

Says Bi-Partisan Combination Raises New Crop of Profiteers For Gigantic Loot of Public

BY GEORGE McHAMPTON,
Director Farmer's National Council.

Washington, July 18.—President Wilson in one of his speeches said "We are fighting to secure for all peoples participation upon fair terms in the economic opportunities of the world."

While that was one of our chief reasons for entering the war, unfortunately there are many members of Congress who were keen for the war but have proved themselves not fully loyal to America's purposes in entering the world conflict for democracy.

It looks very much as though some "practical" men were getting ready to try a lot of fat for both parties for the 1920 campaign. Several bills have been introduced in the present session of Congress to alienate the natural resources of the country's coal, phosphate sodium oil, oil shale and gas on public domain or to permit private exploitation of the water powers of the country in public ownership upon terms grossly unfair to the public. If enacted into law, these bills will rob the American people as Germany would not have dared to do, had she conquered this country.

Nearly a dozen bills to despoil the American people of their natural resources have been introduced in the House and in the Senate. The House committee on Public Lands reported within a year that the estimated tonnage of bituminous coal in public ownership in accessible areas is 10,000,000,000 tons; of semi-bituminous coal, 30,000,000,000 tons; and of lignite coal 50,000,000,000 tons—a total of 90,000,000,000 tons. This report estimates the value of phosphate in its natural state in public lands at \$90,000,000. The value of the oil and gas on the nearly 600,000,000 acres of public land in the United States is incalculable, and there is energy enough in the water power of the United States to keep the business of the world running for countless years.

Our natural resources still in public ownership are conservatively worth close to \$500,000,000,000, which is equal to the total commercial and governmental indebtedness of the world. Much of these natural resources will be practically given away by the pending bills, which have been introduced by both Republicans and Democrats.

Private Development Wasteful.

The two most significant things about private development of natural resources have been the frightful wastefulness and the enormous profits in spite of the wastefulness. The late President Charles R. Van Hise, of the University of Wisconsin,

refuse to turn over the people's resources for the enrichment of the few and the impoverishment of the many.

Will Increase Living Cost.

The Esch Water Power Bill has been passed by the House. No hearings at this session of Congress were granted on this bill to alienate the country's natural resources in the water power for a term of fifty years with rights of renewal. The chairman of the Senate and House committees on Public Lands have informed us they do not propose to hold hearings on the bills to turn the people's natural resources in coal, phosphate, sodium, oil, oil shale, and gas owned by the United States over to would-be profiteers.

No careful estimate has been made of the waste of the oil resources of the country although it also has amounted to hundreds of millions of barrels. Dr. Van Hise estimates that the waste of natural gas, under the boasted efficiency of private development, amounts to 400,000,000 cubic feet a year.

Nearly every great fortune in the United States is based upon private ownership and development of some natural resource of the country.

In five years after the dissolution of the Standard Oil Company, the companies included in the Standard Oil combination, distributed in cash \$167,401,626; in stock at par value, \$207,200,000; and subscription rights at par to the value of \$10,000,000; a total of \$455,600,600, while the capitalization of these companies on April 15, 1912, was only \$276,916,754.

Immense Profit Made.

The Commissioner of Internal Revenue gives some interesting information as to the profits made by oil companies for the calendar year 1916, which are the last figures of the bureau available. This was before profiteering in the name of patriotism became quite the most profitable profession in America for a little group of undemocratic Americans.

In that year, corporations extracting oil had a net income of only \$14,907,086. The Commission of Internal Revenue also reports in 1916 the average net income of 2554 mine owners and operators was \$35,141. Eleven mine owners and operators had a net income in 1916 of over \$1,000,000; ten had a net income of over \$1,500,000; and several a net income of over \$5,000,000. The total net income of corporations extracting minerals was in 1916 \$79,838,349.

These figures show clearly why American financiers are so anxious to be allowed to grab the people's natural resources. They show equally clearly why Congress should

RAILROAD DEMOCRACY

BY PLUM PLAN LEAGUE.

