

such national aid. But why should not the government make this profit sharing reasonably certain? Why should not the government say to representatives of capital: You come to us representing an autocratic minority interest in your business, and this is a government by democratic majority. You wish government aid, and in due time after we have aided you we, the representatives of the people, must have our action approved by a democratic majority, convinced that we have acted for their benefit. Is it not therefore more fitting that the demand for aid should come from this majority? Are the labor investors, the democratic majority, represented in the control of this business which you ask the political representatives of that majority to aid? You say you speak for the wage-earners of your industry. Did they authorize you to speak for them or have you merely assumed that right? Is it not time for the political representatives of democracy to establish the principle that the directors of industry who represent an undemocratic control have only a limited right to ask the coöperation of a government whose principle of existence they oppose?

What is here suggested is no sudden revolution in government or industry but only certain principles of action by which we may hope in the coming years to work out the great problem of the rehabilitation of democracy. Political freedom has been achieved upon this continent through two great wars wherein our people staked their lives and fortunes upon that issue. Industrial freedom we possessed in the early days of an undeveloped country sparsely populated. But the day of the self-sufficient individualist is gone. The industrial organization of great masses of men and capital has been accomplished, as the great political organizations of the world were created, by the autocratic assumption of vast power by bold far-sighted men. Thus upon the very ruins of political oligarchies industrial oligarchies have been builded until they dominate by indirect means the governments which they should serve.

America has the established institutions of democracy through which her people can reorganize their industries into harmony with their government. Accompanying this advance the government can be mutualized to aid the general welfare. But to mutualize our government without at the same time democratizing our industries will be but sham statesmanship. To interweave our present industrial and governmental fabric will only weaken both. An industrial oligarchy and a political democracy will not work well together. Inevitably they will work largely in opposition until one or the other shall prevail. If we attempt to carry on this struggle while competing with the reorganized

industrial oligarchies of Europe we shall surely degrade our national strength. We shall engage in world competitions enervated by internal disorders. Now is the time to strengthen our fibre while our future commercial rivals are wasting their material and human resources in the battle trenches. Our temporary profits in blood money mean spiritual loss. We may not decently rejoice in their accumulation. But, out of dreadful carnage, spiritual strength is being bred in Europe by the inspiration of which we may well and honestly profit.

This is our day of grace and if we fail now to prepare to meet our obligations we shall find out soon that our day is done. Billions of treasure and millions of lives we are ready to sacrifice to defend our country. Can we not have the vision to spend a fraction of that sacrifice to reorganize our industries and our government into an industrial democracy wherein all the interests of our people may be represented in the control of our political and economic government, and wherein our democratic directors may operate public and private business in the common interest of all the people?

DONALD R. RICHBERG.

At the Capitol

SINCE the adoption of the administration's program of conscription Congress has given its time chiefly to two matters: the espionage bill and the emergency measure appropriating funds for the new army. While the question of censorship has had the attention of the press, behind neither of these bills has there been the more or less unified public interest that facilitated the passage of the earlier war measures. The past week has thus given the first indication of what may be expected of a war Congress that is not coerced by a maximum outside pressure.

The army appropriations bill carried two billion, seven hundred million dollars. It was brought into the House with no special rule to expedite its consideration, discussed for less than four hours, and passed with one dissenting vote. Having previously determined to create an army of half a million men, the appropriation of funds for that purpose was perhaps a perfunctory matter. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that only four members chose to speak on a bill which carried double the sum appropriated last year for the aggregate expenses of the government, and that not more than twenty took part in the discussion with so much as an inquiry. On only two questions, in fact, was there any active display of interest. Quite a controversy arose as to whether Jamestown or Pensacola was more naturally deserving of a \$150,000 expenditure for an aviation field. And protracted discussion was given to a \$12,000 item providing for "improving and finishing the third floor of the Court of Appeals building." Half of the time that was given to the consideration of the bill was thus spent over matters involving less than a hundredth of one per cent of its total. Moreover, throughout the whole discussion not more than a handful of members were present. "I can only account for the smallness of the attendance," said Representative Borland, toward the close

of the debate, "by the fact that very few members of Congress yet realize the scope of the present legislation."

Very few, indeed, yet realize the scope of the war. They are attempting to meet an international situation out of a background which has served well enough for the ordinary purposes of river and harbor legislation. Their constituents have so long been forcing them to think in terms of districts that they do not readily think in the terms with which they are now dealing. The rapidity of their own face-about on a series of recent questions has left them looking about for something that is recognizable. Something which looks sectional—Jamestown and Pensacola—something which is familiarly trivial—the third floor of the Court of Appeals building—they seize upon as a reality. There are certain members who appreciate to what extent the administration is tying them to a policy of internationalism, and who desire effectively to support or oppose that program, without the present ability to do either. For the moment most of the members have not caught up with the consequences of their own activity. Now that the more spectacular war bills are out of the way, they are turning back to the matters which were once their chief concern, and finding that by their own hand these matters no longer exist.

