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Monday's Wash and Social Reform

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Monday's Wash and Social Reform

Electric dryers are nice, but I enjoy hanging clothes on a line, especially in the Spring. One sunny April morn I hung an older sheet alongside a brand new one. "How gray this looks," I thought, "this won't do."

After its re-wash in the basement it looked clean. But out in the bright sunlight it certainly didn't. Except for the quality whiteness of the new one, I probably would have been satisfied.

Then I got a washboard; soaped and rubbed hard. And for good measure I gave the sheet a half-hour's boiling atop the stove. Rinsed a third time, it nearly—but not quite—matched the brilliance of the new one.

So it is with social reform. For lack of something better with which to compare it, most people think ours is a "pretty good world." They find it hard to understand the feelings and efforts of those who see something "better and whiter."

One reader asked: "Things aren't really as bad as you think, are they? In recent months you have attacked government, land-ownership, interest, war, scientists, high prices, low wages, taxes, commercial farming, the food industry, the medical profession, factories, public education — just about every human institution one can name. What kind of a future do you want? You aren't really serious about land reform and decentralization of government, are you?"

To which I answer, "Yes, I'm serious. Isn't this affirmed by 23 years — out of my 27 homesteading years — of editing, managing, financing, promoting and processing two journals that have been discussing these matters? And a good many of our readers and our contributors are equally serious."

Fortunately (or unfortunately) the institutions and experiments we work with "hang on our line" like a brilliant new sheet. By comparison, the ones our reader enumerates are worn and gray. If I and others bemoan their dinginess — or danger — it may be because of the sharpness with which better conditions are seen.

Action For A Human Culture

Nor has it all been negative. We have reported and discussed the "elbow-action, the soap and hot water treatments" that we believe will change the old to a better, brighter hue. It seems to some of us that School of Living people are in the forefront of such action — all the way from home delivery of their infants and home education of their children up to Borsodi's low credit, commodity based currency, The International Foundation for Independence.

In place of proliferating government, we advocate and practice independence from government via non-payment of war taxes, and development of all kinds of voluntary associations, primarily family homesteads and intentional communities. In place of finance capitalism's inflation, high prices and low wages, we show how to get a truly free market via free land, free banking, and no usury; in place of factory work, a majority of families supporting themselves on family homesteads; instead of a giant food industry, families producing their own, upgrading health and not depending on the medical profession. For public schools, substitute private and home education of children, have cooperative and student-faculty experimental colleges, establish adult Schools of Living in every community. For giant cities and commercial farms to feed that urban population, decentralize into small villages, small-scale homesteads and self-sustaining farms. Instead of a recreation "industry" and bizarre art, let's have cooperation with nature, indigenous crafts, folk singing and dancing and functional art.

All this to fit and enhance the nature of human beings, whose need is to choose — and whose joy is to create — a brighter life and society.

Peace Seminar, cont'd

International Foundation for Independence, of which he is field director. IFI initiates a money based on commodities; its unit of measurement is a "basket of commodities" and it can be redeemed in commodities, and is thus deflation-inflation free. IFI is open to investors at a conservative return. Its funds are loaned to productive enterprises, at a figure so far below the usual exploitive rates of 30% to 100% as to be comparative freedom of cost to producers in undeveloped countries.

Bill Manning, of New Braunfels, Tex., presented a lucid history of worldwide finance and banking. He intrigued many with his plans for a community in San Blas, Panama, where freer land and money arrangements will be developed. This, plus colored slides of San Blas and its people and their many beautiful molas and craft articles that he had with him, led several in our group to consider joining or visiting Mapka, the project under

way in San Blas.

Nature and Use of Government

Len Krimerman, of the University of Louisiana department of philosophy, led a session on modern concepts of anarchy. He stressed the nature of bureaucracy, centralized, top-down organizations that become as restricting and coercive as Government or the Political State. Some were quick to indicate that this could not happen did not the Political State start the conflict of interests by granting privilege to some and withholding access to peoples' vital needs of land and credit in the first place.

