipal plant at Seattle, Wash., would have saved this customer, for that month, \$108.80. The municipal plant at Tacoma, Wash., would have saved the Florence Wagon Works, for that month, \$179.10.

The electricity furnished to the Wagon Works at Florence was not furnished by a plant either publicly or privately owned which operated in Florence, Ala., alone. The power trust supplied Florence, Ala., with all the electricity which was used. The Alabama Power Company is one of the largest generating and distributing subsidiaries of the power trust in the United States, and Florence, Ala., was only one of hundreds of customers which the Alabama Power Company has all over the State of Alabama and adjoining states.

Moreover, the Alabama Power Company gets some of its power from this dam which is within sight of Florence. It buys it from the government, somewhere in the neighborhood of two mills per kilowatt-hour, and sells it to its customers at an unconscionable profit.

The claim is often made by power trust representatives that some privately owned corporations in the United States sell electricity (when you take into consideration their entire sales) at a cheaper rate per kilowatt-hour than some municipally owned plants charge. On its face this looks like a plausible argument, but if you will investigate you will find it often occurs that the power trust sells electricity to a subsidiary corporation.

This subsidiary corporation sells

electricity to another subsidiary, and so on, almost without limit. In reality, when they are selling electric current in bulk in this way they are selling to themselves. It would be immaterial whether they charged anything, even if they sold below cost to such a subsidiary.

Charges of Ontario Plant Are Cited

Their profit would be just the same when the electricity reached the consumer. It is now an acknowledged fact, admitted by all honest citizens who have given attention to the question, that the Ontario publicly owned plant sells electric current to the consumers at a much lower rate than the consumers pay on this side of the line for current purchased from the power trust.

The last official report of the Hydro-electric Power Commission of Ontario shows that for the preceding year 87 percent of the domestic consumers of that system in Ontario, Canada, paid an average rate for electricity of less than 2 cents per kilowatt-hour. The rate to this 87 percent of domestic consumers ranged between a maximum average rate of 1.9 cents per kilowatt-hour down to 0.8 of 1 cent per kilowatt-hour. This report shows also that the next 12.2 percent of the domestic consumers of this publicly-owned system paid an average rate per kilowatt-hour of from 2 cents to 3.9 cents. This leaves only 0.8 of 1 percent of all the domestic consumers of this publicly-owned service who paid a rate per kilowatt-hour of 4 cents or more.

This same report shows that during that same year 90.4 percent of the commercial consumers of this publicly-owned service in Canada paid an average rate of 2.4 cents or less per kilowatt-hour. The power service in Ontario makes an equally startling showing.

The figures given in relation to the Florence Wagon Works bill show that the municipal plants in the United States, while not making as good a showing as is made by the larger system in Canada are nevertheless so far ahead of any showing which can be made anywhere in the United States by the power trust that further argument seems almost useless.

Regulation Has Failed

As nearly as I can estimate it, if the trust were relieved from taxation and the trust gave the consumers the benefit, the domes-

tic consumers would find their bills decreased by less than one-half cent per kilowatt-hour. The truth is that if they were entirely relieved from taxation they would charge all the traffic would bear. And I am not saying this in a critical spirit. They are in the business for profit. The municipal and publicly owned plants are in the business for service. That is the difference between the two. It is human nature for them to charge just as much as they possibly can.

The only way which has been at all practical to have them reduce their rates is by public competition. Regulation, as every student knows, has fallen down. It has not been a success. As too often happens, the public regulators have been regulated by the trust by various methods.

The recent disclosures of the Federal Trade Commission show conclusively that the trust has spent literally millions of money in various and divers methods to control public sentiment and to build up a sentiment in favor of the trust and in opposition to municipal ownership of electric light plants. They have done this secretly, by methods and means which are disgraceful and dishonest.

They have undertaken to control elections; all the way from the presidency down to the election of municipal officials in small towns and villages. They have spent thousands of dollars to control legislatures. They have not hesitated to approach the pulpit. They have sent their emissaries secretly into communities to visit women's clubs, to influence boy-scout organizations, to control farmers' organizations, to subsidize college professors and school superintendents—all done secretly.

