

FREEFOLK

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and the injustice of taxation.

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ABOLITION OF TAXATION: THE PUBLIC COLLECTIO
OF THE FREELIN OFFERED AND AUTOMATICALLY
ADEQUATE GROUND-RENTS

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After four years of "Trudeaumania" characterised by give-aways, - give-aways to Quebec as bribes to keep the province within confederation, - give-aways to the Maritime provinces to "provide employment", - give-aways to unemployed young people, some in communes where they are said to initiate such essential industries as marijuana growing, - give-aways to keep the unemployed from demonstrating during the long hot summer, .. after all these give-aways the West has declared its disillusionment and only Quebec has yet to overcome its "Trudeaumania"

By accident a very fortunate thing has happened. The representation of Liberal and Conservative is practically equal, two other parties having a few members whose votes will tip the balance. Now Canada has at last WEAK government, - weak to head out, weak to tax, weak to bulldoze laws of hundreds of clauses which no-one understands, weak to lie about inflation, weak to issue "seasonally adjusted" statistics, weak to cut a caper in international circles, in fact, weak enough to be about the best government Canada has had for some time.

When Conservative leader (putative next P.M.) Stanfield read the campaign speeches his back-room boys wrote for him, he was not slow to point out the fact that government creation of money, not workers or storekeepers, was the cause of inflation. Now he has his chance to order its cessation, provided he understood what he has been saying, which is doubtful.

Productive workers of all kinds will have an opportunity to recover from a dazed condition resulting from law upon law which sapped their confidence in being able to produce and sell without being unexpectedly put out of business by an obscure clause in some law arbitrarily interpreted by some bureaucrat. Confidence returning, production will increase, unemployment will for a time decrease. On the whole, as things stand at present we could not have had a better result.

NOBLE SAVAGES

The Philippines have been in the news lately. The stone-age Tasaday tribe has been a marvellous find for anthropologists and those philosophers who do not believe that nature is "red in tooth and claw". The simple Tasaday do not have any idea of what fighting is about. They have no word in their language for either fighting or war. All the information forthcoming shows these primitive people to be kind and gentle. They even do not find any need to strike their children to correct them, and as for clubbing women and dragging them around by the hair, that is something dreamed up from a fevered imagination.

The Romantics of the late 18th century were more in line with the truth. They assumed that a state of nature was the height of social perfection. To them, cities with their factories and filth were putrescent excrescences on the face of the earth. The foul environment corrupted those compelled to endure it. Their morals became debased and unnatural to match their physical environment. The poet Wordsworth was a noted spokesman for the Romantic movement which coincidentally rounded off the Age of Reason. His poem Michael expresses his admiration for the human character shaped by honest work in natural surroundings, and expresses fear of the vice engendered in the city-dwelling slave of the factory system. Perhaps we should read the Romantics again and ask ourselves if it is true that One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach us more of man,
Of moral evil and of good
Than all the sages can.

In contrast from the "civilised" part of the Philippines comes the news of "land reform". The process of concentration of large holdings in few hands has led to public demand for redistribution, but the solution offered is not a just one, not an original one, nor has

it anywhere been proved a successful one. It appears to be patterned on the Indian scheme where a limit is set to the acreage private individuals may claim to own. The Philippine limit is said to be around 17 acres. Any holdings exceeding that size are to be broken up and distributed to peasants who will pay back the government for the expropriated land.

All these provisions are ridiculous. The figure of 17 acres is just taken out of the air. It would be only a one-man logging outfit that could find enough mahogany on 17 acres to keep operating for a few years. On the other hand, 17 acres in the city of Manila would provide work for thousands. The land problem is not merely one of small-scale farming, it is one that enters deeply into all forms of human activity. A redistribution to cultivators takes no cognizance of the vast sums received by urban landlords from those who wish to enjoy community-provided advantages.

The tiny minds that play with petty land distribution schemes do not improve social conditions one small bit. Things remain as they were, with the same tendencies to control by fewer and fewer people who hold increasing power. There is only one very simple means of land reform that will work, and that is for land to be held on a tenancy basis only, everyone who holds land paying its full rent into public funds in lieu of taxation.

MORNING RADIO

The editor of Le Devoir is alleged to be bemoaning the fact that "The Canadian People have elected themselves a government without teeth." - Bully for them! Teeth are made to devour, to destroy. It is high time the millions of ordinary people were given a break. Let them feel strong and secure with a government that has no teeth.

EDUCATION & POLITICS

It is a fact of life that in all places and at all times like causes give like effects. It would be safe to assume therefore that public education systems everywhere are subject to similar forces and that similar results must accrue. The situation in B.C. is not unique, it is typical of all public systems of education.

People fondly imagine that the system of supposedly autonomous school boards gives local control of the system. While it true that the members of a school board are elected locally, all school boards are under the heel of the provincial government and here is how it happens: Originally the whole of the cost of education was borne locally, funds coming from a levy against land-value. Land-speculators locally and provincially working for a tax-shift from land-titles to wages, saw to it that the provincial government which levies nothing against land in the municipalities, took over an increasing share of the cost of education. At the present time, three quarters of the education bill is paid by the province, plus another proportion not considered here, paid for by the federal government. Whoever plays the piper calls the tune, a fact of life which has resulted in centralised control of education even with a locally elected school board.

In detail, what happens is that the provincial government appoints persons of the right political hue, of course, to be district superintendents for each of the school districts. The next almost incredible step puts an end to all claims that there is local control of education. The school boards without exception now appoint this superintendent imposed upon them, as chief executive officer drawing wages from the provincial government and the school board at the same time. Again

we are led to think of a popular saying: 'No man can serve two masters.' Since the superintendent-cum-executive officer looks to the provincial government for promotion to a better district, and then to an administrative post with the provincial government, and finally to a pension from the same source, this dual personality has an overriding loyalty to the government.

Now let us attend a school board meeting. It is likely that first there will be a report from the chief executive officer. Newspaper reporters being present, this report is aimed at getting good publicity for the officer. He may make recommendations at this point, but he certainly will later in the meeting. Should school board members have suggestions counter to these recommendations, these are easily disposed of by quoting an alleged section of the Education Act. The officer is the only one as a rule who knows anything of its content. This man is a dictator skilled at manipulation. Should there be a school board member with independent ideas, the rest of the board will gang up on him or her, meeting privately before a regular meeting then going into regular session and voting through without discussion what they have already decided upon. The district superintendent-cum-executive-officer builds himself a clique of supporters in church, clubs, and among the teaching staff he has shown favour to until the local school system becomes a happy hunting ground for tale-tellers and sycophants, and a place of summary punishment for boat-rockers.

How public funds are appropriated by the empire-building clique will be explained in the next in the series, but it should never be forgotten that the root cause of the corrupt system is the fact that a tax-shift has occurred. When education was funded from land-value there was local involvement and local control. Diversity was possible, and with diversity, opportunity for improvement. Now that the local land speculators reap the benefit of ground-rent, uniformity is imposed from above.

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