

.. SAM ELY ..

MAINE LAND ADVOCATE

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April 14:

1st Maine Conference on Land Reform

What do the small farmer, the fisherman, and the woodcutter have in common? What do they have in common with homeowners, taxpayers, and tenants? How about conservationists, foresters, and land use planners?

We of the Maine Land Reform Coalition believe that all these different people (whether they know it or not) are part of a beginning movement for land reform in Maine. In order for all of us to become more conscious of this movement, and for it to take a giant step ahead, we are sponsoring the 1st Maine Conference on Land Reform. It's to be held Saturday, April 14, 1973, from 10 A.M. - 5 P.M. at the All Souls' Congregational Church (corner of State St. and Broadway) in Bangor, Maine. We hope you'll be there.

The conference promises to bring together Maine working people from across the state to exchange ideas and information, and hopefully join hands in organization for action.

A major reason for the conference is to bring together working people, who, although they do many different kinds of work, all depend on the land and its natural resources for their livelihood. These people work in several industries: timber, fishing, farming, recreation and tourism. They include workers in their own small business: "independent" pulpwood cutters; lobstermen; clamdiggers;

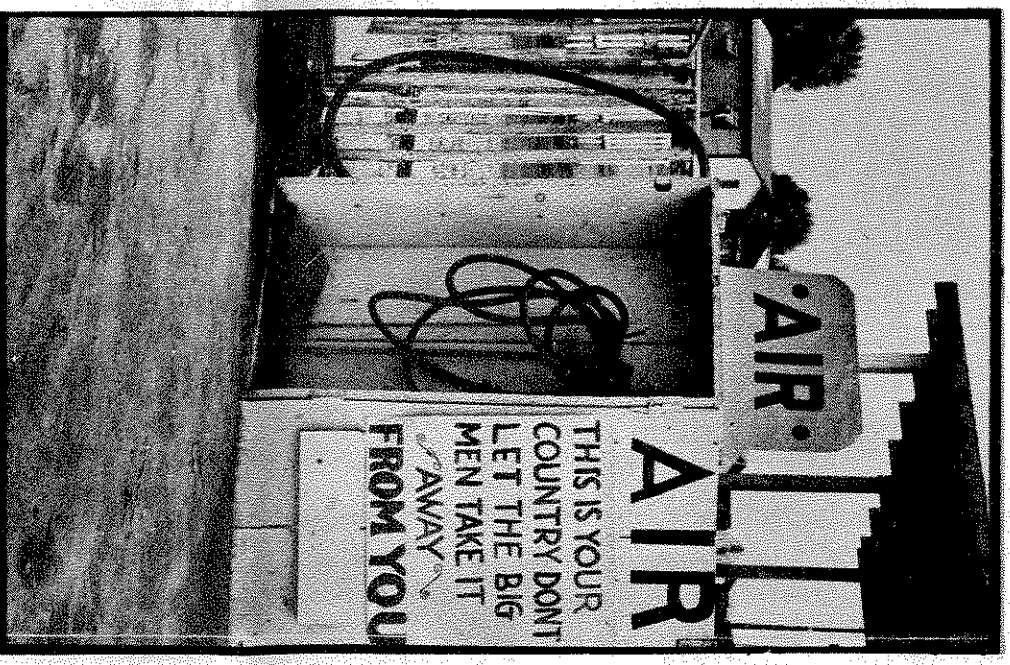
dairy, poultry, and potato farmers, etc. They include workers for large companies in lumbering and pulp & paper; fish, poultry, and potato processing plants. They include waitresses and other personnel in the recreation & tourism industry. They include small land owners trying to develop their land.

Besides people who make their living from the land, we want to speak to the needs of people who need the land as a place to live.

This includes all of us: as tenants, homeowners, and taxpayers. Last, but not least, are those people just concerned about the use of the land and the environment: the ecologists and conservationists.

We expect all these different people at the conference. We hope the outcome will be a coalition of people who depend on the land and its natural resources for their work and a place to live.

The Maine Land Reform Coalition is conservation minded: we are concerned about good wages and working conditions for ourselves and others. Too often in the name of "conservation" and good land use we protect the Big Men, the rich land owners, (like the Rockefeller's, Dupont's, and Lodges's who have their vacation playgrounds on the Maine Coast, or like the men who run Great Northern, Scott Paper, etc. who own most of the unorganized timberlands). We protect their interests at the expense of ourselves, the average people.



Time has come for a change. This change we call LAND REFORM.

"The object of land reform is not merely to alter and control land use, but to alter and control land ownership, for it is the latter that inevitably determines the former. It is ownership--and the economics surrounding ownership--that determines where people live and where they work. And, to a great degree, it is ownership that determines who is wealthy in America and

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Land Reform Conference

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who is poor, who exploits others and who gets exploited by others."

(from "Who Owns the Land?" A Primer on Land Reform in the USA" by Peter Barnes & Larry Caselino)

In Maine almost all of the coastal land, the timberlands, the farmland, and the good residential land is in private hands. The same is true all over America. Who owns this land? What are the social, economic, and environmental consequences of the present ownership patterns?

These are some of the important questions we will be discussing Saturday, April 14. After a few opening remarks beginning about 10:00 a.m., the workshop chairpeople will briefly describe the topic of each workshop. After lunch (which will be provided), Geoffrey Faux will give the keynote address. (See his article on the national land reform picture in this issue.)

At about 1:00 P.M. we will break down into the seven workshops outlined below:

1. TAXATION

- # Reform the tax system: the rich people and corporations ought to pay their fair share.
- # Lower the property tax
- # Increase corporate income taxes
- # Increase the wildlands tax
- # Get the rich of welfare: End the tax loopholes and subsidies to the timber companies, agribusiness, and the land developers.

Subsidize the little person for a change, he pays anyway.

2. FISHING AND COASTAL USE

- # Organizing Fishermen's Associations
- # The Fisheries Development Corporation
- # The large dealers, e.g., Dead River Co.
- # Coastal Districts for Shell Fishermen
- # Sales Tax exemption for fishing boats, machinery, and equipment
- # Reducing the number of lobster traps
- # Changing the price of a lobster license?
- # Oil and the Maine coast
- # The insane rush for our coastal land
- # FARMING, DAIRIES, POULTRY, POTATOES AND OTHER CASH CROPS
- # The diminishing family farm; what can be done?

- # The National Farmers Organization in Maine
- # The Maine Organic Farmers Association

Stop the high subsidies to agribusiness

The Big Dealers: H.P. Hood, Lipman, etc.

The Maine Milk Commission hurts the small farmer.

4. FOREST PRODUCTS, WOODCUTTERS, WILDLANDS

- # The structure of our forest industry: Why mostly paper? Who cuts the wood?
- # Who owns the timber lands? Absentee ownership, Consented ownership
- # Forest Practices
- # How pulpwood cutters have organized
- # Occupational health & safety
- # The Maine Indians' land claim case (so called)
- # Wildlands development, ITT, Public Lots, etc.

Note:

If the small farmer, the pulp-cutter, and the fisherman is going to survive he has got to stop the economic squeeze being put on him by the large dealer who controls the product market. This problem is clearest in pulpwood production where the price woodcutters get from the big companies has gone up very little in the last 20 years. It's not that different in fishing and farming too. The land squeeze is part of the same economic squeeze. More and more the fisherman is being forced to sell out to the wealthy summer resident and either go out of

business or lease back land from the summer resident to get access to the ocean. How would it be different for pulpcutters if the paper companies didn't own all that land?

5. HOUSING

- # The statewide housing coalition
- # End all demolition of housing until new units are built
- # Roll back rents to the level before Phase II
- # Tenant Unions
- # Banks and home ownership
- # Local Conservation Commissions & Lake Associations
- # Baxter Park cutting controversy
- # Oil and heavy industry on the Maine Coast

6. CONSERVATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- # Natural Resources Council
- # Public Power Referendum
- # Public Lots
- # Community Ownership
- # Land Trusts

7. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS

- # Alternative economic development
- # Come to the Conference April 14. Help determine the future of Maine's land and the future of us who work and live on this land. Learn from the people themselves what effect Maine land is having on their lives. This is your state! Don't let the big men take it away from you!

by John Newton
(John is the senior citizens outreach worker from Lisbon Falls and principle organizer of the Conference.)



Confused about Tax Reform?

3 Proposals for Maine

TAXES WILL BE HIGH ON THE AGENDA OF THE FIRST MAINE CONFERENCE ON LAND REFORM TO BE HELD IN BANGOR ON APRIL 14.

In preparation for that conference here are three tax proposals that various politicians and administrators are currently bringing forward in Maine. They illustrate three different approaches to the problem of tax reform:

1st approach: The Homestead Exemption. A bill to this effect will have a legislative hearing in late April or early May. It is the brainchild of Democrat Pat McTeague, legislator from Brunswick and assistant minority leader in the House.

The Bill, according to Pat in an interview with him last week, calls for a homestead exemption of \$5000. This must be at market value and not at appraised value. One must be a Maine resident to qualify: that is, at least six months physical residence in a dwelling. It applies to one dwelling only, and must be a person's principal dwelling. It includes mobile homes; and it includes owner-occupied rents. Finally, towns will be able to recoup their losses from the state. The cost to the state might be between 26 and 28 million dollars per year. This should be raised, he said, by personal and corporate income taxes.

Pat acknowledged that there is nothing in this bill for tenants. To include them would make the administration of the law very costly, since it is very difficult to figure (and prove) the % of rent that goes into taxes. Pat advocates giving tenants a credit on their state income tax up to 15% of the amount of their rent.

According to Pat, 60% of Maine families are homeowners, which is higher than nationwide. All homeowners would benefit to some degree, (even the man who owns a \$100,000 house) but the average citizen would benefit proportionally a lot more.

The average value of a house in Maine, he advised, is about 13,000 dollars. So it's clear, he said, that his bill would benefit the great majority of Maine homeowners quite directly and tangibly.

Pat took the example of a relatively skilled tradesman whom he knows at Bath Iron Works. His pay is \$3.97 per hour. He nets about \$120 per week. Their house is neat but by no means ostentatious. Yet he pays ten dollars a week in property taxes to Brunswick! "And when you consider", he observed, "that the average gross income of Maine people is \$122.00 per week— you see how burdensome the property taxes have become!"

A basic problem, he continued, is that "assessment practices are so rotten." For example, a friend of his in Topsham, just across the river, pays one half the taxes Pat does on a very similar abode. Furthermore,

assessment practices tend to be harder on the owner of a home between 20,000 and 30,000 dollars— mostly because its "easier" to be really accurate about the appraisal on such a home than with the more expensive or the less expensive homes. That's why Pat wants all assessments to be based on market value. He says his bill will help push the State Bureau of Taxation in Augusta in this direction.

Back to back support for Pat's effort to bring about a market evaluation, I later learned in Augusta, would come from a bill which would require a disclosure of the selling price of every piece of residential, commercial, or industrial property at time of sale. This would provide, in a fairly short time, a certified sampling of the market values of different kinds of properties in any given community— it thus provides a fairly clear market indicator as to what all other properties are worth. This bill apparently has a strong chance of passing.

Pat does not feel that his bill will pass this time. But, he's introducing it now in order to build up momentum for it over the next few years.

2nd approach: Statewide Redesign of Property Taxes and Development of Equalized Assessment Practices.

I'm going to give less space to this because it has been much in the daily newspapers lately.

It is being pushed by Governor Curtis. There are bills in the legislature now to provide for a major reform whereby education and welfare costs will be taken over by the state. This will allow a substantial reduction in property taxes, the slack to be taken up by higher personal and corporate income taxes.

This could mean a gradual reduction in property taxes over the next 4 to 5 years up to 80%.

The other feature of this approach is to develop a statewide set of standards to apply to assessment of properties. This presumably would rationalize, equalize, and formalize existing assessment practices. In connection with this, there is provision for making the State Bureau of Taxation a separate entity; and provision for expanding professional and administrative staff dealing with problems of assessment.

