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At Loss for Entertainment?

Jane Goode

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Why a General Sales Tax?

By ALBERTA R. CRARY*

What effect will the general Sales Tax have on the average tax payer? He will pay more for what he buys. He will pay more taxes than his income warrants as compared with wage earners in higher brackets. The man with a wife and four children with \$5,000 income will pay more in comparison than the man with the same number of dependents and an income of \$10,000. For the present, the expenditures for a family are going to be limited more or less to necessities—no new cars, fancy clothes, refrigerators and other luxury household items. It will not be a case of a family buying what they can afford, and so pay sales tax on luxury items. The family will buy the necessities they are able to secure, depending on present and future curtailments of consumer buying.

In order to receive revenue from sales tax levies, the buying public must be able to get merchandise for which they are willing to spend their money. For myself, I do not expect that I will be able to secure all the necessities for my home or business. I cannot add new equipment for my business, as business machines are being reserved for defense industries. During the past four years the largest part of our profits have gone into new and better equipment. For the duration of the war we shall do well to obtain the necessary office supplies to run the office. The car that is used to carry the staff out on the job presents the problem of rubber and gasoline, a problem common to every business and home. The spending for home, office, and business will be cut to bare obtainable necessities. The things left for us to buy will not raise much revenue for the government, nor cut into our incomes. Yet, the income of accounting offices generally will be larger if the sales tax should be passed, as systems must be installed for the business man to collect and remit the tax to the government.

The argument raised in favor of the paying of the sales tax is that it is easier to

collect, and that the extraction of the money is painless, as has been proven in states where sales tax has been paid. I differ with that opinion in every respect. The collection of sales tax has loaded the merchants all over the country with expensive accounting problems, forced the average business man to furnish cash bond to his state to insure the payment of the tax. Sales tax laws have changed the nation's business men from merchants to tax collectors. The states that collect the sales tax maintain expensive departments to receive the tax, verify the correctness of the returns, and to make sure that all tax collectors are collecting and paying the tax according to requirements. Such a department will be necessary for the Federal Government if the general sales tax is passed.

The present efficient income tax division of the Internal Revenue office is very capable of handling increased income taxes. Let us have a Higher Income Tax Rate. If it is going to take 25, 35, or even 50 percent of our incomes to win this war, let us as Americans face the issue squarely and pay that tax on our incomes. The income tax law is a Democratic institution. The income tax collection period just closed on March 15, brought nearly every man and woman to the realization that he owes his government a debt for the privilege of living and working here and must pay the way to keep that right. At least 99 percent of all the people through our office during the past 2½ months for whom we did income tax work, were eager and willing to pay their share. Some of those whose taxes were not as high as they had expected bought Defense Bonds with the difference. Only the American people will win this war. Let the American people pay for it on the income tax which takes the proportionate amount of every American's income. There is no fairer tax.

At Loss for Entertainment?

"Feminine Figures" is the title of a skit written by Jane Goode to entertain guests at a recent A. S. W. A. tea. At your editor's suggestion she has agreed to permit any of the chapters to use it if they are interested.

*Miss Alberta R. Crary heads her own accounting office in Whittier, Calif. A native of Colorado and educated at Western State College of Colorado, she is Legislation Chairman, Los Angeles Chapter A. S. W. A. Special interests—Merchandising Accounting and Tax Law.