

ought to have been, and encourage economical use of it.

Amenity land, like urban open space, need not be rated. Such land should still be valued, and preferably valued as if in an appropriate alternative use, so that the community can see the revenue forgone. But designated rural land, like its urban counterpart,

would be excluded from development and would be unaffected by SVR.

In summary, site-value rating would have only beneficial effects on the environment, and would work entirely within the framework of the present (or any other) planning system.

USA

Producers versus Non-producers

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UNLESS the people's general philosophical outlook changes, there is grave danger that our relatively high standard of living will drop to the level of most other so-called civilized nations in the not-too-distant future.

The people appear to listen with approbation to the tirades of the non-producers against the producers. One would suppose that those who produce the wealth and services which we enjoy would be looked upon with admiration and respect. But, sadly, such is not the case. Instead it is the non-producers who are listened to so eagerly—the professional do-gooders and the bureaucrats and politicians who denounce the producers.

In a large measure, this is probably because so much of what is produced comes from corporations, some of them of enormous size. And yet it is precisely because production is carried on by large units that so much is produced at relatively low costs, for what is known as economies of scale are practised. This simply means that by producing in large quantities great economies are possible. Were it not for this fact, those marvellous machines we call automobiles could never be produced for the ordinary man.

Because these companies are so huge they are open targets for the non-producers. For example, the petroleum and natural gas companies have come under excessively violent attack. Yet it is these companies which discovered the oil and gas and delivered it to the people. They were the ones which went abroad and discovered oil in the Middle East and brought it back to America at such a low price that for years Americans had the cheapest gasoline of any

large nation. These companies were not the cause of the increased prices today, but the governments of the Middle East countries. But to listen to the assorted non-producers, you would think the only thing the companies had on their minds was to rip-off the people.

If anyone is ripping off the people, it is the politicians and bureaucrats, and their natural allies, the professional do-gooders. Our wonderful Congressmen ever so thoughtful of the public's good have just increased their salaries by \$13,000 to \$57,000 a whopping 30 per cent. But let the oil companies raise the price of gasoline a penny or two to compensate them for increased costs, and the cries of these self-serving politicians denouncing the companies are enough to wake up the dead.

The non-producers are handsomely paid. Not only that but they drape over themselves the mantle of saintly virtue. But it is a virtue which costs them nothing, for almost inevitably whatever reforms they advocate come down to interferences by government. They claim whatever credit is due, but the taxpayers foot the bill. And, of course, all of the reforms are worse than the disease for nothing fundamental is ever advocated, such as the communal collection of the economic rent of land.

It is nothing new, of course, for governmental parasites to feed on the people. That has been going on for eons. However, our society is a highly complex one. It utilizes extremely sophisticated electronic and mechanical devices which require huge amounts of energy in one form or another as a substitute for brute human labour. But to keep our society progressing materially, the greatest possible degree of freedom must be accorded to the producers. If such is not done, our society is so interdependent that it can regress much more rapidly than it progressed. For example, energy

is absolutely necessary. One would think that such being the case, the government would do all in its power to aid the energy producers to supply our energy needs. But precisely the opposite occurs. The government interferes not only with price controls, but absurd environmental restrictions. On the eastern coast, a huge reservoir of oil exists which the oil companies have been trying to tap for years. Only as a result of the Arab oil boycott did the federal government finally open bids, but now local and state governments have brought any activity to a halt. And yet it is these same eastern states which are the loudest in demanding cheap oil and gas.

Sooner or later, the people must regain some of the philosophical insight that the pioneers had, which is that for civilization to progress, the highest degree of freedom possible must be maintained. This means not merely freedom of press and assembly but more importantly freedom to produce. If economic freedom is denied, want and poverty reaches such depths that the people do not care whether they have the freedom to speak or not. They willingly sell their right to free speech for a loaf of bread.

Today, a new aristocracy is arising. It is the non-producers who feed at the public trough, all the while ascribing to themselves the virtues of Sir Galahad.

But our society cannot long tolerate such an aristocracy. It must be curbed. Unless it is, our civilization will go down the same path of all the other great civilizations before us, but probably our decline will be much more precipitous and bloody.

But to curb this parasitical class, the people's philosophy must change so that they look with scorn upon these parasites and afford the respect and admiration which the producers deserve.

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