

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE "GIVEN" A JOB

Look to the Land

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NO LESSON to be learned from this war effort is more important than that developing in the minds of some 20,000,000 Victory Gardeners. For the first time in their lives, thousands of these patriotic citizens have made some productive contact with the soil. They have found more time to help themselves to a living. They have learned something of the value of working with Nature—of the health and economic advantages of following this fundamental law of better living. They have begun to appreciate that the fullest economic independence is possessed primarily by those who own and work the soil. At last a deep sense of belonging on God's footstool has come to those gardeners who have ventured to purchase enough ground to provide a considerable portion of their annual food needs.

Then there is another group of Victory Gardeners. They, too, have acquired the art of raising vegetables and fruits, of canning and otherwise preserving the summer surplus for winter needs. But they have secured no land of their own. They now sense the fact, however, that if they had some land, they could not only provide much of their own food but could raise a surplus sufficient to trade for much

of their annual needs in clothing and shelter.

Why have these citizens not purchased land? For several reasons: Their present work is in large cities far from their garden activities, and they know of no suitable jobs near the open garden spaces; city surroundings and conveniences, certain friends and other ties have become so much a part of their existence that they hesitate to break away from these influences; suburban lots or larger tracts are so high in price that they fear to risk the investment.

One or more of these handicaps has prevented millions of families from acquiring homesteads. Then, too, they have depended so long on a weekly or monthly pay check that they are fearful of what might happen if they were to make the land their primary source of income. These people forget that the migration of their pioneer forbears from the settled east into the wilderness of the west was a more difficult undertaking. We need to realize that in city environment and in city work we are in the hypnotic state of so-called "social security." Actually these are factors in our economic system which most tend to create instability of employment.

It is in large metropolitan areas that employment is most quickly and seriously affected by business uncertainties—by depressions, labor-management difficulties and speculative activities. A bad break in the stock market can cause the loss of thousands of city jobs; a private conference of industrialists—fearful of the future—could mean the closing of factories employing millions of people.

Only the blind optimist forgets the lessons of 1929. Those who went through the panic of that season of the stock market know the feeling of helplessness that gripped supposedly strong men and ruined them. The terror that struck the hearts of those dependent upon personal property—as distinct from land—for an income was awful to behold. Thousands of the so-called well-to-do had everything they possessed taken from them.

Where were their inalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness? Values in bonds, stocks and banks had vanished over night. Their jobs and all income gone, there was no place they could call "home." Too late they realized, as many are now beginning to do, that there is no real security except that, buttressed by ownership, of land.

IT MUST BE admitted that the obstacles to acquiring suitable acreage are considerable. Vast tracts—kept vacant for speculative purposes in and around large cities—are held at prohibitive figures. Prices for near-by farms or suburban lots are also comparatively

high, and reasonably priced areas are usually far from the centers of business activity.

Regardless of these facts and of the knowledge that existing laws encourage the holding of land out of use by those who own—but do not want to work—such lands, the need of millions of families for human freedom and independence is so great that some way must be found to enable them to become rooted in the soil. Whether it be one, five or ten acre farms or quarter sections, those who wish to acquire some land must be given the opportunity. That is their birthright. It is their misfortune that they were born after the land of the nation had been parceled out among the "first families" or settled by those who staked out the remainder of the country.

Changing existing land laws or modifying our taxation system so that it would be unprofitable to hold land out of use may be accomplished too slowly to meet the requirements of the present moment. Though we are now in a boom period, the well-known business cycle is still with us, and a post-war depression is bound to overtake us if our natural resources are permitted to continue in monopolistic control.

It would seem wise, therefore, for many families—including those of men now in the armed forces—to consider paying the price of economic independence by acquiring such land as they can now afford. Even if present prices for land are higher than can be justified by prospective postwar val-

ues, possible losses are of little concern when compared with the cost of living, unemployed, in a large city. A little money set aside each week from fat pay envelopes will soon amount to enough to make it unnecessary to be "given" a job, if such funds are invested in productive land.

And let us not berate the employer who says he cannot assure postwar jobs to all his present employees. He has no such power. If he owns and manages his business, he might be able to risk promising employment to a reasonable proportion of his present personnel. If, however, he is the manager of an institution owned by the stockholders and operated for profit, he would lose his job if he committed his enterprise to employment expense beyond the certainty of "orders in hand" for postwar business. Naturally, as an employee of such a corporation, you would like to have a guarantee of postwar work; but if you were an important stockholder, you would vote to support the manager who limits employment costs to the proper ratio of sales income.

THE RESPONSIBILITY for our present employment problem rests upon each of us as individuals, and as individuals, or in groups of determined individuals, we must initiate practical protective programs. Those who would look to the land for subsistence must work for a program that will ultimately reduce land value inflation and prevent the withholding of land from use. Meanwhile, a practical provi-

sion against unemployment—a provision that can assure financial security—is to buy the land needed, at the best price to be had. Unhappily, giving unto Caesar that which is Caesar's is *still the law of the land*.

Though small lots may be excessively high in congested areas, large tracts can be bought advantageously if purchased by a group of people. Suppose, for example, ten families decided to buy five acres each. Instead of individual purchases in ten scattered areas, they could combine in the purchase of a fifty acre tract. Each participant would profit by a saving in per acre price and legal fees for title transfer. Each family would own its five acre plot and all would cooperate in solving common problems and in promoting the general welfare of the colony.

Some of these families might engage in intensive gardening, raising vegetables and fruits for marketing in near-by towns. Other members might specialize in poultry, goats, bees, dairy products, rabbits or pheasants. Altogether, there would be enough variety in production to permit exchanges of produce between families, to the advantage of all.

For the cash income which most families would also require, part-time or seasonal jobs would probably be available in neighboring villages or towns.

There are other advantages in such a cooperative plan of homesteading. Sociability is a worth-while factor. Being able to choose one's associates

and neighbors has a bearing on the long-time enjoyment of a homestead undertaking. Agreements can be made as to styles of buildings, types of fences, landscaping and other considerations contributing to the permanent attractiveness of the properties.

One of the real drawbacks to farming has been the too common practice of having better barns than houses—more imposing shelters for cattle, horses and chickens than for the family. Often the city dweller who yearns for the freedom of the farm, foregoes its delights because of the dread of muddy yards, falling fences and unpainted corn cribs. To some these may seem minor considerations, but to many they are determining influences because of their love of the beautiful—their attachment to the total home, the exterior as well as the interior.

No doubt the lack of order and

beauty around many an old-style farm is responsible for the migration of thousands of young folks from the country to the city and the trading of productive farm homesteads for more resplendent city dwellings.

Many a metropolitan business man has taken advantage of this situation, buying an unattractive farm site and turning it into a habitation of color and beauty. Here he really "begins to live," for men of all classes and vocations have long anticipated finding rest, relaxation and continuing interest in the things that pertain to the land.

On a plot of ground he can call his own, a man can live—regardless of business conditions. If things come to their worst, more science applied to his piece of ground will assure him such independence that he will never have to ask anyone to give him a job!



Electricity-Conducting Adhesive

A new development that bids fair to revolutionize the laminated wood industry is described by Dr. W. Gallay, National Research Council of Canada:

"Many glues require heat to make them harden, and there is no way to get the heat in. We have devised a special electrical means of doing this. We take a special chemical, add it to any glue and use that glue as an electrical conductor, so that the heat is put in just where it is needed."

This method greatly shortens the time required for gluing timber. In the case of aircraft propellers, the gluing can be finished in several minutes as against eight days by former methods.

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