

Glossary of a Simple Man

(D to H)

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DEMOCRACY: originally an attempt to check the power of rulers over the rights and earnings of their subjects by enabling ordinary citizens by free equal voting power to elect legislators to represent their views and thus protect their rights; success depending upon the extent to which essential rights are understood and the extent to which the voting system gives fair representation of minorities. Now in Western societies, where equal rights are ignored and every section seeks privileges at public expense, the elector finds his choice limited to candidates appointed usually by only two powerful groups, each presenting package-deal expedients differing little, if at all, in principle, minority views are suppressed, millions of votes count for nothing, taxation is more penalising than ever, and politics is reduced to the art of sectional bribery. Under the old despots the people resisted heavy taxes, high food prices and a debased currency; now, under the delusion that they govern themselves, they accept all these oppressions.

EDUCATION: essentially an attempt, after instruction in the rudiments, to draw out the student's power of reasoning for himself, seeking knowledge for himself, and providing for himself, so that he may become a self-reliant and highly-developed human being; an attempt requiring wide diversity of method and experiment to suit diversity of parental choice and students' character; therefore requiring free competition among teachers. Now, under collectivist ideas, education is regarded as a state monopoly capable, under the direction of experts appointed by the Minister of Education and Science, of moulding human material into the condition "the country needs," as interpreted by the Minister; and it is evident that he regards this condition as being

robots for the planned economy. The parents' function is limited to paying for the machine through taxation. So education in general has become not an attempt to develop individuality but a method of nationalizing the mind; this originated in the unnatural poverty which made state intervention necessary.

EQUALITY: uniformity of one thing with another, thus inapplicable to human beings, who all born different, so that any attempt to impose equality is a violation of natural rights. But as equality, used hazily, can be confused with equal rights, the word is useful to demagogues who realise that eminence of character, talent, and independence and originality of mind obstruct the tendency of rulers to reduce their subjects to subservience. Thus resistance to egalitarianism is denounced as snobbish, arrogant and anti-social.

FREE DISCUSSION: a method of seeking the truth by free exchange of information and opinion, each participant having an equal opportunity to speak, and having no personal inducement to modify or suppress any part of his contribution. This method has long

proved effective in law courts and in science but today in public discussion of social and economic problems there is no such safeguard; the participants are professionals who cannot be indifferent to the interests of those who pay them; thus the intrusion of any evidence that might seriously endanger the dominating interests of a monopolist society is often checked without the public being aware of it.

HISTORY: the record of human experience, which, if studied by ordinary people for their own benefit, could reveal that personal freedom is of supreme importance for unimportant people; that power exerted by some persons over others corrupts society today just as in former times; that the reciprocal injustices of land monopoly and oppressive taxation have been and remain the most potent means of rendering the mass of the people helpless in mind, body and estate, and that ideas now accepted as modern and progressive are only different names for fallacies as old as the hills. But as histories are now written either as dramatic success-stories in the power struggle or as school texts to please the Minister of Education, any historical example that might shake prevailing ideas is instinctively obscured. Thus, although every normal person learns by experience to avoid repeating his errors, governments continue to repeat theirs.