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A CERTAIN JOB FOR EVERYBODY

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The first essential in living is not, as we have come to think, a job; it is the opportunity to produce for ourselves the minimum essentials of living -- sufficient food, sufficient shelter, fuel and clothing to maintain health. The wise writers of the Declaration of Independence did not say that governments could make people happy and guarantee them freedom from want. They said that governments were instituted in order to furnish people life, liberty and the opportunity to engage, as they phrased it, in the "pursuit of happiness."

This requirement can be met, not by waiting for someone sometime in Washington or elsewhere to give us a job, but by obtaining land -- land upon which we can individually raise food and livestock, erect houses and buildings, cut wood for fuel, and produce other necessities for ourselves.

It is not true that humans are ~~entitled~~ to jobs. No one is entitled to say, "I have a natural right to employment, and to employment at the sort of work which I like, or for which I have been trained. Is any man born with a right to demand of others employment throughout life as a bookkeeper, an actor or as a salesman? But every person is born with the right to work for himself and

~~inflation is coming.~~ Research Division, School of Living, Suffern, N.Y. 1943 ②

on whatever amount of land may be necessary" in order to support him/herself and their family. Access to land is the crucial issue; Western 'culture' has not 'solved' this problem. Every law which bars this God-given right to access to land, violates a primary human right.

Access to Land

Each family is wise who buys a farm or subsistence homestead, or organizes and joins a self-liquidating homestead association, so that land is available when needed. Some of us may change the existing speculative land-tenure, in order that land which is now held out of use, is once again becomes available and the source of our opportunity to survival and livelihood. (Ready Progress and Poverty, by Henry George.

When self-liquidating homestead associations are organized, land may be obtained in large tracts at low prices per acre, with members paying for it outright or putting their savings into it as they accumulate them.

Every American is entitled to an opportunity to establish such a homestead. Opportunity is the real American tradition, not charity. No real American wants charity. Soldiers and sailors should have opportunities to establish homesteads. Persons should not be just 'citizens' but landholders with a real stake in their community.

Plans for sub-division of these large tracts and for their use primarily for subsistence and general family farming, should be made now, Members who do not already know how to live in the

country should begin~~f~~ their education in gardening and productive living.

Many towns, counties and states have abandoned and tax-defaulted lands which they could transfer to such associations. The resettlement of these lands would increase the production of wealth, increase trade and thus raise the public income of communities wise enough to make such use of the land.

In order to make the homestead association self-liquidating (and thus avoid charity), land assessments or ground-rent sufficient to meet all carrying-costs should be collected from the members by each association.

In order to avoid the misuse of the land for speculative purposes, membership in such a homestead association should carry no right to speculative resale. If a member desires to abandon his homestead, it must be made available to some other person who has an equal right to such an opportunity. The price which he may ask for an improvements he has placed on the land, should be fixed by arbitration.

In order to insure that the homesteaders shall be always able to meet their land assessments, the ground rents should be payable in either money or in kind.

In order to avoid fining the members of such associations for the improvements which they make, no taxes should be levied by towns, counties or states upon improvements made upon the

land, which the homesteaders have thus voluntarily removed from speculation.

Finally, in order to make possible the incorporation of such homestead associations and the tax-exemption of their improvements, legislation amending the membership, non-profit and co-operative corporation laws of the several states should be enacted.

An Expanding Enclavical Movement

A homestead association resembles a single-tax enclave. (See Enclaves of Economic Rest, Fiske Warren, Harvard Mass. from School of Living, RD 7 Bx 388, York Pa. 17402-\$5.00). An isolated single tax colony (such as Fairhope, Mobile, Ala.) is an anachronism. But hundreds and thousands of such homestead associations all over the country, each comprising a group with an actual stake in the abolition of land speculation -- an expanding enclavical movement -- would furnish a basis for land reform similar to that which the cooperative land and building movement furnished in Denmark.

The importance of preliminary planning and continuous education is shown by a study of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, US Dept. of Agriculture, Washington DC 1942, titled, "A Place on Earth--A Critical Appraisal of Subsistence Homesteads" by Russel Lord and Paul H. Johnstone.