Mr. Krimerman was in the midst of this discussion when a newcomer arrived, and in the belief that this was a meeting for presenting any and all opinions he opened up his concern about racial discrimination. Some present felt this was undue interruption of plans and goals in process, and so stated. The newcomer interpreted this response

as discourtesy and rejection. Other group members felt we should turn our attention to the new speaker, Ray Robinson, a Black Power advocate. In this situation, a degree of dispersion of feeling and attention developed to make it seem wise to adjourn and re-group as one chose. ("Let the Rage Uncoil," in the March issue of *Liberation* magazine, 75c from 5 Beekman St., New York City, discusses a similar encounter with much understanding.)

It seemed that some members needed and preferred to follow a scheduled program, while another section preferred freer attention to members' needs, opinions and concerns, whether or not related to the subject at hand. (These differences will have careful consideration in future Heathcote meetings.)

Some assembled for the next discussion on "Free Money" and others gathered with Mr. Robinson for attention to today's pressing situation as he sees it. This worked fairly well for the nonce, and all (including our friend Ray Robinson) joined for the evening session.

The afternoon's experience indicated clearly how readily many of us react emotionally and irrationally to persons, ideas and events. On Sunday morning we gave some thought to how to rectify the loss (if any) we had experienced; how to prevent such in the future; and certainly how to grow and develop in ourselves sensitivities and skills of more effective human relationships. Attention to, and hopefully some training in, our emotional and mental habits will probably become increasingly present in our future efforts at Heathcote Center gatherings.

Publication of Seminar

The presentations and discussions of the entire seminar will be published (including a paper by Lewis Herber, who unfortunately did not arrive because of illness).—MJL

Letters To The Editor

Florida — Pro and Con

To the Editor:

I don't understand why more would-be homesteaders don't look into Florida. This area is climatically ideal, and most northern crops except apples and cherries will grow here, plus all citrus, papayas and mangos. Fish and game are abundant (neutral factor for vegetarians). The snake menace is over-rated, although I just shot a 52" water moccasin this morning. In 15 months I've yet to run across a rattler, though I hear of others who have. On the other side, there is the racial thing and the general semi-feudal economy in the interior. The area around here is run by land barons, many of whom bought up vast amounts for \$1 an acre in the 20s. And one-half the emptiness between here and Holopaw, 60 miles north, is owned by the Mormon Church, tax-free. — Jack Coursell, Rt. 2, Basswood Estates, Okeechobee, Fla. 33472

East-West Community Tour

To the Editor:

We are planning a tour of experimental communities and schools with a view to locating in one, or developing one ourselves. Currently we are planning to go East from Chicago in mid-May and June, and hope to visit these places: Joy Valsko's Candlelights Crafts property out of Traverse City, Mich.; The Everdale Place, Hillsburg, Ont.; North Country School, Lake Placid, N. Y.; Lewis-Wadhams School, Westport, N. Y.; the Community at Conway, Mass.; The Dugway, Glendale, Mass.; Winsor Mountain School, Lenox, Mass.; Franconia College, Franconia, N. H.; Summerhill and School of Living people in New York City; Heathcote Center, at Freeland, Md.; Washington, D. C.; The Vale, Yellow Springs, O.; and Lane's End Homestead, Brookville, O.

Back home by mid-June, we will head west, and include: Min-

nesota Summerhill Community School, Minneapolis; Minn.; Tolstoi Farm, Davenport, Wash.; May Valley Co-op, Renton, Wash.; groups in the San Francisco area; Fran Crary's ranch at Lakeport, Calif.; the Live Oak School, Ojai, Calif.; Pacific High School, Palo Alto, Calif. — Michael R. Walsh, 5380 S. Martin Rd., New Berlin, Wisc.

[Note.—We have asked Mr. Walsh to report his findings in *Green Revolution*.—Editor]

School for Human Resources

To the Editor:

We are founding a school to help students with an individualistic orientation to recover from the bad experience of high school. In our School of Human Resources, in which many qualified educators in our area are cooperating, we hope to help students discover how to turn their own genuine deep interests into practical satisfying learning. A rather lost art, from what I've seen, but a crucial one if adult living in college and beyond is to make any sense.