Washington, D. C., July 18.—Labor's solution of the railroad problem finds official voice for the first time through the organization in Washington of the "Plumb Plan League." This organization is placing before the nation a plan for public operation and democracy in control of the railroads. The league is supported by the two million organized railroad workers; the executive council of the American Federation of Labor has been instructed to co-operate with it. Samuel Gompers, President of the America Federation of Labor, is its honorary president and nineteen high officials of national and international labor organizations form the corps of officers.

The railroad question is at vital interest not only to the railway workers, not only to labor in general, but to every person.

The cost of living to every American citizen. Could any governmental agency be as wasteful and increase the high cost of living as much as it has been and will be increased by the turning over of our natural resources for exploitation by our un-American profiteers? Some years ago the government was obliged to appoint a receiver for certain oil wells and the late Mr. E. J. Justice, of the attorney general's office reported, "He (the receiver) has also operated every well at a reduced cost as compared with the cost to the company that preceded him."

The pending legislation will increase the price of farm machinery, of transportation on railroads and of fares on city railways. It will add to the cost of practically everything we have to use or wear. In our opinion the legislation is designed to prevent government development of these natural resources, which all forward-looking farmers of America demand.

The American people should promptly write their United States Senators and Congressmen urging them to defeat these measures which are in contempt of democracy and in defiance of the expressed will of the people of America, recorded when we entered the war.

SOCIETE FRANCAISE

"LE SECOURS A LA FRANCE."

La Société "Le Secours à la France" a été fondée en juillet 1918 par un groupe de Français et d'amis de la France afin de soulager les souffrances causées par une guerre atrocité et barbare, de venir en aide aux populations ruinées et sans abri des "pays envahis, d'aider à la reconstruction des foyers détruits.

La cotisation minimale de 25 sous par mois a permis à la société d'envoyer les sommes suivantes aux adresses ci-dessous:

Orphelins Français	153500
Régions libérées	300.00
Refugiés	300.00
L'Aisne dévastée	200.00
Tuberculeux	200.00
Massieurs aveugles	200.00
Orphelins Belges	100.00
Société des Mutilés	100.00
Société des Aveugles	100.00
Foyer du Soldat Aveugle	100.00
L'Armée des mutilés de la Terre et de mer	100.00
Croix Rouge Française	100.00
Croix Rouge Américaine	75.00
Total	3,510.00

Malgré l'armistice et la perspective d'une paix prochaine, la Société ne considère pas son œuvre comme achevée. Les ruines amoncelées des régions, hier encore envahies, demandent, plus que jamais, l'aide et les secours des Français et des amis de la France. Aussi la Société se propose-t-elle non seulement de continuer ses envois mensuels à la France, mais, d'en augmenter l'importance si possible; et dans ce but, elle fait un appel urgent au dévouement de tous ses anciens membres, et à la bienveillance effective de tous ceux qui voudront se joindre à elle en lui envoyant leur cotisation de 25 sous tous les mois.

Le Comité de Secours de la Société est heureux d'offrir gratuitement ses services à tous ceux qui voudraient envoyer directement en France un secours quelconque, en indiquant l'attribution désirée. Il les tiendra au courant des démarches faites dans le but indiqué, leur offrant, à l'appui, tous documents en sa possession, de même que les accusés de réception des destinataires, le cas échéant.

Le Comité de Secours est composé comme suit:

Mme Bordes, Mme Poujol, Mme Marthe Despauz, Messrs. Maurin, Lahadie et Rémond.

Mme Poujol, trésorière, recevra au No. 232, rue Bourbon, Nouvelle-Orléans, les contributions de n'importe quelle nature, et le comité se chargera de les faire parvenir au but désigné.

Le Président
J. A. BUISSON.

rates are decreased five per cent.

Without new economies or new business the surplus the next year would be only \$250,000,000, and the employees and the government would receive only half the amount of the year before. But decreased rates mean more business; and also, the reduction in dividends would stimulate the employees to improve their operation by applying better methods.

Decreased rates mean cheaper commodities; and so, through the effectiveness of the railroads, the purchasing-power of money is increased, not only for the railroad man, but for every wage earner and every purchaser.

The rate-making power remains with the Interstate Commerce Commission. Should operation by the directors result in a deficit, Congress can revoke their charter.

This guarantees the people the final control over its property.

Wages and Disputes.

