

DISHONEST BUSINESS

IF THE MILLIONS of workingmen in this country who are patiently paying their social security dues could glimpse the bureaucratic absolutism which that act presages for themselves and their children they would repudiate the whole monstrous and dishonest business overnight. When a government takes over a people's economic life it becomes absolute, and when it has become absolute it destroys the arts, the minds, the liberties and the meaning of the people it governs. It is not an accident that Germany, the first paternalistic state of modern Europe was seized by an uncontrollable dictator who brought on the second world war; not an accident that Russia, adopting a centrally administered economy for humanitarian reasons, has arrived at a tyranny bloodier and more absolute than that of the Czars. And if England does not turn back soon she will go this same way. Men who are fed by their government will soon be driven down to the status of slaves or cattle.

CYNICAL PROFESSIONALS

ALL THESE DANGERS were foreseen by the political leaders who put our Constitution together after the revolution against England. The Constitution is so built that while we adhere

to it we cannot be governed by one man or one faction, and when we have made mistakes we reserve the right to change our minds. The division of powers and the rotation of offices was designed to protect us against dictatorship and arbitrary authority. The fact that there are three branches of government makes for a salutary delay and a blessed inefficiency, the elective rotation makes for a government not by cynical professionals, but by normally honest and fairly incompetent amateurs. That was exactly what the wary old founding fathers wanted, and if we are wise we shall keep it, for no scheme in the history of the world has succeeded so well in maintaining the delicate balance between personal liberty and the minimum of authority which is necessary for the free growth of ideas in a tolerant society. But we shall not keep our Constitution, our freedom, nor our free elections, if we let our government slide gradually into the hands of economic planners who bribe one class of men after another with a state-administered dole.

A GIVE-AWAY PROGRAM

SINCE *Knickerbocker Holiday* was written, the power of government in the United States has grown like a fungus in wet weather, price supports and unemployment benefits and farm subsidies are the rule, not the exception, and