We would like your reaction to our brochure-program, and to ask whether we can make use of School of Living material and people in our adventure. Our work is admittedly correction of long-term damage. But I feel we are on the verge of a generation that will find large-scale ways to remedy today's evils. We want to prepare agents and leaders for that work. We may well be sending students to Heathcote and Lane's End.—Bob Doolittle, 722 Commonwealth, No. 31, Boston, Mass. 02215

Seeks Correspondent

To the Editor:

In the fall of '66 someone from Wisconsin wrote me an interesting letter about schooling their children at home. They let the children go to school when they wish social contact, but they do their learning informally at home. I've lost this letter, and would like to be in touch with these people. Cheers for spring again! — Helen Ryan, Fiddler's Choice, Franklin, N. H.

Bewildered Teacher

To the Editor:

Here is my monthly check for Heathcote salary fund. Wish it could be more, but I'm substituting in schools in underprivileged districts. This is Something Else; too many mornings I can't drive myself to call in and offer my services. The other day a lovely oriental girl was student-teaching in a room I came into. She was bewildered. Said she'd read about Watts and similar horrors and wanted to do something. Admirable. And she chose to do that which most needs doing: help educate. So far as good, until she got thrown into the school room with them—unbelievable!

They're like bear cubs, tumbling and slapping. Administration takes a strong stand, and wants teachers to be martinets—not my style. I want to laugh with them and show affection, but it doesn't work with so many in the group; always some take advantage. I didn't know what to say to the earnest oriental, or to myself. It's evident, however, that methods which "teach" nice eager-to-learn middle class children don't work with these underprivileged. They need recognition first, but in these large groups (not too large for normal-

ly self-disciplined children) only sternness appears to achieve anything "academic." Actually they need to learn to respect themselves and each other more than they need to learn to read—although third graders are using primers. The schools here, screaming for substitutes, are magnificently equipped with everything except children prepared to learn.—M. B., San Francisco, Calif.

Oil Drum to Stove

To the Editor:

J. J. Jura asks about making a wood-burning stove from a large steel drum. Eddie Bauer, Expedition Outfitter, Seattle, Wash. 98122, advertises an "Oil Drum Stove Kit" (door, stove pipe collar, legs—everything needed to convert a 50-gal. oil drum into a giant heater). It costs \$23.95 f.o.b. Everett, Wash. They also have an

(continued on page 3)

Join Summer Trek To Heathcote

The third summer seminar at Heathcote School of Living Center (Rt. 1, Box 129, Freeland, Md., 25 miles south of York, Pa.) occurs on June 24 and 25. Here you will meet skilled and friendly Ruth Rosevear, nutrition counselor of Beechwood Clinic, Columbus, O. You'll discover how to rate your own health — in specific detail — how to know your body's vitamin C level; how you are doing as to vitamin B; how acid or alkaline your body is; etc.

Right before your own eyes you will know quickly, and then you can plan and practice how to balance, improve and be responsible for your own good health. This kind of knowledge should save you countless trips to doctors, clinics, and hospitals. Make sure you send your \$2 registration to Heathcote to reserve your place in this useful and important study. Heathcote landscape and weather are at prime in June. You will enjoy and benefit from this weekend, June 24-25. Bring bedding.

Youth Session July 22-23

How many teenage and early-twenty young people of School of Living will gather for their discussion of Rebellion vs. Independence on July 22-23? This is anybody's guess.

It is the first such meeting planned by and for young adults in School of Living families. Attendance does not depend on whether the family is a member of School of Living, but a core of School of Living young people are handling this seminar; Evan Lefever and Dave Pettie, both now living with the Anacker (continued on page 4)

School of Living Trustees Needed

Your nominating committee considers it most important that School of Living have as active and able a board of trustees as possible. The board consists of nine members, three elected for a three-year term, each year. Besides an understanding of School of Living and its goals, and earnest commitment to them, board members should be able and willing to attend three or four meetings a year.

We open the nomination to members. Please suggest persons you would like to have represent you — with a statement of their background and qualifications. And so that we overlook no possible candidate, we urge those who want, and have time, to serve, to volunteer their names and a 300-word resume of background, and program for School of Living you want to help achieve. This is all in the direction of School of Living principles—responsible persons volunteer, take initiative, and work for and with the persons and groups they approve. Ballots must be in the hands of our members by mid-July. Please write me promptly. — Walter Nuegebauer, Chm., 754 Iona Ave., Akron, O. 44314

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