

felt the same way. But finally we bought 380 acres of about the poorest land in Winnebago County. The owner was willing to carry the mortgage for a time — glad enough to get rid of the land.

There you have it, a thin farm on a very thin shoestring and a heavy mortgage. Perhaps I didn't know enough about it to be scared. We even got the local Production Credit Association to loan us money to buy feeder cattle. They finally got their money back — but take my advice: Don't ever loan anybody money to buy cattle if he knows nothing about how to feed them!

Part of our 380-acre tract was too sandy to plow, and more than one-third of it too wet. We have now planted nearly 150,000 pine trees on the sandy land for Christmas tree production, and dug ditches and built dykes in the slough land. We even bought 120 acres more of the stuff at the fabulous price of \$17.50 an acre. Then we threw a couple of carloads of muriate of potash on the peaty loam and changed the value of the land from \$17.50 per acre to — you name it! — let us say conservatively, \$300.00.

In the first instance, calamity followed disobedience. In the second, all the success my family and I have achieved has come as

reward for obedience to economic and physical laws. This was a personal and a family struggle, the success of which was guaranteed by no one. In the light of this experience I am convinced that such struggle is a blessing, not a curse.

Strength Through Struggle

No people ever became greater than the difficulties they had to overcome. Strength comes from exercise, work, struggle. It is in effort that physical and mental health is born.

These are days of terrific tension. The lines of our problems seem to be drawn almost to the breaking point. Perhaps we need to remember that there is no music in a violin with loose strings. The strings of a fiddle have to be stretched almost to the breaking point to bring it in tune, and only then can a musician play upon it. I have faith to believe that something great, perhaps divine, will eventually come out of the staggering tension which now grips the world. For great problems produce great men as well as great events.

Still, there are plenty of people who plead for subsidies, hoping to benefit from federal aid without suffering the hardship of federal control. But that is a false hope. Controls are inseparable from grants. The mess agriculture is in

today, the staggering government supports, and the creeping paralysis of government control of agricultural markets as well as the attempted control of production, puts every farmer deeper and deeper in subjection, and more and more dependent on the caprice of bureaucratic dictation. How can we be naive enough to think that the government can give us anything which it does not first take away from us?

Think of it as we will, argue about it as we wish, habitual federal aid is indicative of a vast transformation from a free economy to a planned economy. And may we never forget, when we no longer have a free economy, we are no longer a free people. And that is the dynamic and didactic thing our money is trying to say to us today.

I have a neighbor who has done exceedingly well in the farming business, yet he consistently takes from the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Committee (ASC) every dollar he can get, not because he needs it, but because he argues that if you can get it, you're a fool if you don't take it. He said to me: "Why not? I figure those fellows in Washington are a lot smarter than I am, and if this is the way they want it, who am I to object?"

Now a man like that can't con-

vince me that he is in favor of government economy so long as he eagerly grabs government payments, money which has come out of the pockets of other people who owe him nothing.

Character Will Stand

In the last analysis, our salvation will not come out of Washington. It will come, if it comes at all, in that secret relationship which each man works out between himself and his God. Personal responsibility, integrity, and faith are the building blocks which erect that stalwart edifice of character which is the only building worthy to stand through tomorrow. The only loyalty that has the power to save modern civilization is loyalty to truth. If we consistently practice a lie, we will inevitably be destroyed by that falsehood; for only the truth will survive. That is the judgment of human history, as it is the decree of God's universe, and it will be the verdict which shapes the future.

Money talks! It is saying to us with all its power: "Economic wrong-doing and economic falsehood lead eventually to economic poverty and human slavery. Economic rightness which is in harmony with eternal truth alone will lead us to economic prosperity and human freedom." • • •