Wages are to be determined by the board of directors.

Disputes which may arise between official and classified employees are to be adjusted by boards composed of ten men, five elected by each class of employees. In case of failure to reach any agreement, the question would be referred to the board of directors for settlement.

Immense savings will result even from the machinery for assuming financial control of railroad properties.

Every \$500,000 salary paid to an unnecessary or incompetent railroad official adds just that much to the selling cost of transported articles. The past era of private ownership and control has seen

by each class of employees. In case of failure to reach any agreement, the question would be referred to the board of directors for settlement.

Immense savings will result even from the machinery for assuming financial control of railroad properties.

The public can obtain the money to purchase the lines at 4 per cent, whereas the public is now charged rates to guarantee the railroads about 6-1/2 per cent on their money. The saving on the present capital account of the railroads would be about \$100,000,000; and in an honest valuation would be nearly twice this sum.

The Plumb Plan provides for a sinking fund, and every year one of the fixed charges would be one per cent of the outstanding indebtedness, to be used in retiring the bonds.

The government also uses its profits in retiring bonds, so eventually, probably in fifty years, the people would own the roads as a unified system, which permits the interchange of equipment, the end of wasteful competition, and greater economy in buying supplies.

The courts are to decide the real value of the private interests in the railroads. It can be determined only after examination of the charters of the existing companies, the laws under which they were created and the extent to which each company has lived up to its charter and the laws.

Operation will be by a board of fifteen directors; five named by the president to represent the public; five elected by managerial officers; five elected by the classified employees. This plan is free from the evils of government operation. It eliminates the opportunity for control by an inefficient, politically appointed management.

It gives each man in the industry a voice in the management of the railroads.

Disposition of Surplus.

Any surplus above operating expenses and the payment of fixed charges (including interest on outstanding government securities) is divided equally between the government and the men. This provides a stimulus to the employees since a surplus may be secured only through increases in efficiency and by the creation of new business.

The share of the surplus going to the government is to be used for improvements and extensions, and to retire outstanding bonds.

The share going to the men will be divided among the managerial and classified employees, but the former class receives double the rate of the latter.

By giving the official employees twice the rate of dividend going to classified labor, the extra responsibility of management is recognized, and the public is protected against a combination of employers for the purpose of unduly increasing wages.

For the official employees would lose in their share of dividends through a general wage increase, so they are committed to the dividend system; and to win a wage increase the directors of the classified men would have to convince the public's directors of its justice.

This arrangement, however, will not cause hostility between the two classes of employees, as sincere co-operation will be necessary to provide increasing efficiency in operation and to secure new business—the only way of creating a surplus to be divided.

Each class, in working for its own dividend, is working for the dividend of the other class.

Reduction of Rates.

When the government's share of the surplus is five per cent or more of the gross operating revenue, rates shall be reduced accordingly to absorb the amount the government receives.

For instance, if the entire surplus one year is \$500,000,000, and this were ten per cent of the gross operating revenue, the government receives \$250,000,000.

And because this is five per cent

BOTTIN DES SOCIÉTÉS FRANÇAISES

Société Française de Bienfaisance et d'Assistance Mutuelle de la Nouvelle-Orléans, organisée le 14 mars 1843. Local de la société, 1820 St. Anne. Officiers: Président, J. M. Vergnolle; Vice-Président, François Bildstein; Secrétaire, A. J. Bonner; Trésorier, William Gomez. Séances le 1^{er} et 3^e jeudi de chaque mois, au local de la société.

La Société de 14 Juillet, Incorporée le 25 avril 1890. (École gratuite pour garçons.) Local de la société, au coin des rues Espérance et Bourbon. Officiers: Président, F. Bildstein; Premier Vice-Président, Charles D. Fouche; Deuxième Vice-Président, H. Duhesme; Secrétaire, L. F. Martin. Séances le second vendredi de chaque mois, au local de la société.

Les Enfants de la France, fondée en septembre 1891. Local social, 730 Avenue de l'Esplanade. Officiers: Président, J. A. Buisson; Secrétaire, F. Surmery; Secrétaire, René E. Clerc. Séances le 1^{er} mercredi de chaque mois, au local de la société.

