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Dear Teacher:

"WELL-PRO-  
VISIONED SHIP"

"It is a well-provisioned ship, this on which we sail through space", wrote Henry George. "If the bread and beef above decks seem to grow scarce, we but open a hatch and there is a new supply, of which before we never dreamed."

This is well illustrated by an article on water in the November 5 issue of Science News: "The total supply of water in the earth's system always stays the same. It is neither diminished nor increased. There are the same 326 million cubic miles of water today in the earth's system as there were when the earth first began . . . At any one time more than two million cubic miles of this water exist under the earth's surface, lying beneath mountains, plains, forests, cities, and even under the huge dry deserts of the world. For instance, beneath the hot sands and arid regions of the Sahara lie an estimated 150,000 cubic miles of water."

So the problems of water shortage and water pollution are no fault of nature - they are man-made and have to be solved by man.

LAW &  
CRIME

The January 7 issue of Science News had an item, "Does Law Make Crime?". It quotes economist T.C. Schelling as saying that "a large part of organized crime is the selling of commodities and services contrary to law. This includes dope, prostitution, gambling, liquor under prohibition, pornography and stolen goods . . . Essentially the question is whether (the law's) goal of somewhat limiting the consumption of narcotics, gambling, prostitution, abortion or anything else that is forced by law into the black market is or is not outweighed by the costs to society of creating a criminal industry."

Dr. Schelling does not make a recommendation, but thinks the subject should be studied from this economic point of view. However, he does suggest that "without these important black markets crime would become substantially decentralized . . . If ordinary brokerage firms were encouraged to take accounts and buy and sell bets by telephone for their customers, it is hard to see how racketeers could get any kind of grip on it."

And so, even in this shadowy realm the operation of the free market may be better than the repression of the law. See George's Protection or Free Trade.

HIDDEN  
TAXES

Columnist Sylvia Porter quotes the Tax Foundation as having estimated 151 taxes hidden in one loaf of bread. This estimate, she says, was made some years ago. "Since this study there have been additional taxes levied at the state and local levels, and substantial boosts in existing tax rates in many areas . . . Although many efforts have been made to break down hidden taxes in terms of dollars and cents on any major item . . . we cannot possibly trace the multiplicity of taxes without going into an endless chain of checking on taxes paid by each supplier of materials, etc. to the manufacturer."

The estimate of hidden taxes on each item is limited to one chain, from raw materials supplier to retailer. The Tax Foundation's estimates on 5 items are given below. "Each estimate is conservative now", says Sylvia Porter.

Egg:	100	hidden	taxes	plus
Man's suit:	116	"	"	"
Woman's hat:	150	"	"	"
Loaf of bread:	151	"	"	"

TIGHT MONEY  
& LAND PRICES

According to a nation-wide survey reported in the December 5 issue of U.S. News & World Report, the present tight money situation has not seriously affected the land boom. Land prices around the nation are generally rising, even if not shooting upward, and in only a few cases is there a tapering-off. The experts consulted around the country bring out that land speculation, like other things in our economy, has become big business, that tight money has hurt the "little guy" and is "shaking out the amateurs", but the big operators and syndicates are getting stronger.

Farmland prices are still going up, and according to Richard Watson of Geneva, Ill. are up 5 to 10 per cent over two years ago, "The inefficient part-time farmer is washed out", he says. "We will go to 1,000-acre farms."

F.R. Zoellner, a St. Louis developer, makes this estimate on land purchased for shopping centers: "About three years ago land was 40¢ a square foot, two years ago it was 90¢, and now it's around \$1.25."

The situation is summed up by Bill Chewning, a land expert of Richmond, Va.: "Population is increasing, and they're not making any more land."

DROP-OUTS

The Autumn 1966 issue of Adult Education contained "A Study of Classroom Factors Related to Drop-outs". In the study it was found that most drop-outs occur early in the course; that there is no perceptible correlation between drop-outs and a number of different teaching methods used by different teachers (e.g., use of visual aids, getting students to introduce themselves, etc.); but that there is some correlation between drop-outs and the feeling that the teacher was not treating the student as an equal. More research is needed, says the article - but the teacher treating the adult student as an equal does seem important.

Sincerely,

Robert Clancy

RC:lk

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