

FREEFOLK

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PLANNED POVERTY

Before entry into the Common Market Britain used to import 3 million tons of corn (maize) per year. Two million tons of this came from the U.S.A. at a very low price, but now the regulations of the E.C.M. will cut off this source. Accordingly farmers in England are thinking of growing corn themselves. East Anglia, Kent and Sussex are areas in which special early-maturing varieties may be grown as forage. It is doubtful if there would ever be sufficient sunshine to ripen the corn-cobs so that the grain could be used. Not only that, but it is absolutely certain that artificial drying would have to be resorted to in order to separate any seed matured. Add to these factors the certainty that the growing of corn would occupy the land so late in the year that the usual winter cereals could not be sown, and we have an additional problem.

Why cut off the U.S. source of supply? Climatic conditions in the U.S. make corn such an easy crop to raise and harvest that the grain is a ridiculously cheap carbo-hydrate for animal and human feed, and for other processing. People in Britain had to exchange little work for a ton of corn. Growing their own, they will have to expend several times as much labour per ton of corn than they previously did. Next we may expect investigation into the feasibility of growing pineapples in Britain.

Government planning of people's lives results in inefficiency, cruel waste of materials, and eventual poverty. It robs the individual of his individuality, freedom and happiness. Frustrated at every turn when he wants to attempt some innovation, he eventually loses heart and ceases to care about efficiency and improvement. So declines a society where the dross dominates and the true metal is rejected.

OVERPOPULATION?

Dr. D.A. Rennie speaking at the Farm and Home Week of the university of Saskatchewan said that farms in Saskatchewan produced 550 million bushels of wheat per year when they could produce nearly twice that amount. He also condemned the practice of summerfallow which causes soil erosion and loss of soil nutrients mainly nitrogen.

The productive potential of the Prairies is tremendous. The trend to large farms and the depopulation of rural areas does not encourage good management in which diversity is practised. The keeping of livestock which would benefit the fertility of the Prairies demands the presence of people to give constant care to the animals.

The only conclusion that can logically be drawn from such statements as those of Dr. Rennie is that a system of land tenure that encourages large farms and the depopulation of the rural areas will prevent the realisation of the true potential of the earth to support people. Moreover, such a system will quite likely result in the formation of new man-made deserts. The only true resolution of this problem must stem from a popular realisation that the earth is not property, that all men are equally entitled to its use.

TRICKY DICKIE

Nixon's inaugural speech showed that he believes that the problem of poverty would disappear if people would only

ask what they can do for themselves instead of what their country can do for them. Apparently in his alienated way he does not realise that opportunity to work for oneself exists in only a very limited way. The high price of land arrests enterprise and invention at every turn. Taxation operates to deny the worker the right to his wages and the speculator finds himself rewarded for doing nothing. Suppose every poor person was given entry to the select clubs, parties and churches where the speculative schemes are concocted, and in addition a few million dollars, no doubt he could do something for himself. By the same token, if Richard Nixon were to lose his present identity and become poor, he would have little chance of survival, probably not as much as that individual who approached on Skid Row, unzipped, staggering, to ask, "Have you a quarter for a cup of coffee buddy?"

DRAFT DODGERS

Many people think that after the cease-fire in Vietnam there will be an amnesty for those Americans who came to Canada and countries like Sweden as a matter of principle. If any U.S. problems are to be solved, these people will be needed to apply their talents for the common good. Already they have proved that they are the only ones who correctly interpreted the Vietnam situation.

PRESTIGE

The Trudeau government shows great haste to offer the services of young Canadians in a peace-keeping force in Vietnam. What the British Army is suffering in Northern Ireland is a picnic compared with what will happen in S.E. Asia. Young sincere men will have to die to enhance the reputation for statesmanship of the senescent pöer-hungry.

KIDS IN SCHOOL

This month let us talk about the children who attend public schools. In the majority of cases the attitude of a child to his peers and to his school is a direct reflection of the type of home he came from. Where parents take their responsibilities seriously and give their children unstintingly of their time, we find children who are inquisitive, keen to learn and co-operative with their teachers. This is almost invariably true in elementary school. Where parents spend their leisure time on their own pleasure and leave their children to baby-sitters, we find children with emotional problems, but the most serious problems are found where there is a broken home and a single parent has to earn a living and also attempt to rear a child at the same time.

In junior high-school, all the problems seem to intensify as children try to cope with puberty, but there is still a minority who remain well-balanced and profit from attendance. However, in some junior high schools in populous areas, all semblance of a learning situation has disappeared and it is a case of hell let loose.

In the senior high-schools the attitudes of the students have crystallised. There is the destructive element, - those who vandalise the building and equipment. Most of these are forced into attending by foolish parents who may want to claim a family allowance for a child at school, or may imagine that there is some urgent necessity to "get grade 12", since father only had grade 10 and that is why he has a poor job (allegedly). The reluctant student derives no benefit from attendance, - quite the opposite. Students of another group have at last realised that what they have been told about achieving at a high level in order to get a better job is a lot of nonsense, that influence is a better qualification than merit, and so these people are "turned off".

Cover.

That leaves maybe one quarter of the senior high-school population who are in attendance as serious students. If it costs \$1,000 a year to keep a boy or girl in school, only \$1,000 out of every \$4,000 is productive of beneficial result at the senior high level, - a scandalous situation and one connived in by all those receiving some kind of cut from the education dollar, - by administrators, teachers, janitors, maintenance men, secretaries and so forth. Criticism would possibly cause the loss of a job and so a tight-lipped silence prevails.

Now we see the student as a victim of his social environment, but if we consider him in relation to the power structure we see him as a double victim. The trade-unions want to keep young people off the job market and so they are strongly in favour of "more education". The government knows that if students were not imprisoned in the schools they would be searching around for work and the marvellous seasonally adjusted employment statistics would paint a blacker picture of opportunities for employment. The truth must be hidden at the cost of alienation of youth, at the cost of training in vandalism, but chiefly at the cost of years of misery for young people at a time when life should be an intense pleasure.

We treat our children thus like enemies, is there any wonder they want to opt out?.

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