They have, likewise, indirectly attempted to control newspapers and have sometimes purchased them outright. All these things are disclosed by the official investigation of the Federal Trade Commission. They have sent their emissaries into Canada to bring back misleading and often untrue reports and conclusions as to what is being accomplished in Ontario by the publicly-owned electric light and power system. There is no doubt about these things. Further denial only adds to the already large accumulation of incriminating evidence which has been produced and which stands uncontradicted.

WE ARE reminded by the Hoover politicians that this is a world-wide depression. At best, this only means that other countries are as badly managed as America. It leaves out, however, the fact that the leading European countries protect their workers with unemployment insurance while America does not.

IN A COUNTRY which has an abundance of men, machines and materials for production, unemployment is nothing short of economic insanity. For the industries of a country to be idle under such circumstances is as crazy as it would be for a man to sit in the midst of food and let himself starve to death.

UNEMPLOYMENT is a failure of capitalistic employers in the management of industry; but it is also a failure that can be laid at the door of capitalistic government, which refuses to adopt measures that will guarantee the subsistence and necessary welfare of its citizens.

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Gibbon on Christianity

After Two Centuries This Remains the Best and Most Stirring History of the Rise of Christianity

Edward Gibbon, eloquent and scholarly Englishman who lived in the time of Voltaire, was one of the first to write modern history; that is, history which is critical and careful and inspired by the most impartial, enlightened regard for the truth. His *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* is probably the greatest masterpiece of history writing, both from the standpoint of its enlightened conception and its elegant style. And of all that immense work of historical scholarship, two chapters have stood out challengingly as the impressive and hotly discussed feature of the Gibbon masterpiece: namely, the two chapters in which Gibbon described and analyzed the character, the motives, the practices and the rise and final triumph of Christianity.

FACTS VS. EXAGGERATED LEGENDS OF CHRISTIAN MARTYRDOM

Committing himself unreservedly to the task of discovering, sifting and relating the whole truth, it was inevitable that Gibbon should offend the pious spokesmen of the Christian religion. His famous two chapters—which have the rounded completeness and significance of a separate, distinct work—exploded the most venerated legends about the rise of Christianity. Scarcely a single feature of the official church story of the rise and character of Christianity escaped demolition or serious modification by the critical pen of Gibbon. Most unforgivable of all, Gibbon placed his criticisms on a solid foundation of facts. His history was so well buttressed by the original authorities, by the most diligent research, by a remarkable familiarity with the Roman writers and the Christian writers of the early centuries when Christianity was not yet the ruling religion—in short, Gibbon knew and handled his subject so well that his Christian critics could do nothing but denounce him—it was beyond their power to disprove or to weaken his account of the early church.

CHARACTER OF THE CHRISTIANS AND THEIR MOTIVES

For nearly two centuries an animated controversy has persisted with regard to these two chapters of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*. In his own lifetime several rather violent criticisms were published and Gibbon himself replied forcibly to his critics. And, as J. M. Robertson says in his scholarly introduction to these two chapters, which we

A Vivid Picture of the Early Christian Fanatics

GIBBON SAYS—

It was universally believed [in the early Christian communities] that the end of the world and the kingdom of Heaven were at hand. The near approach of this wonderful event had been predicted by the apostles; the tradition of it was preserved by their earliest disciples, and those who understood in their literal sense the discourses of Christ himself were obliged to expect the second and glorious coming of the Son of Man in the clouds. . . .

One fact Gibbon makes entirely clear: namely, that the early Christians were groups of the most abhorrent and provoking fanatics. Their conduct was such that persecution of them (which persecution has been grossly exaggerated in pious Christian histories) was more political than religious in nature. As merely a rival religion, content to take its place with the many other religions tolerated under the Roman Empire, Christianity would not have been subjected to persecution.