The politics of the legislature suggests that Gov. Curtis may wind up with only half the loaf (the worst half)— the second feature above, and not much by way of a breakthrough as far as state assumption of educational and welfare costs is concerned.

3rd approach: Abolition of the Property Tax and Its Replacement by a Land Use Tax.

This approach is strongly advocated by Dick Sevigny, a housing specialist in the

Economic Opportunity Office in Augusta, and formerly Single Assessor for the city of Biddeford. "The key", said Dick in an interview last week, "is to base the rate of tax, not on the value of land, but on the use made of that land. This will enable us to move from a subjective to an objective assessment."

Dick believes that the present structure of taxation is by definition inequitable. He said the general public is aware of inequities. But the system continues to be put up with because everybody thinks he is getting away with his own little inequity. People are becoming aware however that this is a very relative matter—that "my little inequity" which benefits me allows much greater inequities by others who are a lot richer and stronger.

The more volatile and complex the property, the more opportunity there is to "get away with it". He observed that Central Maine Power, to all intents and purposes, writes its own property tax in all of the many communities in Maine where it is established. Similarly, the leading firm in one-industry towns (most of Maine) can generally do the same. For example, he notes the case of a firm in a Maine city which paid a constant tax bill of x dollars for thirty years, irrespective of changing values or changing rates! During this same thirty year period the tax rate for ordinary citizens in that city went from \$7 to \$28, or an increase of 400%! Dick estimates that the firm in question got away with about \$40 million in taxes.

A Land Use Tax would work something like this: All property in a given community that has a residential use would be put in one category and divided into units (say, one acre equals one unit). Similarly, all property that has a commercial use would be put in a category. The same for industrial property, recreational property, non-profit corporate property, etc.

Then for each category, the community could apply a tax rate for all units in that category— say ten dollars for residential, 20 dollars for commercial, 30 dollars for industrial, etc..

The method used to get these figures would be to take the gross number of units and weigh them according to the amount of services the community provides to these units— fire protection, police protection, municipal, administrative services and so on.

In this way, said Dick, the same weights could apply uniformly. Once the pattern is worked out, the community needs only a person to identify land use (not to "appraise" it, as at present). He

Tax Proposals

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favours letting the various communities work out the basic pattern though with close cooperation of the State Bureau of Taxation. The scheme, he believes, will stimulate effective economic use of the land (consistent, he added after being nudged on this, with environmental safeguards.)

Vermont, he noted, is developing a prototype model of this type of approach.

He felt that the politics of getting a land use tax through the Maine legislature is of course extremely difficult. But he said that in spite of the expected opposition of the paper companies, public utilities, major landowners, major realtors, and major bankers, that this approach will gain ground. People persist in their dissatisfaction with the property tax, he noted, and are beginning to look for more basic answers.

He pointed out that consumer groups could initiate class action suits in the courts. He said the Maine State Law, which now is supposed to be enforced by the State Tax Assessor, Mr. Ernest Johnson, requires that each year (o/a April 1) the local assessor shall "equatize" all properties in the communities and report back in September. This is not enforced, of course. It can't be—it is literally unenforceable, he observed. But what is to prevent, he added rhetorically, consumer groups from asking the courts to enjoin a community from collecting taxes until this "equation" has taken place! He noted that a Massachusetts judge has recently enjoined a whole community from collecting taxes until the officials can show that they have equalized the tax burden.

A few comments:

As I go through the process of writing the above, I'm left with many questions—as I'm sure you are in reading it. I won't air them now but take them with me to Augusta for the Conference on Land Reform.

These are interesting approaches—far more substantive than what we've been treated to in the past. They need careful scrutiny and possibly more development. They need above all to be related simultaneously to the needs of the land and the needs of the people. These needs are not divergent; they must always be seen, and provided for together.

We'll come back to the taxes in the next issue of the Advocate and feed in the things we learned at the Conference. We should also at some point get into a thorough estimate of the politics of getting any good approach into public law.

By

John Rensenbrink

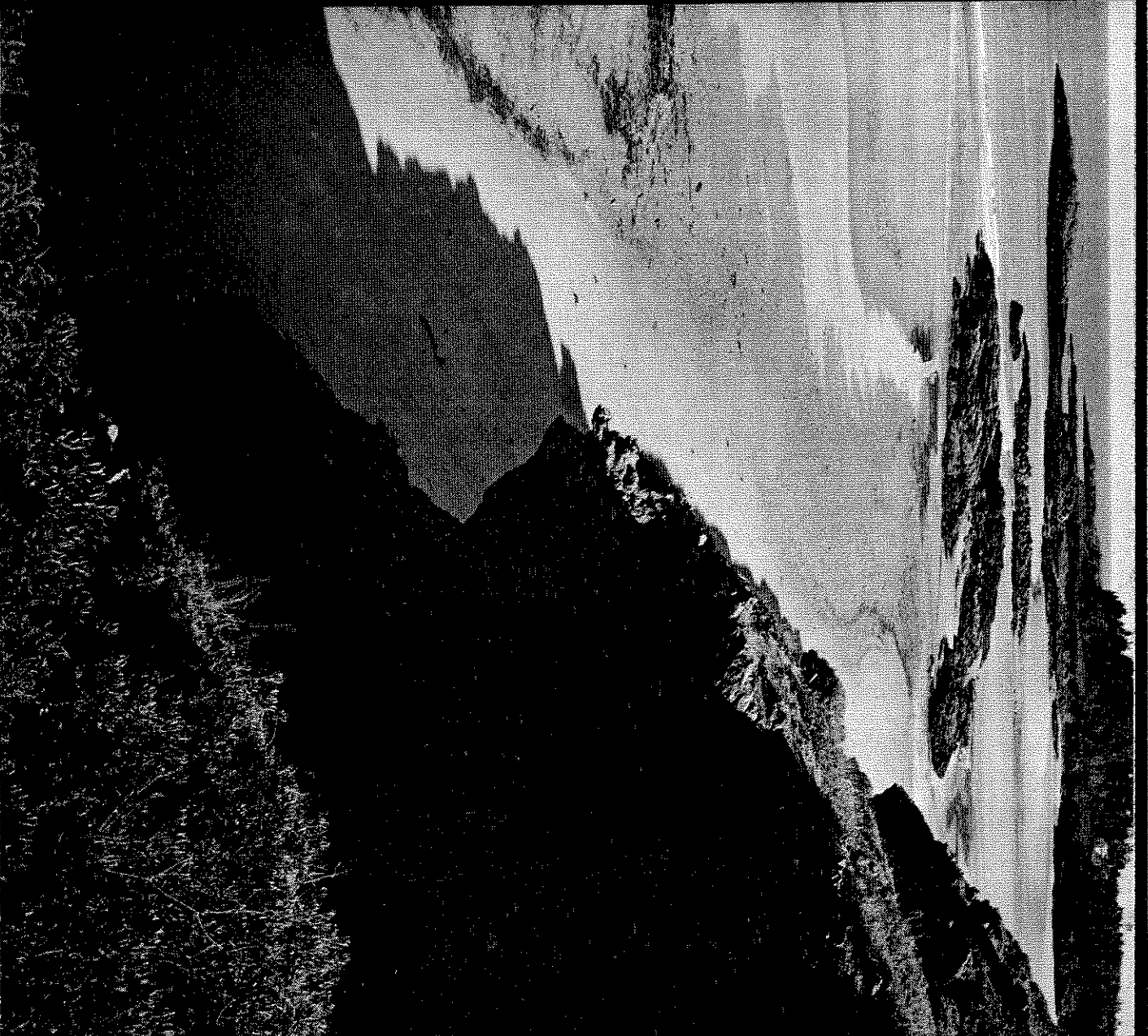


PHOTO BY DAVID WILKINSON

Conservation and the Environment

By Jim Connors, LUHC Commissioner and Sam Ely CLT Trustee.

What is meant by "Conservation"? Conservation of natural resources is generally defined as wise use. Wise use implies planning as well as actual use of resources. Thus when we talk about conservation we are talking about using, wisely, natural resources to the benefit of society.

The use of natural resources results in some sort of environmental impact. In this case, we take environment to mean the sum total of all conditions included within and surrounding a natural resource. The use of a natural resource results in a changed set of conditions that are perceived as a changed environment.

The array of natural resources is generally divided into two groups. One group is the non-renewable resources such as coal, oil, asbestos, iron ore, soil, etc. The other group is the renewable resources such as forest, wildlife, and crops. In geological time all elements are recycled, but in mankind's time frame non-renewable resources can be used up and become no longer available. On the other hand, renewable resources can be regenerated to ensure a continual supply.

The concept of conservation as applied to these two kinds of resources is a policy of use without waste for the first group, and managed use for continuous yields for the second group.

Societies concern with conservation of natural resources revolves around value judgements as to what

constitutes wise use. Furthermore the society is concerned with its natural environment as it is influenced or changed as a result of using those resources. We have come to appreciate the full circle aspect of natural systems. When a use is made of one resource, an impact is felt on many other resources through a system of interconnected causes and effects.

Of extreme importance to society is the decision-making process by which resources are allocated to various uses. It is this process that determines if the uses of resources will have a negative or positive impact on the environment. The institutions involved in the decision-making process are many and varied, but in the U.S. are all apart of the capitalist market system.

The question at this time of increasing population and environmental awareness is one of effectiveness. Do our systems for allocation of scarce resources work for the benefit of the entire society?

Land ownership is a central concern in determining the effectiveness of resource allocation. The ownership and/or control of land and its associated resources plays a large role in the decision-making process. It would be correct to say that land tenure systems are the controlling element in the decision process.

Organic Farming:

