

ownership and accumulation of property, on the humanitarian theory that property ought to be divided more equitably, has worked in practice to destroy the worker's security—his right to the product of his labor and his right to offer his services as he pleases in exchange for what he wants. Such a compulsory socialization quickly depletes the supposed vast reserves of the owners of capital; and then the government finds that it must either abandon its position or else start digging into the working man's reserve, directing each to the work planned for him. The history of such movements is too consistent to allow reasonable hope for any other result under any "labor" government.

Some persons, at this point, may insist that these evils will exist whether the government favors "labor" or not. And there is a wealth of evidence to support such a view. We know that the citizens of other societies have felt the yoke of oppression, as in ancient Greece and Rome, in the Russia of the czars and then of the communists, and particularly in those situations where the church has held the monopoly powers of government. It was not a "labor" government from which the early American colonists sought independence.

Perhaps the truth is that governmental planning and compulsion, as a substitute for the market, is in itself the evil which wrecks lives and makes for bad relationships within

a society. If so, then it is wrong to give any person, or group, or so-called class, the right to plan and govern the social relationships of individuals. The self-interest of those who work and of those who have saved and accumulated capital is not detrimental to peaceful progress within society; rather, the thing to be feared and guarded against is the reckless abandonment of self-interest to a supposed class interest with the power to govern. And, if such power has developed and is being used to oppress other persons and groups within a society, the solution would seem to involve the displacement of such coercive power, not with a new "class" of governors, but with a new reliance upon freedom. The lifting of restraints and restrictions upon personal choice—the freeing of the market so that each may bargain with what is properly his own—is the only assurance of justice to every individual.

Government Wage Control

EFFORTS AT GOVERNMENT wage control in the United States have proven unsatisfactory; and, of all people, perhaps the wage earner is most conscious of that failure. Such control interferes with production. It robs individuals of the incentive to produce because it forbids employers to pay higher wages for added service. Freezing wage patterns tends to freeze production in all lines