Société des Bouchers, organisée en 1861, incorporée le 17 octobre 1867. Officiers: Président, Sylvain Dumestre; Vice-Président, Maurice Cazanonne; Secrétaire, Paul Vandeborre. Séances le 1^{er} jeudi de chaque mois, au local de la société.

L'Alliance Franco-Louisianaise, fondée le 16 octobre 1908. Officiers: Président, J. M. Vergnolle; Vice-Président, Emile Ecuyer; Secrétaire, André Lafargue, 407 Rue Carondelet; Trésorier, Matareas Routier; Deuxième Vice-Président, J. P. Bouvier; Secrétaire, Nemours H. Nunez, Jr. Réunions générales le dernier jeudi de chaque mois à 4 heures p. m.

Le Secours à la France, fondée en août 1916. Local social, 730 avenue de l'Esplanade. Officiers: Président, J. A. Buisson; Premier Vice-Président, L. A. Maurin; Deuxième Vice-Président, J. Darribere; Secrétaire, Mme Amélie Pujol; Secrétaire générale le dernier vendredi de chaque mois, au local de la société.

Société de Secours Mutuals la France, fondée le 16 avril 1891. Officiers: M. le Consul de France; Président, H. Duhesme; Vice-Président, J. A. Buisson; Secrétaire, André Lafargue, 407 Rue Carondelet; Trésorier, P. Cazalot. Séances le troisième mercredi de chaque mois, au local de la société.

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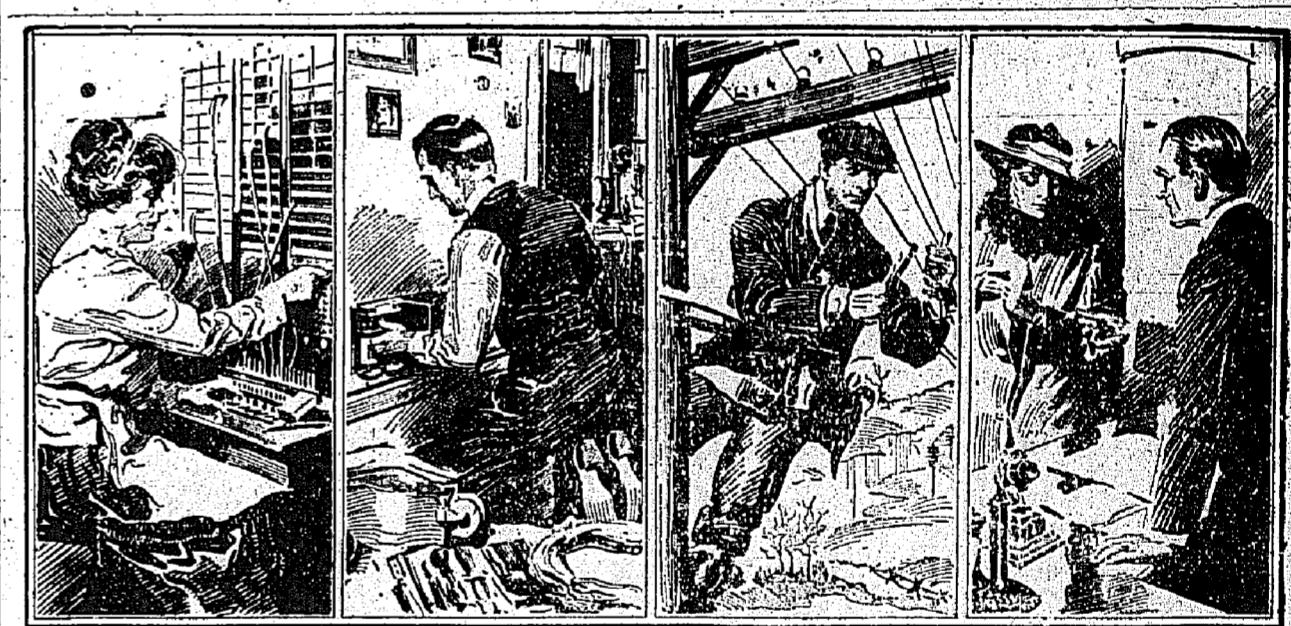
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