One Solution for the Maine Farmer

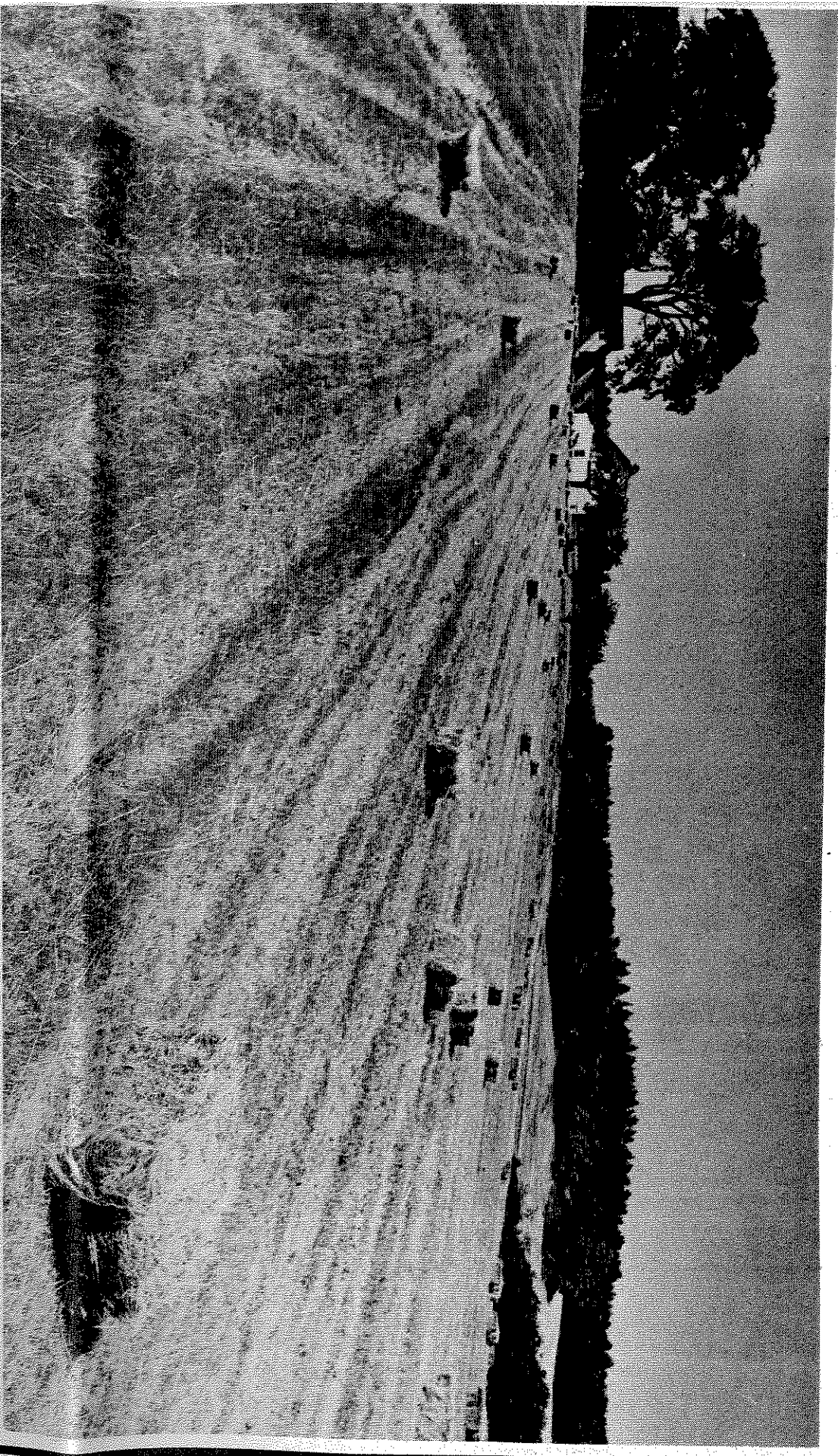


PHOTO BY TOM JONES

There are several pressing problems facing the Maine farmers. The primary one is that their number is decreasing rapidly. Obviously this is due to a lack of economic viability. And although economics are of prime importance there are other problems which affect the farmers in Maine. These include animal (and solid waste) disposal, amount of energy put into farming to the amount of energy recieved from farming, pollution of groundwater etc. From a farming standpoint the "more and bigger" solution of the USDA doesn't apply to Maine for the most part because of the terrain.

One solution and I think the best solution to these problems is organic farming. Why and How?

Organic farming is sound economically because it is based primarily on diversification. Most dairy farmers and all poultry and egg producers buy their feed from outside of Maine. At the very least they buy fertilizers. An organic farmer will produce most or all of his feedstuffs on his farm. This of course means that he will have fewer cows or chickens but by producing his own feed and by marketing his produce organically he will increase the difference between his cost and his gross income. The organic farmer would not only have a few cows but he would have some layers and grow vegetables. He would process some of his produce himself, e.g. make cheese thereby increasing his net return.

Organic produce has the advantage at this time of being a specialty product, the marketing of which can be freshly formulated. Thus the traditional market outlets can be bypassed and the profit to the farmer can be increased. At the present time there is a group of organic farmers marketing vegetables together in New York City and Boston. These farmers stopped their marketing research when they found their total marketing to be about \$300,000 because they knew that they would have trouble supplying that amount of produce. This figure doesn't really reflect the total market for vegetables and doesn't include such items as meat, milk products, eggs and grains. There is certainly growing market for organic produce.

The organic farmer utilizes waste materials. It has been calculated that the unused chicken manure in the state of Maine is worth about \$6 million in terms of commercial fertilizers and certainly could grow a lot of corn. A good amount of this manure is either landfilled or piled where it causes pollution problems.

Disposing of Maine's private and industrial wastes and the pollution from them is becoming a great problem and will be a costly one. These wastes are the organic farmers resources. Cannery wastes (shrimp and clamshells), vegetable wastes, paper and lumber wastes, granite dust, sewage (when properly treated there is no danger of products grown on it

containing disease) - these are all resources and the organic farmer welcomes them to his land. The soil is an excellent purifying agent and is a very inexpensive one. Other solutions to these waste problems are costly. Pollution control is a side benefit from organic farming. From an energy standpoint organic farming is more conservative of energy. 3-5% of all electrical power generated in the U.S. goes into the manufacture of ammonia for chemical fertilizers. The energy requirement of disposal of solid wastes is high. Soil high in organic materis much easier to work than soil low in organic matter thus the actual power requirements of anorganic farmer is lower. The energy of getting rid of solid wastes and sewage would remain about the same for organic farmers but since this grows produce there is energy returned from the soil. Thus the organic farmer will use less energy to grow a higher quality product.

Organic farming is only one solution to the problem of how to make better use of Maine's farmland. There are questions which I haven't discussed. Why not come to the Land Reform Coalition Workshop on April 14 in Bangor, and voice your problems and solutions?

By Jim Luthy

(Jim is President of the Maine Organic Farmers Assoc. R.F.D. #1, Poland Springs, Me.)

From the woods, a populist?

Rep. Roswell Dyar fights special interests, 'heartless' corporations

Kennebec Journal, Augusta, Tuesday, March 27, 1973

By ERNIE STALLWORTH
KJ staff writer

AUGUSTA — The gentleman from Strong, Mr. Dyar, isn't one of the many members of the 106th Legislature who is running for governor, and he thinks it's probably just as well.

"You can't run for governor and Congress in this state and fight against the people I'm fighting against," Dyar says. "You give me \$1 to campaign with from all the people I'm fighting for, though, and I'd whip any of them."

Roswell Dyar, a 42-year-old country store owner, is fighting the people who run Central Maine Power, International Paper, ITT, giant insurance companies, and outside exploiters who are turning Saddleback and Sugarloaf into watering spots for the rich.

"The people with aspirations are playing cozy with what I call the gut issues," Dyar said.

Dyar's gut issues involve a number of areas where he thinks ordinary people are victimized by large corporations, but the really key issue, to him, is land.

Land ownership and control by giant firms is increasingly the issue for many rural representatives, and Roswell Dyar has become a leader of a new breed in the Maine legislature, the rural populists.

"The old guard in the Republican Party is very concerned about my actions, John Gore called me a populist in the Maine Times," Dyar said.

Everyone gets sour when anyone tries to represent the people. They don't recognize you unless you speak for big industry or big government."

Dyar definitely doesn't speak for big business. Not willing to label himself, he sees his role as protecting the ordinary person from the growing power of America's corporations.

"These conglomerates: they have no heart, no ties to the individual, the county, the state," Dyar says. "They buy up businesses, exploit resources and take all the profits out of the state."

Franklin County, where Dyar lives, would be booming if the corporations would invest their profits and manufacture products from raw materials they extract from the land, he said.

And so Dyar has entered a bill in this legislature to require the state to sell the timber stumpage on the public lands to a local corporation of less than five stockholders. The bill also forbids the export of logs unless they are sawed in Maine mills.

"This kills the export of logs," Dyar said. "Now I'm a nasty S.O.B. to do something like that, aren't I? This is billions of board feet. Let ITT come now. They'll have to hire local labor."

The coming of the International Telephone and Telegraph Co. has jolted Dyar and a number of representatives who live in an arc from Rumford to Dover-Foxcroft. Other rural people who live near the vast holdings of land and timber companies are also concerned.

Dyar operates Dyar's Northland Trading Center, a general store located north of Farmington at the edge of Maine's wilderness.

A former store manager for J. J. Newberry Co., he

represents the rural towns of Avon, Carrabassett Valley, Eastis, Kingfield, Madrid, Phillips, Rangeley, Strong and assorted plantations and unorganized townships.

Out in Coburn Gore, an unorganized township of 14 families near the Canadian border, Dyar received a hero's welcome last weekend. "It's not that I'm a hero, but these people felt someone at last was standing up for them," he said.

One State House political observer, who asked not to be identified, says Dyar has been forced to look at the questions of who owns Maine and for whom it is run.

"You don't find guys like Dyar in Waldo and Lincoln County," this observer said. "You do find them in areas where the resources are being contested. Dyar is right there at Kingfield and Sugarloaf."

The Maine people and companies who used to own the resources are being replaced with large out-of-state corporations who don't have bonds with local people, and the reaction is building, he said.

"This isn't a mass movement in the sense of socialism or populism. It's not radical," the observer said. "It's Yankee independence, seek it to the biggies, but it has the potential of a populist coalition."

The observer admits that the House leadership could smash the budding movement, based now on emotional speeches. The Senate has already killed Dyar's land bill which would have taxed tracts of over 500 acres if they posted the land.

The substitute only guarantees access to the great ponds and allows the Attorney General to prosecute if access is denied. The altered bill got 98 votes in the House over the objection of the Republican leadership.

Another bill to allow citizens to appeal to the Insurance Commissioner if they were denied fire insurance received 87 House votes. An urban bill, it passed in a landslide after anti-corporate speeches by Dyar and others.

Larger fights are looming over Dyar's bill to keep timber in the state, public power, health care, and other issues. One of Dyar's bills would allow unorganized towns to help to organize for 48 hours, thus severing all timber and grass rights.

Dyar himself is contemptuous of his opponents, saying "I can take on any of them. I represent the way the people feel, and they know it. In the past, I won't say there was corruption, but people in high places were remunerated for ignoring what was going on in the wilderness," Dyar says. "It would be embarrassing if I named names on the floor of the House, but I probably could if pressed."

Dyar's not an expert on all kinds of corporate antics. He says he doesn't speak on such issues as transportation, urban renewal and social programs and city matters. His concern is the land, particularly the half of the state owned by 23 families and corporations.

"My people have suffered at the hands of the big landowners," Dyar said. "International Paper says the pulpwood products can't organize because it would be a trust. There's not a dime's worth of difference per cord in the offers

from all the timber companies. Who do you think has a trust?"

The timber companies bring Canadian crews and trucks into Maine forests and haul the logs back into Canada for processing, he said. Dyar, who also works as woodcutter, says the companies put the squeeze on Maine cutters.

"They're selling us our own processed wood at inflated prices and they're exploiting the people from Canada," Dyar said. "If you try to do anything, they say they'll bring in more Canadians. They want everyone to work their butt off for \$1.80 an hour."

Dyar can't figure out why the companies just take the rough lumber from Maine without using the local brains and work force. And, he objects to what he calls a "new phase" in rural areas.

"I have no objection to others coming in to places like Saddleback and Sugarloaf," Dyar said. "But, buying up the businesses, refusing to hire local people, taking profits out of the state — this is a new phase."

Local businessmen can't get financing, he says, but conglomerates can spend \$80 million to \$40 million without any contact with local people. The power of conglomerates, particularly ITT, has become a popular subject in the Maine House.

Rep. Patrick McKeague, D-Brunswick, says that individuals have a hard time standing up to a company that could attempt to overthrow the elected government of Chile.

Roswell Dyar and his friends have been talking about the posting of ITT's 50,000 acres against hunting and fishing.

"You used to be able to talk with these people, like the local manager of Central Maine Power would meet with you halfway," Dyar said. "Now, he's a big wheel. If you don't like our service, get somebody else. Well, I told them three years ago, I would do my best. Yes, I'm talking about public power."

Rural farmers near Strong have trouble getting electricity. Dyar said, and running a power line three-fourths of a mile can cost a man with six children \$10,000.

Dyar's strong views haven't earned him the friendship of Augusta's lobbyists, although increasing numbers of Democrats and Republicans seek his support on their bills. A flood of 200 to 300 letters a week also reflects his growing prominence on land questions and as House chairman of the Health and Institutional Services Committee.

Prominence has come slowly. As an obscure freshman in the 104th Legislature, Dyar pushed two bills involving the interests of the banks and insurance companies.

One would have taken away the insurance companies' right not to testify in court in certain cases, and the other would have required banks to discharge notes and mortgages they have recorded with the town clerks. Both were defeated.

"I was told by the lobby I should reconsider," Dyar said. "and that I would regret it if I pushed."

Several life insurance policies, a homeowner's policy, and insurance on a truck were cancelled either during or after



Rep. Roswell Dyar

the session, Dyar said. "I don't have to speculate. I know why, and it wasn't for non-payment."

Dyar was able to obtain other insurance, but at a higher rate as a result of the cancellations.

