



What Are We Facing?

By Dr. Preston Bradley

situation. Our future is no more secure as a democracy than our ability to solve the problem of unemployment, to get people back to productive and creative work on

EDITOR'S NOTE

We are pleased to have the privilege of presenting herewith extracts from an address on a timely subject given by Dr. Preston Bradley, pastor of the People's church, Chicago, before the Evanston Chamber of Commerce on March 28.

a living wage scale, the gradual elimination of people from relief rolls and the loosening of the frozen credit which now exists in the financial structure. This is the problem which faces us and which we are to

my glass here at the table is pure water. That is a responsibility which the government has. They have a right to demand that the milk that you feed to your children is pure, but what no government under the democratic order has a right to do is to enter into competition with legitimate private industry and to embarrass the development of industry by governmental interference. The tremendous purchasing power of the government, the opportunity which it has in this regard is all out of proportion to that granted to individual enterprises, and yet democracy cannot exist without individual enterprise.

THERE is an old adage which we frequently hear, that the only way to judge the future is by the past. We who are concerned with the problems of democracy need to heed this adage. It is necessary, before we speculate upon what the future will bring, that we give evidence of our familiarity with the historical processes. One who is alarmed and concerned for the future of democracy needs to study very carefully the contributing factors which have entered into the death of democracies on the European continent.

How Dictators Arise

Dictators always arise when governments fail. We must not forget that the revolution which drove the Czar from the throne of Russia was a revolution of the Social Democrats who attempted to establish a Parliamentary Government. Alexander Kerensky, now in the United States, was the leader of that government which collapsed in the presence of the onslaught of Communism. The reason for the collapse was the inability of the newly established government to solve the economic and industrial tragedy of the Russian people. A hungry man and a jobless man is always a susceptible man to any idea or philosophy of government which would create for him a better condition.

In Germany, we must not forget after the revolution and the eradication of the Kaiser, that Germany, under the Constitution of Weimar, established a parliamentary government and elected a harnessmaker as President, which all collapsed with the onslaughts of Hitler, and why? Because the government could not function in eradicating the industrial and economic conditions from which the German people were suffering as a result of the Versailles treaty which attempted an economic mortgage upon a great people for an untenable number of years.

In a lesser sense is this true of Italy, but it was nevertheless suggested by the failure of the previous Italian government to meet the economic and industrial demands of the people, and the way for Mussolini was definitely paved by this inability.

In America we are facing the identical

solve if we are to triumph as a democratic people.

Dictatorship Impends

There are evidences, particularly among the higher bracket group of government, that democracy cannot function, and there is an ever increasing tendency to so centralize government into the hands of a few men, that dictatorship impends.

There is no better example that we have here in the United States in our present administration in Washington than the so-called Reorganization bill. While I am speaking to you here, the halls of the Senate are reverberating with the protestations of those members of that highest of all legislative bodies in this world, in an effort to prevent the passage of this vicious and unnecessary bill. Our hope, in the event that the Senate passes the bill this afternoon, is that from there it must go to the House of the Congress and inasmuch as the House is nearer the source of political power than the Senate, the people of this country, when aroused to the real character of this bill, will assert themselves in an effective manner.

Democracy depends upon an educated and intelligent citizenry, and when the citizens become informed as to the real principle of this Reorganization bill, they will demonstrate their opposition, and an active, highly organized opposition is always necessary in a democracy, particularly when the people are confused that an Administration and the Government are identical. The Administration is not the Government—the Government is the People, and the People can do what they choose to do with the Administration when they choose to do it.

Interference in Private Industry

Every student of democracy is always ready to admit that the abuses which grow up within the structures of government ought to be eradicated by governmental processes. There are definitely certain actions which a responsible government must perform when these abuses exist; that is the responsibility of our government. The City of Evanston has a right to know and to demand unquestionably that the water that I drink out of

Individual Obligations

Our future is no more secure as a democracy than is the unhampered opportunity for development of individual enterprises within the governmental structure. A new philosophy seems to be growing up within our democracy and that is that government is obligated to us and we have assumed that our rights are paramount, when the fact of the matter is that our responsibility to our government and our interest in our duties as well as our rights are quite as important as the present emphasis. It is not what I can get out, but it is what I can put in to society and to democracy that establishes its permanence. The increasing tendency to shift the responsibility onto an ever diminishing, ever centralizing group is the identical process which finally resulted in the totalitarian State. The totalitarian State commands and demands the entire loyalty of the individual. It can admit of no deviation, it must control the sources of information, it must absolutely deny protective measures incorporated in the Bill of Rights, trial by jury, the right of habeas corpus, and all other safeguards must be destroyed and are destroyed in the totalitarian state. Not only man's economic interests, his intellectual, cultural and religious interests all fall within this category.

Totalitarian State Revolting

All this is revolting to me, more revolting than I can possibly express, and when I see the evidence of the tendency in our own country toward that sort of philosophy, I tremble for our future. It is not too late, nothing has been done which cannot be undone. We can save democracy for our country, for ourselves; it all depends on how much we want to save it. A revival of interest on the part of the people is essential. We must educate, inspire and encourage. Morale is important, never more so. We must create confidence; we must inspire confidence. Democracy has worked, democracy can work, and democracy will work, if we who love it are willing to sacrifice for it as well as make demands upon it.