

propose that the weekly pay shall not be reduced under the new conditions.

It is evident that these two theories are in some respects mutually inconsistent. The advocates of the first theory do not contemplate a loss in production, while the advocates of the second do not appear to be thinking of compensating the producers for the loss of time. Personally, I believe that the labor leaders referred to, if I have not misinterpreted their mind, are on a mistaken road. There are times when a slowing up of the pace of production might have a very wholesome influence on the market for commodities. There are other times when the restoration of normal and healthy industrial conditions would seem to call for increased production.

But now comes Dr. Person with a rather new slant on the matter. He seems to conceive of the shortened work period as something in the nature of an extra reward which industry, either now or at some future time, may be able to make to the worker.

IT IS not easy to foresee by what expedient American statesmanship will solve, as it certainly will, the problem of how to adapt to American political conditions some equivalent to the British and German national systems of universal insurance providing maintenance during those periods of life in which wage earning is impossible. In short, what American civilization seems most to lack—from the standpoint of the vast majority of the heads of families who are "hired men"—is economic security. In spite of unparalleled private wealth, unusually effectively open to all, though necessarily attained only by a small minority—in spite, too, of an average of earnings and of individual savings, throughout an unprecedented aggregate of wage earners, higher than the world has ever seen—there remains the definite statistical probability that any given wage earner will, in the United States, find himself at one or other time "fired"; that he will at one or other period in his life go through at least one pro-

longed spell of involuntary unemployment; that he will be at various periods incapacitated by sickness or accident; that he will under one or other of these trials exhaust all the family savings; that his wife may be left a widow, and his offspring at a helpless age orphaned, without any adequate maintenance; that his children may grow up insufficiently protected against disease and very inadequately educated; and that, if they or their parents live the allotted span, the chances are that they will find their old age one of extreme penury, and possibly of dependence on charity. The statistician has to tell us that, however numerous may be the exceptions, these are the liabilities of the main body of wage earners, the "common lump of men," in the United States as in the other nations of western civilization, liabilities which, in no small fraction of the mass, are bound to become actualities. (Sidney and Beatrice Webb in *Whither Mankind* edited by Charles A. Beard, pages 132-133.)

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The Philosophy of Taylorism

An Address Made by Mr. Henri Le Chatelier at the Opening of the Congress on Management in France, June 26, 1924

Translated by ELEANOR BUSHNELL COOKE

I HAVE accepted with pleasure the honor of speaking to you today on the subject of scientific management. I thank the directors of the Congress for having given me this opportunity to cast a retrospective eye over a field in which I am particularly interested. When I wrote fifteen years ago the preface to "The Principles of Scientific Management" by Taylor, I could hardly foresee the success of this publication. Twenty thousand copies were sold in a few years; all French engineers became acquainted with Taylorism. You will pardon me for recalling this success with some pride. However, in considering the actual state of the diffusion of the methods of this great American engineer in our shops, I cannot refrain from a definite feeling of sadness. If the progress made has been important it might have been, and it should have been, infinitely more so. Many mistakes have been made; without being understood the Taylor system has been combatted or misapplied by those so obsessed by unimportant details as to lose sight completely of the fundamental principles of this new science. I should like to try to clarify the philosophy of Taylorism at this time.

The Prejudice Concerning "Speeding-Up"

One of the greatest difficulties encountered is the result of the interference of the daily press. In order to satisfy those readers on whom false and absurd ideas act as a red rag to a bull, newspaper men lie in ambush for all the apparent contradictions; "the ardent ray of Matthews, the dog of la Couture," illustrate this unfortunate state of mind. Their contention is that the object of Taylorism is the organization of unduly intensive work, and this persistent statement has become a dogma for many of these too artless readers. It is interesting to note how public opinion can be fooled by these things. The prejudice against such intensive work

has been diffused among intellectual circles through articles, inspired by the publication of an English journalist named Fraser, who has completely misrepresented Taylorism. After having described the great Baldwin Locomotive Works of Philadelphia, Frazer tells the following story. Having expressed in the course of a visit to a similar factory his astonishment at seeing only young men in the shops, the manager proposed to conduct him to the place assigned to those of greater age. After a good breakfast he tendered him a large cigar and conducted him to the cemetery. Without wishing to discuss the veracity or the good taste of this anecdote, it suffices to say that Fraser has never mentioned a Taylorized shop. He did not visit a single one during his trip and does not seem even to suspect the existence of new methods of work, to which he makes no allusion whatsoever. In the Baldwin and other similar shops the method employed was the negation of all system. The rule of work could be expressed in two words: hard work and cleaning up. The application of the legend of the cemetery to Taylorized shops, where the dominating idea is, on the contrary, to suppress all useless effort and work, is therefore, a sign of bad faith. But in spite of this many persons supposed to be intelligent repeat seriously, "I read it in the paper."

Predetermination

Let us seek then to define the spirit of Taylorism. We will take for example the case of the man of brawn so often quoted to discredit all attempts at organization. Taylor tells us that in the handling of pig iron billets he successfully employed the man of brawn type who was able to carry forty-five tons of pigs a day. From this the conclusion has been drawn that all the workmen in the Taylorized factories have to be of the husky type. It would