In spite of these experiences, Dyar isn't a champion of government ownership. He opposes spending \$3 million to buy Bigelow Mountain because the private developers have promised to use local labor, and he proposes instead the development of four 1,000-acre public lots for recreation.

He drowns on placing wilderness in trusts to protect them, and calls people interested in such projects "out of state do-gooders."

"Basically, these outside people have the financial background to dabble in public causes," Dyar said. "They have no interest in the people. They want to leave Boston to look at the wilderness and the peasants who live nearby in shacks."

Dyar himself is not an outsider. Raised in Strong, he graduated from Strong High School and Becker College in Worcester, Mass. After military service and employment with Newberry's, he returned to Strong in 1962.

Since then he has been chairman of the Young Republi-

cans and served three terms on the Republican State Committee. The party began in his home town in 1954, he says.

"It was basically local businessmen and farmers who said the hell with Augusta, we want free enterprise back in our own hands," Dyar said.

Dyar still believes in free enterprise, in the economy of small businessmen and farmers.

"You might call me a Jeffersonian Democrat, but I'm not a McGovern Democrat," Dyar said. "I'm a Teddy Roosevelt Republican, too, but not a Calvin Coolidge type. He let the big boys run all over him."

Dyar won't let the "big boys" run over him. He has another heritage.

His great-grandmother, five generations ago, had to be smuggled out of Boston into Maine after she participated in the Boston Tea Party. His great-grandfather was imprisoned seven times by the British during the American Revolution.

"I think I'm fighting for the same rights they did," Dyar says. "I'd like to get back to the time when neighbors owned the land and worked together."

Sentiment against corporations runs in an arc

Legislative sentiment against the large corporations runs in an arc from Rumford in Oxford County to Dover-Foxcroft in Piscataquis County, jumps into rural Aroostook County, and is just emerging in Hancock and Washington Counties.

A total of 25 legislators from 41 districts in this rural, traditionally conservative, area can be counted as part of an emerging populist trend.

All of the 41 representatives live near the conjunction of organized multi-ownership towns with unorganized townships owned primarily by large corporations and families. 23 of which own 8.4 million acres of Maine.

The most active spokesmen for the emerging populists are John L. Martin, D-Eagle Lake, and Roswell E. Dyar, R-Strong, Martin the Democratic minority leader, has many other duties, but Dyar speaks mainly on the subjects of land and corporate power.

The populist group includes 16 Democrats and nine Republicans while the group which votes with corporate interests has three Democrats and 13 Republicans.

The groupings were obtained by cross-checking votes on three issues: taxing large tracts which posted their land; allowing the Attorney General to prosecute landowners who denied access to the great ponds; and providing relief for homeowners denied fire insurance.

The votes themselves were perhaps not significant, but each of the three issues provoked emotional, anti-corporate speeches in the Maine House. Those voting with Roswell Dyar and John Martin were assumed to be in a populist camp.

The legislators, listed by county and political tendency, follow:

Oxford, Populists. Albert Theriault, D-Rumford; Emile J. Frase, D-Mexico.

Franklin, Populists. Sidney J. Maxwell, D-Jay; Roswell E. Dyar, R-Strong, Corporate; Richard G. Morton, R-Farmington, Somerset, Populist; Roosevelt T. Suss, R-Pittsfield; C. Everett Dam, D-Skowhegan; Frederick C. Herrick, R-Harmony; and Raymond N. Faucher, D-Solon, Corporate. William R. Lavy, D-Fairfield; Glenys W. Berry, R-Madison.

Piscataquis, Populists. Douglas M. Smith, D-Dover-Foxcroft, Corporate; Charlotte H. White, R-Guilford; Claude N. Trask, R-Milo.

Penobscot (near Dover-Foxcroft), Populists. Harold J. Keyte, D-Dexter and Stewart Smith, D-Exeter.

Penobscot (north of Old Town), Populist. Leon J. Crommett, D-Milbrook; Corporate; James T. Dudley, D-Enfield; Walter W. Cameron, R-Lincoln; Edna M. Murchison, R-Mattawamkeag; and Walter A. Birt, R-East Milbrook.

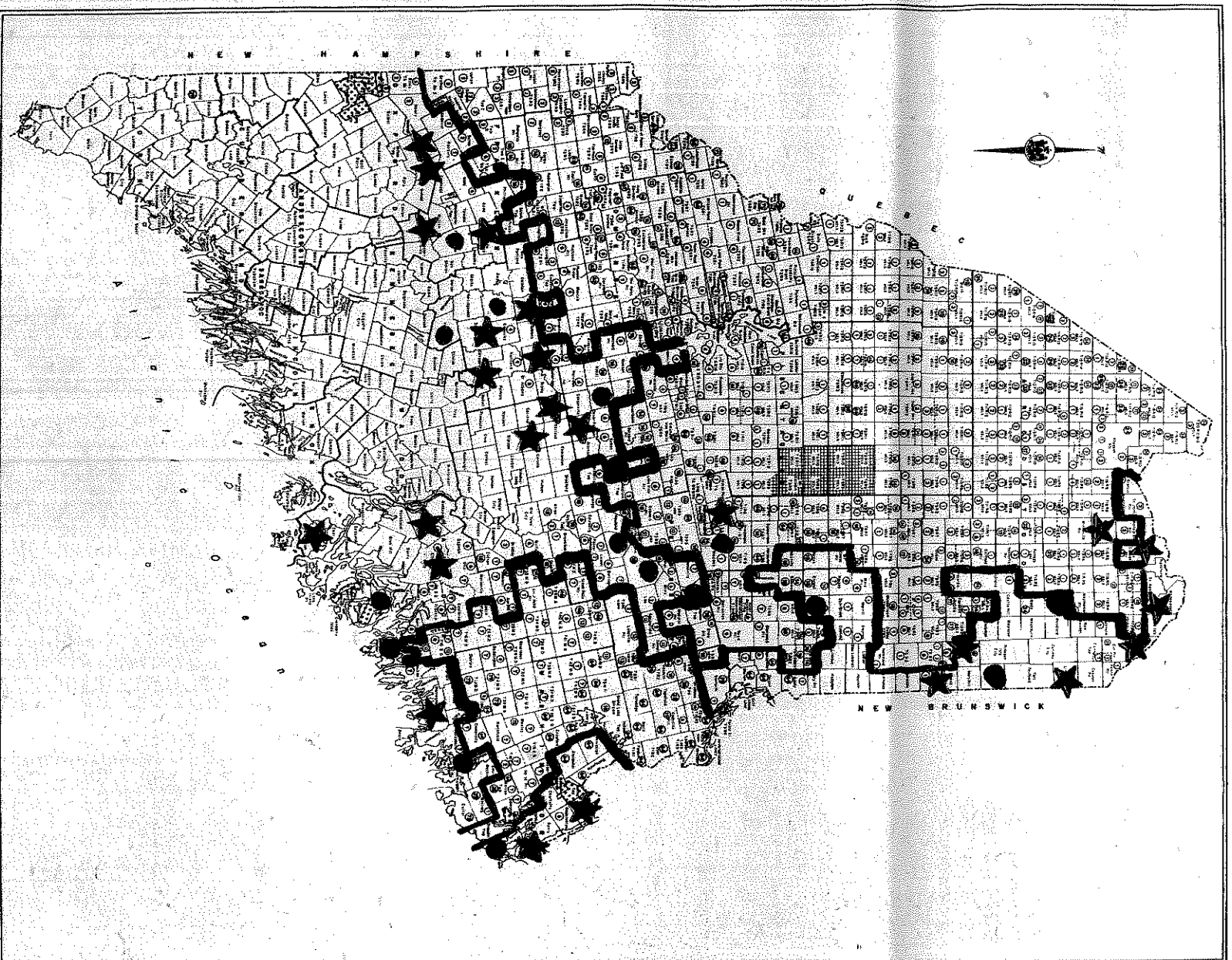
Hancock, Populists. Lawrence P. Greenlaw Jr., D-Stonington; Eugene L. Churchill, R-Orland; Cecil H. McNally, R-Elsworth, Corporate; James C. Macleod, R-Bar Harbor; Walter L. Bunker, R-Gouldsboro.

Washington, Populists. Bertram E. Davis, R-Addison; Kenneth A. Mills, D-Eastport; Harold L. Silverman, R-Calais, Corporate; Dorothy B. Kelley, R-Wachus; John A. Donaghy, R-Libet.

Aroostook, Populists. Louis A. Finamore, R-Bridgewater; Herschel L. Good, R-Westfield; John L. Martin, D-Eagle Lake; Valler E. Morin, D-Fort Kent; Edward A. McHenry, Madawaska; Armand A. Leblanc, D-Van Buren; and Thomas P. Albert, D-Limestone.

Corporate. Luman P. Mahaney, D-Easton; Harold Bragdon, R-Pennam; Vaughan A. Walker, R-Island Falls.

The six urban representatives from Houlton, Caribou, and Presque Isle are not included in the list. They all voted against taxing companies which posted their land.



Timber meets town

Rural representatives on the thick black line of Maine's wildlands are in a changing mood. Twenty-five of them, (shown with stars), have joined an emerging populist movement while 16, (circles), continue to vote

with the 23 corporations and families who own 8.4 million acres or 80 per cent of the wildlands. The new populism seems to be bi-partisan in a traditionally conservative area.

Kennebec Journal, Augusta, Tuesday, March 27, 1973

Maine Is Not Alone:

Land Reform is a National Issue

By Geoff Faux

Over the past several years efforts at land reform have sprung up independently in so many different parts of the country that it may soon be time to consider it a movement.

The people supporting these efforts reflect a wide variety of viewpoints and backgrounds. They are small farmers whom the agribusiness oriented policies of our governments seem to have doomed for extinction. They are working people who are tired of having to choose between the hope of a job from polluting industry and the prospect of starving in an ecologically balanced environment. They are environmentalists who see their hopes and efforts for a sane environmental policy slowly ground away by the relentless drive for profits. They are people who live in the cities who have come to realize that the subsidization of land speculators is a major cause of the deterioration of their neighborhoods. And mostly, they are just citizens, who see that land is a scarce and fixed resource that must be put at the service of people, rather than simply exploited for private profits and/or bureaucratic power.

The specific issues upon which people are organizing differ from place to place. In the West, people are challenging the large concentrated land holdings in violation of the Reclamation Act and the railroad grants. In the South, pulpwood cutters have organized against the exploitive conditions under which the large land-owning paper and timber companies force them to work. In Appalachia the political power of those opposed to stripmining is growing stronger and has forced

the enactment of new legislation which, while still inadequate, is a first step. Stripmining has also become a major issue in Montana. In our cities, citizens' efforts to stop urban renewal efforts designed to fatten the profits of speculators and their political cronies continues. And in places like Oregon, New Mexico, Florida and here in New England people are waking up to the insane rush for recreational development which is not only unplanned and irrational, but which provides little in the way of economic benefits to the resident population.

Finally, in a number of places throughout the country, people are experimenting with alternative and more rational ways of using the land economically. There are new small development corporations in such diverse places as Knox County, Kentucky and New York City, and land trusts in Georgia.

At present land reform is a movement without leadership. There is a National Coalition for Land Reform which is having its first national conference under the sponsorship of the Center for Rural Studies in San Francisco in late April. (see page 14) It is a group of people from various parts of the country interested in exchanging information and ideas, and eventually in joint political action. But there are no official spokesmen and no official dogma. And that is all to the good.

Since there are no official spokesmen for the land reform movement, anyone can offer their own definition of land reform. As someone who has watched the movement take shape in

a number of places, I have concluded that there are at least five common elements in the demand for land reform. They are:

1. Recognition that in the long run the conventional approaches of land use regulation and zoning are insufficient to assure responsible and rational use of the land. Experience with regulation and zoning in rural, urban and suburban situations has consistently shown that it cannot resist the power of private profit.

