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THE END OF THE "BREATHING SPELL"

President Roosevelt's promise of a "breathing spell" to business has gone the way of a long list of other New Deal promises.

It has followed into the waste paper basket the Democratic platform pledge of a 25% reduction in the cost of the Federal Government, the platform pledge for maintenance of national credit by a Federal budget annually balanced, the platform pledge of a sound currency to be preserved at all hazards, the platform pledge favoring unemployment relief through the extension of Federal credit to the States, the platform pledge for the removal of government from all fields of private industry except where necessary to develop public works and national resources in the common interest. The "breathing spell" has likewise gone the way of the platform declaration that: "A party platform is a covenant with the people to be faithfully kept by the party when entrusted with power;" and lastly, it has gone the way of Mr. Roosevelt's declaration that he was for the 1932 platform 100%.

Of course, only the very gullible ever took the "breathing spell" promise seriously. The phrase originated in an interchange of letters between Mr. Roy Howard, a prominent newspaper apologist for the New Deal, and the President. One of Mr. Howard's employees, Mr. Heywood Broun, characterized it at the time as "a daisy chain." It was generally accepted as an arranged publicity stunt. But whatever the circumstances surrounding the promise, the "breathing spell" is now definitely ended, if indeed it ever existed.

The most recent evidence of the death and burial of the "breathing spell" is to be found in Mr. Roosevelt's so-called tax program, as outlined in his special message to Congress last month, and in his request for an additional \$1,500,000,000 to supplement the \$4,880,000,000 blank check appropriation which Congress gave to him last year for relief purposes.

The tax program is an amplification and an aggravation of the "soak-the-rich" proposal enacted into law on the President's recommendation last year at a time when the administration was seeking to steal the thunder of the late Huey Long's "share-the-wealth" project. The request for the additional \$1,500,000,000 for relief purposes illustrates that the administration cannot or will not profit by its own mistakes. Adequate appropriations for direct relief to prevent suffering are approved by the American people. But experience with the spending of the \$4,880,000,000 appropriation demonstrates clearly that the so-called work relief program is wasteful, inefficient and inevitably tainted with politics. That such a program has temporary political advantages for the party in power may be conceded, but the day of reckoning is certain to come.

In any event, the "breathing spell" is over. The nation may as well face that fact. Actions speak louder than words.