The other measure which has occupied the attention of the House since its adoption of conscription is the espionage bill. Here, apparently, there was a clearer understanding as to purpose. In spite of explicit assurance that the President desired the passage of the censorship provision as drafted, the House struck it out and substituted a restriction less rigorous. But in view of the support which the original provision had in the House that result is not surprising. The burden of the chairman's argument was: "You people stood by the President on the declaration of war, the bond issue bill and the conscription measure, and now that it becomes my committee's turn you are apparently going to funk, and it isn't at all fair." The supporters of the bill were content to coast along on the President's prestige, with no real effort at presenting a case; the opposition, consisting chiefly of members who throughout the month of February had flayed the newspaper cabal that was driving us into war, defended the freedom of the press in a series of set speeches before an almost empty House. How little the debate accomplished is shown in the fact that the final vote was along strictly party lines, with just enough Democrats swinging over to defeat the provision.

Meantime, the Senate has not fully justified the confidence of its members that if the President would only cease usurping its legislative powers it could make quite as effective progress. Since the passage of the army measure the Senate has, with little outside pressure, given its attention to the questions of espionage and embargo. These are broad studies, to be sure, but not broad enough to justify at this time all of the irrelevancies that have been indulged in. Mr. McCumber, for instance, started the members of the Senate off on one tangent by warning them that he had read in a newspaper that the Ancient Order of Hoboes, in convention at Newark, had threatened "not to take up firearms or the tools of production against their fellowmen." Another diversion, and a much more protracted one, consisted in a controversy between three senators as to who had won the battle of King's Mountain, in 1780. Mr. Shields, in the course of an unnecessarily long tribute to the state he represents, had placed credit for the victory in the hands of the Tennesseans. Mr. Overman objected, declaring that the battle had been won by a North Carolinian, General McDowell. Mr. Mc-

Kellar, also of Tennessee, denied this fact, and asserted that by the time the battle of King's Mountain was fought General McDowell had been given another command. Mr. Overman reiterated his statement. Mr. McKellar declared that the Senator had only to examine the records of history to find that he was mistaken. Mr. Overman then replied that there were two Generals McDowell, and that Mr. McKellar was thinking of the other one. The argument ran on until Mr. Overman sent for a copy of *The Story of the Revolution*, and read from it enough to establish his case. Like the discussion that arose over the Ancient Order of Hoboes, this is an extreme case; but both of them are indicative of the time that has been given to incidentals during the past week. Nor has the attendance since the conscription bill was disposed of been more than perfunctory. A vote on one measure of importance to the war was delayed because the debate ended too late in the afternoon; "I doubt very much," said Senator Smoot, "if we can get a quorum at this time of the day."

By permitting nonessentials to consume so much of its time Congress is being prodigal with its opportunities. It has kept the Federal Reserve Board waiting for an emergency measure which passed the last House with one dissenting vote, was killed by the Senate filibuster, and is not yet law. The Shipping Board has been unable to secure the passage of a bill giving it power to seize interned German ships of 600,000 tonnage. It is almost too late for any measure that will help the Department of Agriculture to increase materially the spring sowing. It was, perhaps, an achievement to get through a Congress so badly organized as ours a declaration of war, a seven billion dollar issue and a conscription bill, all within four weeks. But in the time that has since elapsed no reason has been given for believing that without the persisting pressure of a definite public interest, Congress, leaderless and in doubt as to its objectives, can make progress proportionate to its powers.

C. M.

CORRESPONDENCE

Must Economize

SIR: The President made an appeal to all citizens to prevent waste and practice economy. Many of us have felt that we were called upon to make radical curtailment of our living expenses and we have carried out all sorts of economies. The pleasant consciousness of a patriotic duty fulfilled has more than compensated for what we have denied ourselves.

Suddenly there comes a staggering blow to our patriotic impulse to save in the form of a warning from Mr. Howard E. Coffin of the advisory commission of the Council of National Defense against indiscriminate economy. This warning, which has been taken up by the press and re-echoed through the country, has been aimed directly at us, for our economies have certainly been indiscriminate.

It would seem presumptuous for some of us to question the wisdom of issuing warnings against economy, had we not long ago been taught by political economists to regard with suspicion any line of reasoning which seemed to prove that "unproductive consumption" was necessary to give employment to labor. If such arguments are fallacious in times of peace how do they apply to a nation anxious to assume its full share of the burden of this great war? For all the warring nations the greatest problem has been to