2. A sense that most rural areas have the characteristics of economic colonies. Their primary resources are scale agricultural cooperatives in Wisconsin, Alabama, and California, woodworking cooperatives in Minnesota and the Pacific Northwest, community controlled by absentee owners and in the interests of distant finance capital.

3. An understanding that for the most part concentration of land holding in private hands has been aided by government policies from Royal charters to railroad land grants to tax subsidies. Political action is therefore essential to rectify the mistakes of the past and to prevent history from repeating itself in the future.

4. A recognition that the interests of working people in job and income security and the interests of environmentalists in limiting irrational economic growth must be reconciled if land reform is to have any meaning.

5. A recognition that in order to achieve such a reconciliation, new greatly altered institutions which distribute the benefits of econ-



PHOTO BY E. W. MILLIKINS

Land Reform is a National Issue

omic development fairly, are essential. Thus limited growth can only be achieved if it distributes jobs and income in such a way as to provide people with a decent standard of living relative to each other.

These observations are reflected in some of the aims of the National Coalition for Land Reform. They are to:

- #assure existing small farmers a fair return, and increase the number of self-employed farmers.
- #encourage agricultural, woodcutting and other cooperative efforts of rural people to achieve economic stability
- #combat corporate feudalism
- #make government and financial institutions more responsive to rural working people and the rural poor
- #promote small-town and rural economic development under local control
- #preserve open spaces and diminish use of toxic chemicals
- #enforce acreage limitations
- #apply antitrust laws to agriculture, mining and timber holdings
- #restructure tax laws and subsidies to favor small farmers, woodcutters

and other working people rather than large land owners and speculators. #create new legislation and institutions which will enable rural Americans to acquire a proprietary interest in their local economies

At this point one can only speculate on how a land reform effort in Maine might develop. The upcoming conference in Bangor hopefully will start the process. We should however begin with the understanding that Maine's problems are not hers alone.

--Like California, much of her land was given away to large corporations.

--Like Kentucky and West Virginia, her extractive industries are owned by out-of-state interests.

--Like Wisconsin and Mississippi, she has a large work force of currently unorganized, but potentially powerful woodcutters.

--Like South Dakota, she has an Indian population that has been systematically robbed of its land.

--Like New Mexico, she is beginning to be overrun with recreation and second home land developers.

Maine's road to land reform will be its own. Much of what has to be done can be done by organizing right

here in this state. But while Maine might be somewhat more isolated, she is subject to national (and international) forces. At some point a national effort will be needed to halt Federal tax subsidies and other national policies that encourage large scale exploitation of the land. In the long run, therefore, the development of a land reform coalition in Maine will be aided, and will in turn aid, the movement for land reform in America.

Editor's Note:

Geoffrey Faux will be keynote speaker at the 1st Maine Conference on Land Reform, April 14, in Bangor. Faux has been an important force in the organization of both the National Coalition for Land Reform and the Maine Land Reform Coalition. He has written several articles on land reform and economic development concerning Maine; see for example his "Colonial New England—20th Century Style" in the Maine Land Advocate, Vol.1, No. 3.

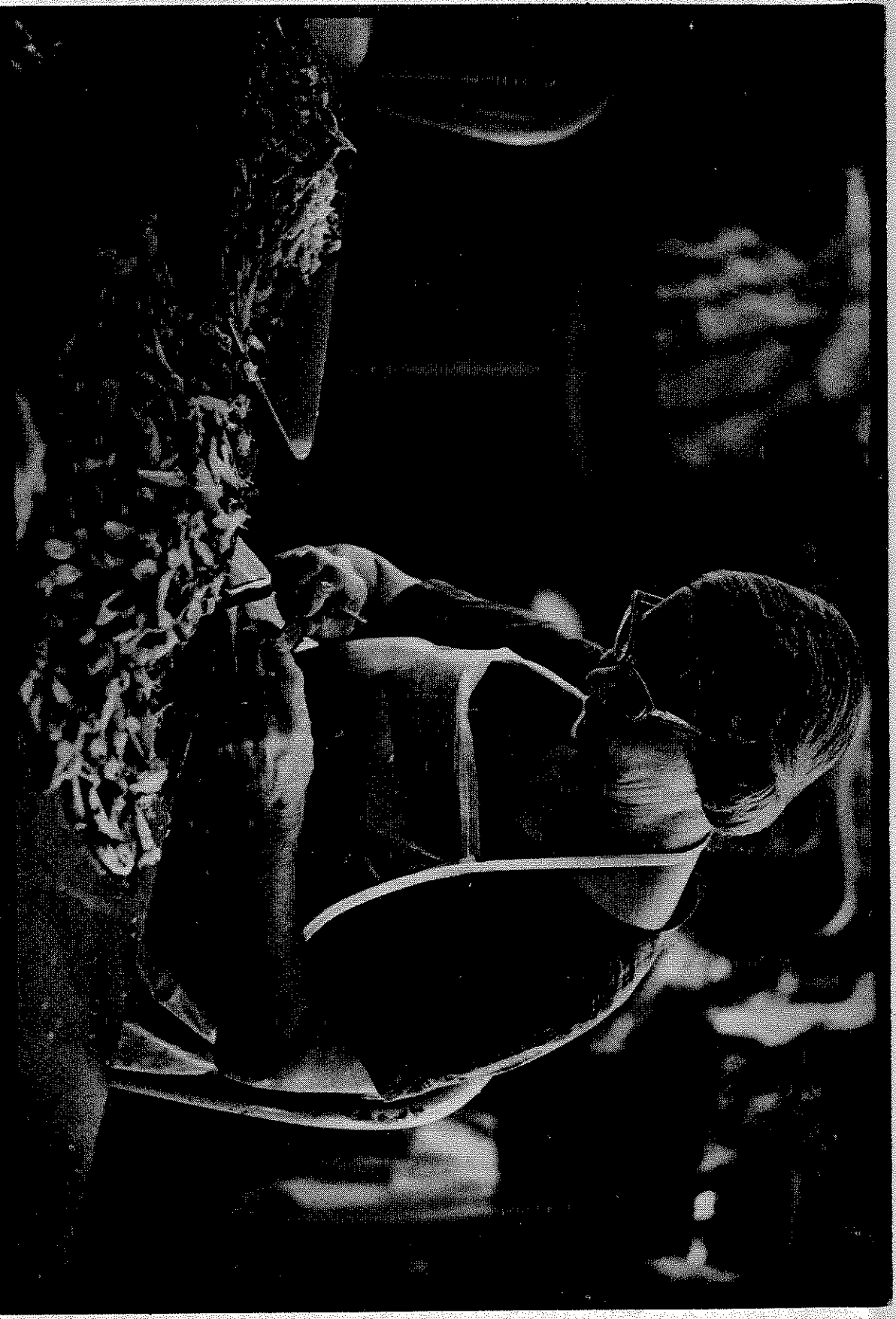


PHOTO BY NICHOLS

Milbridge, Maine
Hon. Kenneth Curtis
Augusta, Maine

Dear Sir:

I know that you are busy with a great many problems of state government, but will you devote a few moments' attention to the problem of my wife and me, who desperately need your help? Our problem, we believe, relates to a much larger one which is statewide. It involves a rank injustice, and perhaps a violation of state law.

The house we live in and the land around it have been in my family for over a hundred years. They have been handed down from my grandfather's time, from generation to generation.

I have farmed the land, raised two fine sons on it, kept livestock on it, and cut pulpwood from it.

As you know, times have changed. It isn't very easy to make a living in Washington County today. But I am not complaining. I enjoy making a living from my own land and from the mudflats nearby. If only given a chance, I can scrape by selling a few cords of pulpwood from my land, though there isn't much good wood left. I take firewood from my land, and that helps me get by the winter. We get food from the garden I raise in summer.

But now I believe the Town of Milbridge is trying to drive me off the land we depend on. They think they can get more tax money if the land is sold to real estate people and developed. I have already had to sell off several pieces of my land because I couldn't pay the higher taxes the town imposed on me. But this didn't help me at all. They just kept raising the tax on the rest of my land because they said when the land I sold was developed it

raised the value of my land nearby diggers. Here is what happened specifically:

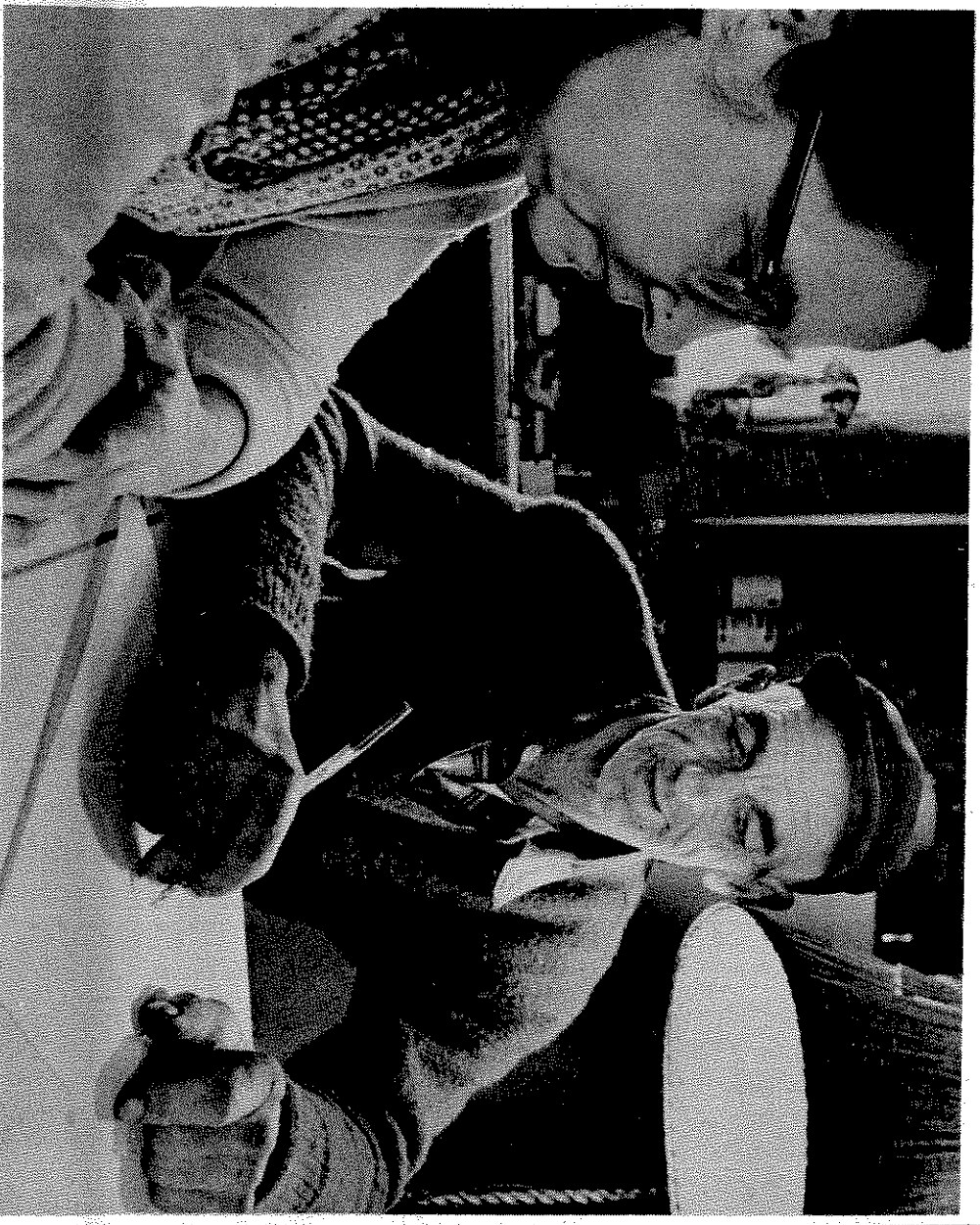
My house lot was taxed \$124.90 in 1971, having been raised several times. In 1972 the assessors jumped the tax to \$213.75. When I complained to the assessors, they said my land could be developed for a lot of money.