The Pagans respected all religions and gods. The multitude were superstitious and believed in many gods, doubting none though preferring some; while the philosophers were superior to superstition and looked with tolerant amusement or disdain upon the beliefs of the multitude. And it may be remarked that, naturally, Christianity was in the view of the philosophers simply another superstition and the most repulsive of all, seeing that it made war upon the merriment and good spirits of humanity, preaching a fanaticism and an asceticism unknown to the pagan religions.

The early Christians withdrew as far as possible from the normal life of society and behaved as enemies of society and as foes of toleration. The real intolerance of the Christians was shown tremendously when they became the beneficiaries of imperial favor and power; but their intolerance was also plainly visible from the beginning, even when they were oc-

reprint for the first time in America under the title of *Gibbon on Christianity*, the many critics have been unable to shake the essential narrative of Christianity which the great English historian told so truthfully and so well. Not only that, but since Gibbon wrote subsequent historians have discovered new material which strengthens Gibbon's main outline of the nature and rise of Christianity.

POLICIES OF THE ROMAN EMPERORS IN DIFFERENT PERIODS

Gibbon on Christianity is not only a work of singular eloquence and vividness—not only is it a curiously thrilling story—but it is sound history, in which one finds the facts reliably recorded and free from all the errors and fancies of the later Christian mythology. Gibbon spent years in the preparation of his material and the writing of his famous history; and knowing how controversial it would be, he was especially careful to present the most sound and complete and critically invulnerable account of the rise of Christianity. In a work that has the very greatest tone and subject matter throughout, the two chapters on Christianity are the best of all and they have the unity, completeness and importance of a work that deserves to stand alone as a separate, splendid masterpiece.

NATURAL CAUSES SHOWN IN RISE OF CHRISTIANITY

It was Gibbon's design, first among great historians, to set forth the natural causes that made Christianity triumph as a religion and as a political institution, as distinguished from the supposed supernatural victory of this religion which had been elaborated in the most extravagant legends of the church. As a historian, Gibbon was among the first realists; he was a cultivated and skeptical man; in his view history was a thing of solid evidences and reasonable proofs, based upon a study of the original material. He turned for his facts to the genuine literature—to a comparison of an extensive range of original literature—which recorded, both in the writings of Pagans and Christians, the true events of those few centuries, just before the downfall of old Rome, in which Christianity rose from an obscure body of sectarians into the powerful religion of Rome, oppressing with intensified violence its former occasional oppressors.

HERE IS IRONY—

"A noble Grecian," says Gibbon, "promised Theophilus, bishop of Antioch, that if he could be gratified with the sight of a single person who had actually been raised from the dead, he would immediately embrace the Christian religion. It is somewhat remarkable that the prelate of the first eastern church, however anxious for the conversion of his friend, thought proper to decline this fair and reasonable challenge."

casional marked as victims of a persecution which they persistently invited. Most of the Roman emperors sincerely believed, and with sufficient cause, that the Christians were fanatical enemies of toleration and public peace; and, even so, these emperors for the most part favored a policy of toleration for these fanatics. During the greater part of the period from the first foundation of Christian communities to the eventual triumph of Christianity, these fanatics—who asked toleration for themselves yet denounced toleration for others—were permitted to conduct their strange rites and customs without molestation.

The tale of Christian persecutions has been unscrupulously stretched and magnified by the fabricators of church history. In a single year, after the triumph of Christianity, more Christians were killed by Christians than were killed in three centuries by the Romans. Whatever the faults of the pagans, religious intolerance was the least of them; they were infinitely more tolerant than the Christians.

It remains to be explained how Christianity, which to us seems so abhorrent and extreme a religion from its earliest appearance, finally won its triumph. One important fact is that Christianity had no real or extensive triumph until, for political reasons, it was placed under the patronage of the Emperor Constantine and made the state religion; its triumph was that of oppression rather than genuine conversion. Gibbon shows that the numbers of the early Christians have been greatly exaggerated; and he shows also the blank below.

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