My second lot is 48 acres off the mudflats. I had to sell 20 acres from that lot several years ago so as to pay my taxes. This past year they raised the taxes on that lot from \$37.10 to \$237.50. The assessors said because the land I sold off next to it was developed, never call me back. I would my land was worth more. That's the lot where I cut my firewood and pulpwood.

My third lot is across the road from me. The taxes went up on it this past year from \$15.90 to \$95.00. This is the land where I plant my garden, and where I cut my hay

'Dear Governor': A tax lament from a Downeast land owner

★ ★ ★
"One assessor said if I tore down that old house of mine, the land would be worth even more. I don't think they should talk to a man like that."



(NEWS Photo by Danny Maher)

Hazel and Clarence Bagley of Milbridge

for my horses. The fourth lot is on a salt marsh, only a small piece, which they raised from \$5.30 to \$26.75. I only keep this land because it is getting harder for clam diggers to get access to the flats, and I thought if things got any tighter I could always have a right-of-way to the shore for myself and the other diggers. The assessors say that the land is valuable

because someone could put a trailer on it. But that land is wet. Most of the time a man would need boots to walk out on it. I understand there is a law against filling in salt marshes.

I have been to the County Commissioners about this, and they recommended that the town reduce my taxes, but the assessors say no. I have tried to get a Pine Tree Association lawyer, but they

ciation lawyer, but they I sold off next to it was developed, never call me back. I would be willing to pay a lawyer.

I understand that the state passed a law that says land should be taxed on its

present use, not on its potential for development. Is this true? If it is, I think my land would qualify for some tax abatement.

I am not trying to get out of paying my fair share of taxes. I want to pay my taxes, and I would be happy if they would just cut my present taxes in half. But there are a lot of poor people like my wife and me who are being treated unfairly so as to drive us off the land. I don't think the towns should be that greedy for tax money.

My wife and I want to stay on our land. We couldn't live if we were cooped up on an acre or two. Where would we get our firewood? Where would we grow our fresh vegetables? We don't want to sell town feels it would be more economical to put us on welfare with some of the money they'll get from taxes after the land is developed.

Governor Curtis, can you take a few moments out to help a man and a woman who are willing to help themselves if they are only given half a chance?

Respectfully,

Respectfully yours,
(s) Clarence V. Bagley

Reprinted with permission of
the Bangor Daily News

April 5, 1973

THE TRUST SCENE

NEW COMMUNITIES IN GEORGIA
STRUGGLES ON...LAND TRUST
INVESTMENT FUND BEING CREATED.

New Communities INC. with the help of International Independence Institute has virtually completed negotiations for refinancing \$350,000 of its debt under an arrangement which will significantly reduce its land cost and facilitate economic development. This portion of its mortgage obligation will be replaced with lower-interest bonds developed by a Boston legal firm with the help of a grant from DJB Foundation. These bonds are designed for large, institutional subscribers which include church organizations and foundations.

The next phase of this legal work is the development of a social investment fund which in principle will resemble a mutual fund; however it will be dedicated to land acquisition for land trusts and land trust related development. This will be a vehicle for small investors as well as institutions to channel their assets into socially affirmative alternative economic enterprises on a reasonable secure basis. This work is being performed through the Center for Community Economic Development.

COMMUNITY LAND TRUST EFFORTS ELSEWHERE...

Efforts to set up Community Land Trusts are underway in various parts of the country: besides the Maine organization, we know of at least one in New Hampshire which has 1300 acres free and clear and has retained a Manchester planning firm; in Vermont, following several workshops in which I.I.I. participated a statewide group is now incorporating; two smaller groups are acquiring property in Massachusetts; there is quite a bit of activity in California and I.I.I. is in touch with two groups being organized in that area.

Vermont people interested in the land trust can get more information by contacting Liz Yeats, 1777 Lincoln Ave. Rutland, VT. 05701.

SAM ELY'S FIRST!

The Sam Ely Community Land Trust acquired its first piece of land recently - a thirty acre homesteading tract with house and barn in Detroit, Maine. The donated plot was accented at Sam's fourth board meeting on Mar. '71. In Winslow and a family has already been agreed upon with room for a 2nd. More coverage and pictures in the next issue!

YE ENGLISH LAND TRUST

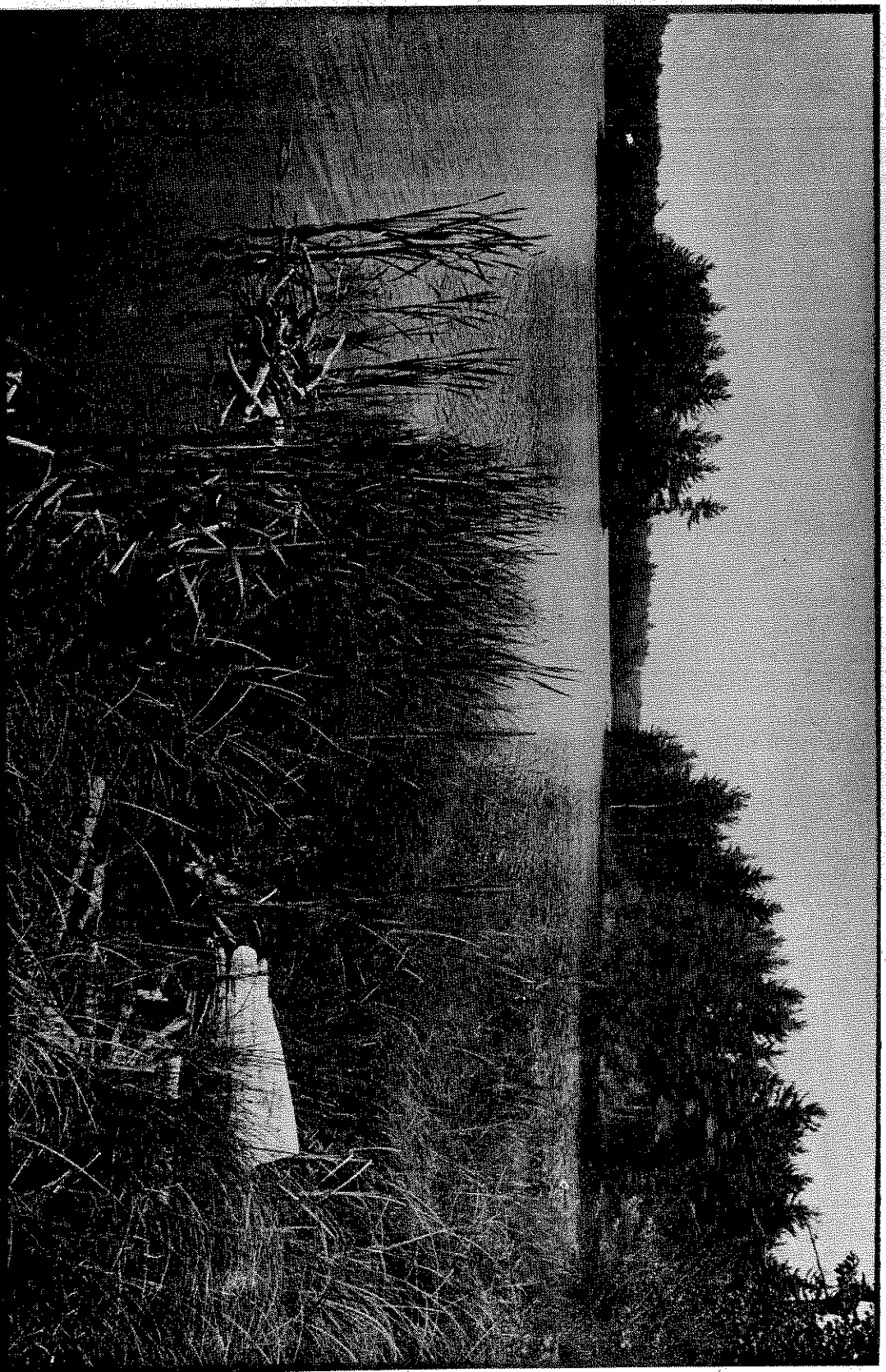
England has had a national land trust since 1895 when Octavia Hill, Canon Rawnsley, and Sir Robert Hunter (a likely crew) gathered over tea to talk about ways in which historic sites and land could be preserved. England was slow in developing a national parks system. Parliament didn't pass the National Parks and Countryside Acts until 1949 and 1968.

In the land trust, much experimentation has been allowed as to lease-hold agreements. One interesting concept is to encourage owners to put their land into trust by the use of covenants. "Covenants enable the owner to preserve the property and the rents of the land as his own and his heirs; and enables him still to sell it for its agricultural value, but debars him or any further owner from building on the land or otherwise altering its use except by permission of the National Trust".¹

Today the National Trust of England owns Thousands of acres of country-side, seashore and historic buildings. A number of people continue to make their living on trust lands. England's Trust is working hand in hand with the National Parks System.

by Ralph Green

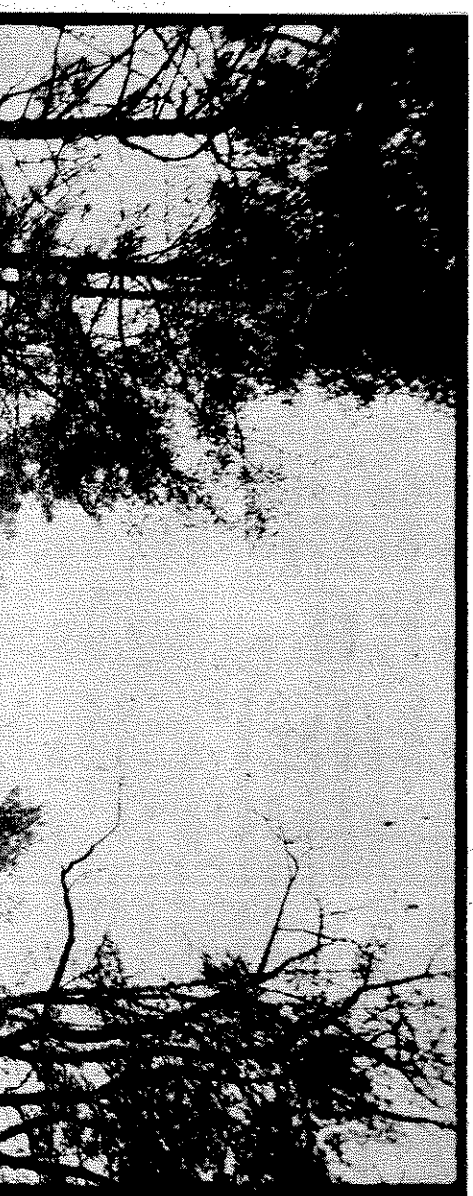
1. J. Dixon-Scott, England Under Trust, MacMillan, N.Y., 1937



The Land Struggle:

Coming to Terms with Theory and Practice

P. H. O. T. O. B. Y. M. I. C. H. O. L. L. S.



I grew up on a farm in Minnesota. We were seven kids and parents, whose fathers and mothers had tilled the soil for generations in Holland. We moved to the city when I was eighteen. My younger brother sent me a poem several years later when I was overseas. I no longer have the poem but the part I remember, and have often repeated to myself since, goes "...and falling down torrential rain and sudden snow and sleet/Had stalked the sullen farmer's field/While cities in the distance with loveless kiss deceive/The loneliness of adolescent years."

The ambivalence of our uprooting is strong in these lines: awareness of how tough and distorting life in the land can be (and I may add, has usually been); and an awareness of the disillusioning attractiveness of life out of the land, in the city. One may easily get lost, even destroyed, in such a transaction.

In previous articles I have described the journey of western humankind, now involving virtually all humankind, from peasant to capitalist existence. That is, from earth-caught by-nature-possessed, existence to a seemingly emancipated, from-earth-re-moved existence. Or, from traditional life "in the land" to the acquisitive consumptionist life "out of the land" that characterizes modern urban centers and sprawls and spillovers.

I have described the rise of the western bourgeoisie, the class in whom and through whom this radical emancipation from "the idiosyncrasy of rural life" has taken place. It continues to take place all over the world under the driving hegemonic force of the multi-national, or global, banks, corporations, and law firms.

I also briefly sketched the long, tortuous, growth of an opposition--from nostalgic yearning for pre-capitalist forms to an eager embracing of rational futuristic utopias, and swinging back again. It has lost a lot of ground therefore to the steady driving efficiency, and seeming reasonableness, of western bourgeois culture and organization. The onset of the various liberation movements in recent decades has helped to stiffen resistance. It has made the opposition more clear about itself and about the enemy. It has pushed us along from mere rebellion to the need to affirm a better way.

However, the liberation movements are severely limited in developing a better way. They remain separated from one another. They are weak in the face of the seeming attractiveness, efficiency and co-opting power of bourgeois existence. They can be, and are being, absorbed and neutralized.

For me a new focus, or call it perspective, or angle, is afforded by the land struggle. I understand it a possibly leading to an authentic transcendence of peasant and bourgeois existence. By this I mean a rebellion that is real enough to get free and

clear of the bourgeois mind set and manipulative practices--but I also mean thereby a rebellion that does not turn its back on the wider opportunities for human freedom and efficiency opened up by the bourgeois epoch and bourgeois achievements in technology, marketing, political structures, etc.

So that I view the next step for humankind not as "a final resolution of the human problem" (the "ideal" form of life). Rather I view it as an historical movement toward actual human possibilities opening up now, relevant now--not stuff for armchair philosophizing or for doing your own away-from-it-all individualist thing at the fringes of society.

I perceive two or three guiding considerations in formulating the nature of the next step. One is to be found in the historical movement of peasant to bourgeois to post-bourgeois existence. The movement is from "in the land" of peasant to "out

of the land" of the bourgeoisie, to a "with the land" concept of post-bourgeois existence. "With the land" describes an intermediate point that is really a new point. Post-bourgeois existence of course needs a name of its own. It does not have one--both because it is in its beginning stages, and because it does not yet have sufficient awareness of itself. A name I would offer, to contrast (and incorporate) both peasant and bourgeois institutional patterns of life, is democratic community. Peasant life was not democratic, though it was a form of community. Bourgeois life is not a community, though it is (or was) a form of democracy. Thus, like the concept "with the land" noted above, the name democratic community describes an intermediate point between two previous forms of existence, but it also describes something quite new.

LAND STRUGGLE

Another guiding consideration is rooted in a new understanding of nature. I described this in earlier articles as a cooperative, or inter-actional, attitude. It must be distinguished from both the peasant presumption of powerful Nature acting on Man; and from the bourgeois presumption of aggressive Man acting on a willful but supine Nature. Interactional describes an intermediate point between two previous attitudes, but it also describes something new.

This kind of conceptualizing helps--but is is not sufficient. Personal experience, and the growing awareness of my personal need, are also deeply involved. Or say that the conceptualizing comes out of, and further clarifies, the personal need--it comes to the same thing.

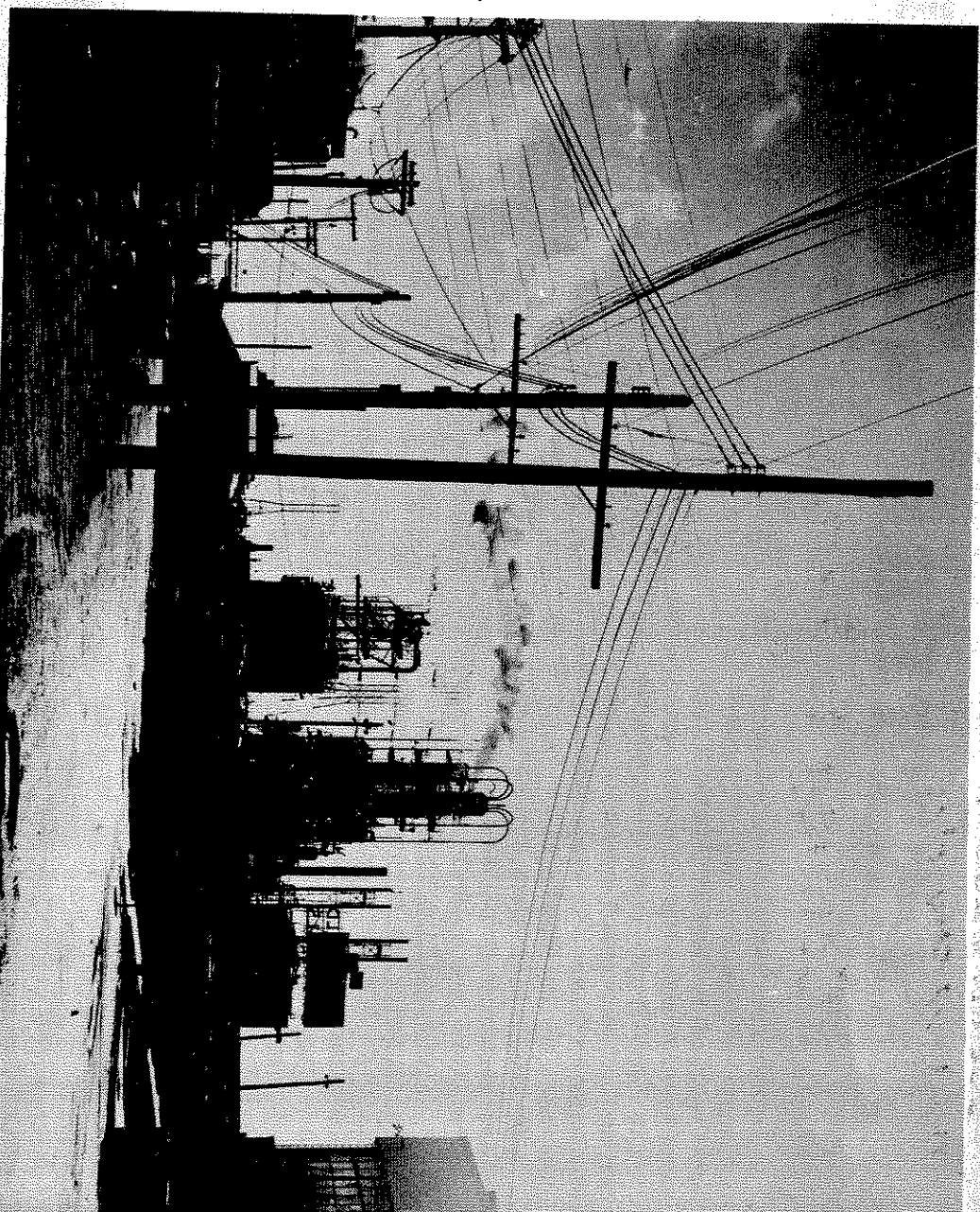
As is clear from the beginning of this article, I began my life "in the land".

An event from those years is still vivid in my memory, not as painful as it was then, but there is a strong memory of pain. It was late spring. The rains had been increasing and it was touch and go whether we would get our crops in. My father had died the previous year. My older brother and sisters were sick I remember; and the rains having let up, I was in the fields preparing the land behind horse-drawn implements. Finally by late Saturday of that week I had gotten five acres of corn planted. That night there was a deluge of four inches of rain and the planting was washed away.

Nature was cruel and I shook my fist in rage at the offending sky. Or was it also the wealthy farmer up the road who had talked my mother into a drainage scheme that, though it helped his farm a lot, dumped too great a volume of water too fast on our low-lying farm and made it that spring into a ghastly lake?

At eighteen I moved to the city and readily absorbed there the urban "inundation of self". Thereafter there occurred the odyssey of a "poor but bright" (deserving?) ethnic farm kid groping upward; invited early to patronize my past and my beginnings; brimful of an ambition for self that got channeled (almost in spite of myself?) into bourgeois upward mobility and pursuit of power; seduced again and again by manipulative, chauvinist, and romantic models; and encouraged to find in cosmopolitan and aristocratized values some relief from nagging insecurities. These never stuck. There came the recurring "crises of identity" when the "new" (the capitalist lure to become one of the successful assimilated ones) failed to sustain or satisfy. So I found myself--especially under the impact of the liberation movements of two decades--having to re-examine the entire course of my life of four decades. That process of reexamination is not finished, and in a sense never will be. However, thus far, I have found in my past surprising points of strength and hope.

For one, an intellectual and philosophic tradition that gave me the tools first to resist, and later to fight back against, the overwhelming and subtle power of the



bourgeois mind set. It is a tradition I came in contact with because of my emancipation from the farm.

Another point of strength and hope: the message of the land in my life. First, Minnesota land, where in spite of the traumas of "torrential rain" and "the sullen farmer's (my father's) field," I imbibed, as the language one speaks, the joy of upturned soil in springtime, the open spaces, the fun with others, and with neighbors, doing a common task.

Second, African land. For the three years I spent in Africa, the most important impression on me was the message of the land that I saw inscribed deeply in the eyes and speech of virtually every African I met, no matter how willy-nilly like me emancipated he had become from the roots of his beginnings.

And, thirdly, Maine land. For seven years again the message of the land, the plight and the promise of actual and symbolical battle lines. Here, one says to himself, is a place to live and to fight locally the global struggle, to fight globally the local struggle.

Finally a point of strength and hope--the exploration of my own self, my own nature and history; a process going on for a long time, but more compelling in recent years.

From these self-explorations so far I have learned much about the blighting, maiming power of the splits in contemporary culture and institutions--city versus the land; intellect versus emotions; the civilized versus the natural; the realistic versus the romantic; male versus female; aggressive versus passive; white versus any other color; the sophisticated versus the simple; the professional versus the layman; mind versus body; product versus process; power versus love; the efficient versus the free; the technological versus the primitive; and so on and on.

These splits had worked (worned?) their way into me, and as such have great power over me to immobilize and destroy me. But I have learned some things. I learned that these dichotomies, in their polarized state, Page Thirteen

need not define reality for me--even though the culture and socio-economic system I'm in has always tried to force me to choose for one versus the other; or has tried to palm off phony unities that masquerade as the annihilation of one of the polarities by the other.

I have learned to try to see these so-called polarities as historically created contradictions. They are therefore real enough and need to be mediated in practice, but I in myself don't have to feel caught up between them and eternally frustrated by them. I am learning to see "behind" the historical contradictions. I am learning to see each set of seeming opposites not as polarities but as pairs--as things in interaction

which are in principle capable of moving naturally in a state of creative tension within me.

I have experienced enough of the possibility of that happening, especially the aggressive-passive transaction, (which may be at the heart of all the others) to know that this is where life and the future "is at".

Yet so often, my culture, socio-economic system, and my own personal history (read hang-ups) rise up to prevent such transactions, or dynamic balances, from being realized in practice--leaving me literally at odds with myself. I have come more and more to realize that such balances cannot be struck often enough unless I get support and feedback from a variety of other people also struggling in the same direction--and support from forms of life which encourage and contribute to the striking of these balances.

This indicates the need to actualize myself through neighborhood and community--something, however, that is neither peasant nor bourgeois, but learning from both. I named it above the democratic community.

LETTERS & COMMENTS

Friends,

I just now read the Maine Land Advocate of January 29, 1973, and am troubled by the attitude I find expressed there, in phrases like:

"the Land Trust hopes to explore"; and, "we must fund common projects to work on"; and, "feasibility studies need to be done"; etc.

The hell with that stuff. Let's start shooting from the hip and let's start now. Why?

1. Opportunities to buy land

in Maine may rise beyond our means.

Land in Maine is selling at an almost incredible pace; I have looked for land for the past month, and found that many parcels I liked were sold within days of going on the market, and this in the winter season; spring will bring a horde of land hungry people to the state.

I recommend that anyone with money buy land anywhere, to give later. Don't wait to decide

whether you want this particular parcel for months, or sit trying to think what you will do with it.

That we can decide later, for we can use any land, or if we can't we can always sell it.

But we can't wait; land prices are increasing too fast. We are like a starving person, sitting within piles of fresh food, who waits so long for a feasibility study from his doctor on which food would be best for him to eat first, that the food spoils!

The banks are now giving mortgages on undeveloped land for half down and 9% interest for five years; at the rate inflation continues, you can pay back, present dollars with dollars worth half that in five years.

The technical advisory group can and should furnish attorneys and other financial aid to those members of the trust buying land, at low or no fees.

Figure that eventually the trust will seek money, to buy land, from us. Why not buy land now with that money you will donate? It will buy a lot more land now than it will five years from now. Talk to a realtor if you don't believe me. Even if the land trust fails, you have the consolation of a good investment.

2. The corporations are permeating Maine right now

Contrary to popular thought, they are moving into, not out of Maine. Arthur Austin, industrial specialist of the DED, says we are in for a boom in the next decade. A principle reason for that boom is low land prices. (Boston Globe Supplement, March 20, 1973).

If we fight the large corporations, we should start now. Don't wait for the leadership to approve your idea of fighting; that won't happen for a couple of years.

Meanwhile more obstacles will be thrown in your path.

Once we have all begun to fight, then let's get together to discuss our various methods, and perhaps select one which seems to be working well. But meanwhile I would like to see on the pages of the Maine Land Advocate tales of attempts, successes, and even

failures, (for we learn from them) but not clouds of daydreaming and wishful planning.

If anyone lacks ideas for fighting corporations, the person might do a little history reading; in this country we have had powerful movements: the Populists, the Single Tax League, the Socialists, the Labor movement, the IWW.

Get together with others around you. Strike. Leaflet. Protest. Zone. Boycott. Sit-in.

Finally I would like to complement the organizers of the Maine Land Advocate; although the attitude is sluggish, the ideas and the promise expressed therein is not. Keep up the good work!

In peace,

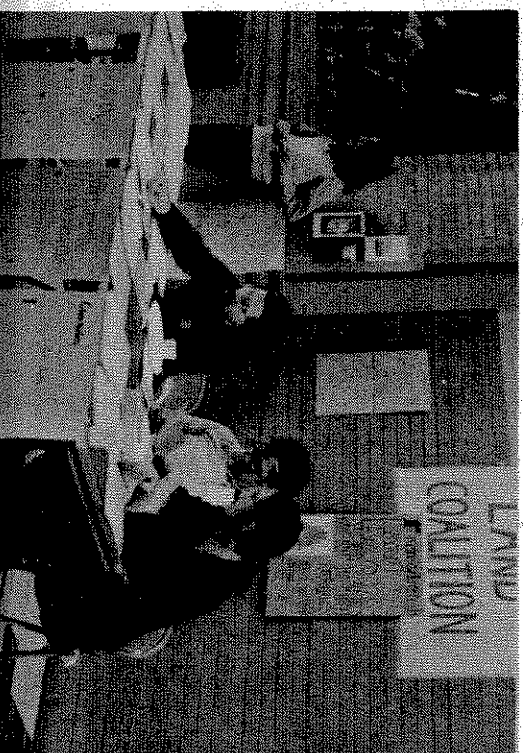
Chalmers Hardenbergh
member, technical
advisory group

Dear Folks,

We've read with interest and hope about the Sam Ely Land Trust. We also just found out I'll have a part time job next semester- thus the check. If we can save any extra, we'll try to send more. I'm reading everything I can get my hands on concerning land trusts, community development corporations and self-management. Even found a guy in my class who has extensively studied CDC's and is doing his thesis on them. At any rate, if you people need any kind of help that can be done from a distance- research, writing letters in search of funds, etc., we're anxious to volunteer. Please let us know.

Even and Joan Richert
116 Westminster Ave.
Syracuse, N.Y. 13210

Land Reform Coalition
and Land Trust Booth
at the Statewide United
Low Income Inc. Rally
in Augusta on March 20.



First National Conference on Land Reform

The first National Conference on Land Reform will be held in San Francisco, California, April 25-28 under the sponsorship of the Center for Rural Studies, an affiliate of the National Coalition for Land Reform. The purpose of the conference is to exchange ideas and information and help develop a national network of people interested in basic changes in the way in which land is owned and exploited. Participants and panelists will include people from every region of the country who are active in land reform efforts.

The program will include films on land reform and a keynote address by former Senator Fred Harris of Oklahoma and a speech by Senator Lee Metcalf of Montana.

The conference will be held at the San Franciscan Hotel. Registration is \$35.00

For further information contact the Center for Rural Studies, 345 Franklin Street, San Francisco, California, 94102 or the

National Coalition for Land Reform, New England Office, 1878 Mass. Ave., Cambridge, Mass. 02140.

Topics on the agenda include:

- Regional reports
- Land Trusts and community land ownership
- Land reform in other countries
- Public land policies
- National policy and rural cooperatives
- Land ownership and the environment
- The role of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the land grant colleges
- Tax laws: present consequences and possible reforms
- Subsidies: present impacts and possible reforms
- Local control of energy resources
- Models for new Rural Communities
- Developing land reform legislation
- Research and organizing techniques

Baxter Park: Still not a Public Trust

Great Northern Paper Co. has been stopped from cutting in Baxter State Park, but it looks like the Park Authority will cut there itself! That seems to be the result of the Natural Resources Council's suit of last December to stop the deal between Great Northern and the Baxter Park Authority. The deal would have allowed GN to cut in the remote northwest section of the park.

Stopping GN from cutting cost the state \$725,000 in the out-of-court settlement. What is worse than the state having to pay out all this money? The state will probably cut in the northern section itself! Maynard Marsh, chair-

person of the Park Authority, says the state will cut according to "scientific forestry methods" as allowed by the deed of Percival Baxter himself. This raises the question: What was really gained by the settlement? Now the state can gain the income from the stumpage rather than Great Northern--Big deal!

One purpose of the suit was to determine what, indeed, Baxter meant by "scientific forestry practices." The cash settlement prevented us from finding this out.

It's quite clear that the Park Authority intends to cut in that "forever wild", remote northern

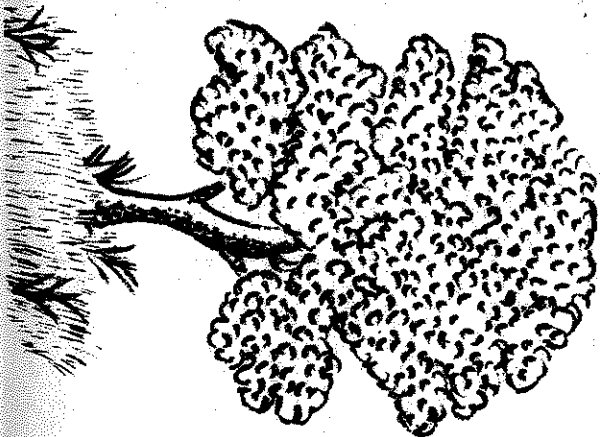
section of the Park one way or another. The Authority is now developing a "master plan" for the park that will include the cutting practices to be used in this northern section. The Authority will be holding public hearings on its "plan" in the near future. It is up to us to go to these hearings and demand that "scientific forest practices" mean no cutting at all in this remote section of the Park.

LONG LIVE BAXTER PARK!

-J.N.

MAINE LAND ADVOCATE STAFF

BRUCE CARLISLE	JOHN NEWTON
LULU CHAMBERLAND	JOHN RENSENBURK
RANDY CURTIS	WES NICHERSON
SUE LUNDQUIST	(SAM ELY)



Constants!

AN INFLATION-PROOF
CURRENCY EXPERIMENT.

In Exeter, N.H. Bob Swann, Ralph Borsodi and others recently lunched at the Good Earth restaurant and instead of using Dollars to pay the bill they used a new currency, the Constant. In February, Independent Arbitrage International began a new phase in its plan for monetary experimentation with the first issue of its non-governmental currency. People are purchasing the new notes in 1 to 50 Constant denominations as an alternative to their depreciating U.S. Dollars. In Exeter, Constants are now accepted by a number of merchants and are passing through the exchange system; IAI is encouraging others to begin circulation of this new currency elsewhere in the country. In terms of Dollars, the current value of the new issue is about 25¢ for a 1-Constant note.

It is also possible to open checking accounts held in Constants at either the First National Bank of Boston or the Exeter Banking Company; these accounts are increasing very rapidly. Accounts with balances over 500 constants pay 3% interest in addition to the inflation protection advantage. For information on the purchase of Constants or opening a checking account in Constants, write IAI, Exeter, N.H. 03833

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If you would like to keep receiving the Advocate, please fill in and send the coupon below to the Maine Land Advocate, P.O. Box 116, Brunswick, Maine. If you cannot afford a subscription at this time, please indicate on the coupon. Arrangements can be made.

☐ Enclosed is a \$3.00 subscription.

☐ Enclosed is \$_____ as a further contribution.

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If you have been receiving the Advocate by mail, this is the last issue we are able to send out, unless we receive your subscription. If you've run into any problems with your subscription, please drop us a line.

Adventures
of SAM & ELY
& their
friends

Two months later
still in VERMONT
ELY was at it again
organizing around
the issue of
out of state
land claims

The courts are a pack
of villains—if no one
else undertakes the
overthrow of the govern-
ment of VERMONT—
I WILL!

And where does it get him?

THE OLD
DALLHOUSES



home
sweet
home

WILL
ELY EVER LEARN
THAT GRIMES
DOES NOT BAY?

WILL
SAM ESCAPE?

WILL
I ESCAPE FROM
THE ADVOCATE STAFF?

WILL
THERE IS PLENTY
OF EXCITEMENT AHEAD
KIDDIES?

Maine Is Our State — Let's Not Lose It!

WHAT IS THE
PROBLEM?

* 70% of America's people live on 2% of the land. * nearly 2,000 family farms go out of business every week. * 800,000 farmworkers will be displaced by machines within the next 3 years. * absentee corporations have extracted 500 billion dollars of coal and timber from Appalachia's rich earth - yet the people of Appalachia remain poor. Same thing goes for Maine and its people. * the wealthiest 7% of farms get 40% of the crop subsidies. * tax loopholes enable thousands of doctors, actors and speculators - but not farmworkers to become landowners. * over 80% of Maine is owned by out-of-staters: 50% plus by a handful of paper companies and the other 30% by large corporations or families. * of the 4,058 miles of coastline in Maine, only 3 miles are public beaches.

WHAT ARE THE
POSSIBLE REMEDIES?

* develop a system of credits, training and technical assistance for poor people's rural cooperatives and other self-help enterprises such as land trusts and community development corporations. * reform the farm subsidy programs which favor corporate wealth over the small farmer. * reform the tax policies which provide incentives for the wealthy to speculate in land. Also required is a shift away from the property tax to a more progressive income tax as a basic source of local government income. * create local public utility districts to own and develop energy resources. * exploration of the anti-trust aspects of the concentration of land ownership looking towards the possibilities of comprehensive land reform through both legal and legislative action.

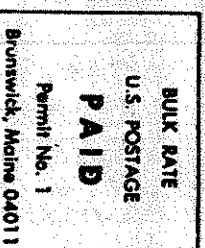
WHAT ARE WE
SEEKING?

* to assure existing farmers, fishermen and woodcutters of Maine a fair return and increase the number of self-employed people in the state. * to encourage agricultural, and other types, of cooperatives. * to combat corporate feudalism. * to make government and financial institutions more responsive to working farmers and rural poor. * to promote small-town business and rural economic development under local control. * to preserve open spaces and diminish use of toxic chemicals.

COME TO THE CONFERENCE!

Hazel and Clarence Bagley in Millbridge (see page 10) are not alone. They need your support. If you can't make it - send in letters saying what's going on in your own communities on land issues.

Maine Community
Land Trust Planning Committee
Sam Ely Community Land Trust
P.O. Box 116
BRUNSWICK, MAINE 04011



TO:
