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Last August an Act "to mobilize the human and financial resources of the nation to combat poverty" became a law of the land. This is the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964.

The purpose of the act is to make it "the policy of the United States to eliminate the paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty in this nation by opening to everyone the opportunity for education and training, the opportunity to work, and the opportunity to live in decency and dignity."

Disregarding all technicalities and using more or less catch phrases for descriptive purposes, we may break down the major goals of the act into nine categories.

1. To create a job corps for young men and women from the ages of 16-21.
2. To set up work training programs for unemployed young people.
3. To enlarge opportunities for part-time work programs for students in colleges and universities.
4. To aid community action programs for fighting poverty.
5. To provide adult education programs, with a special emphasis on helping the illiterate.
6. To set up a voluntary assistance program for needy children.
7. To offer special aid for impoverished rural families, migrant agricultural employees, and idemnity payments to dairy farmers.
8. To make available small loans to small businesses, especially loans that will lead to increased employment opportunities.
9. To provide work experience programs to help train those unable to support themselves or their families.

Let me repeat that I have listed only the major objectives, and that I have used only enough description to remind you of the general nature of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964.

A number of questions inevitably come to mind in connection with this program. Before I present them and my answers, let me state frankly that I am heartily in favor of the bill and that you are at liberty, therefore, to suspect that my answers may be prejudiced.

Question Number One. Is there enough acute poverty in our country to justify such a bill? I would say that the answer is yes, and that answer should be obvious to all whose eyes are open. For those who dwell in palaces, those whose chief la-

bor consists in clipping coupons, and those who dwell in ivory towers, I would suggest a reading of the testimony offered before Congress. That testimony will convince all whose minds are not closed.

Question Number Two. Are there opportunities for waste and graft in this bill? Certainly there are. Waste and corruption occur in all large-scale enterprises, both private and public. The bill, however, has been carefully drawn. The percentage of the funds lost through corruption and waste will certainly be no more than that in certain other federal activities, and the proportion of graft will probably be less than it is in nearly all the activities sponsored by all the state governments. However, it must be remembered that two wrongs do not make a right.

Question Number Three. Can we afford it? The program will cost during the first twelve months about two-thirds of the net profit that General Motors made last year. Put it another way. The cost is infinitely less than we spend on either liquor or cosmetics. Put it a third way. It will cost about 1/40 of the amount of money that we spend yearly on national defense. I suggest that by making our economy stronger and by strengthening our international image, the bill will probably do more to strengthen our defenses and to further our international purposes than a similar amount of money does when spent on military hardware or foreign aid.

Moreover, when we consider the cost of the program we should not fall into the error of considering the money involved as expense; it is not an expense of running the government comparable to, say, overhead expenses of running a business. The money spent is an investment. Speaking in traditional terms of economics, let me suggest that the marginal utility of that fraction of the tax dollar which is spent in strict accordance with the law has a higher marginal utility than that entire dollar would have if left in the private sector. That a dollar spent on the poor and hungry has a high marginal utility seems to be axiomatic.

I shall return to this subject later, but I do want to **emphasize** that the money spent is an investment that will bring economic returns and other social benefits as well.

Question Number Four. Is this program not something entirely unprecedented in American history? My answer is paradoxical. In one sense

there is nothing new about it. In another sense it is revolutionary. It is not new because there is nothing of significance in this law which has not been included in prior laws — especially those laws passed in the era of the New Deal. Earlier enactments, however, came into existence during a time of general economic chaos and misery; whereas, the present law was designed and enacted when the nation's income was at its highest. The mere difference in the economic climate is sufficient to denote the present action as being grander in design and bolder in intent. Whereas the earlier programs were designed to combat general unemployment and poverty, the new legislation is designed to elevate a large minority group to a higher level of economic opportunity and livelihood. Out of the New Deal experience came a philosophy of eradication of the business cycle. The new epoch, the age of maturity, involves the elevation of the needy poor to a higher plane of productivity and consumption through a series of self-help programs. Herein lies a major implication of the Act—the establishment of programs whereby destitute Americans learn to help themselves with the aid of public-private ventures. Put even more broadly, the New Act seeks not only temporary aid to those in acute poverty, but to eliminate, ultimately, acute poverty among all who are willing to make a real effort to better themselves.

In fact, then, the full implication of the economic act stretches almost as far as the imagination of human minds can conceive. It may well be that if this act proves successful and if it is expanded and broadened in the coming years, it may have implications as great in magnitude and diverse in nature as the Declaration of Independence or the decision to abandon the Articles of Confederation in favor of the federal constitution.

Question Number Five. Is the act economically sound? Politically sound? Morally sound? Will not some economists, political scientists, and moral philosophers object to the whole philosophy behind the act? Certainly they will. Some twentieth century economists who still think in terms of the Manchester school of the 18th century are enraged. If you believe that the economic commandments of the 18th century are as sacrosanct as the Ten Commandments and even more scientific than the laws of thermodynamics, then the economic act of 1964 should enrage you. If you have complicated and mysterious theories of price determination and wage determination that you think should take precedence over all normal human considerations, you may not like the act. But I do like the act. As an economist, I believe in competition; but I do not believe that the law of big dog bite little dog, big fish swallow little fish, of every man looking out for himself with complete disregard of his fellow man is economically sound. I do not believe in beating down the cost of labor by keeping a large body of permanently unemployed and a vast number in acute poverty. I am speaking here specifically as an economist. I believe that the striving towards the elimination of acute poverty helps to keep consumer demands high, helps to keep the wheels of

industry going, helps the little man, and helps the corporation. I believe that educating the illiterate and training the unskilled gives us a constant source of new techniques and new ideas and promotes economic stability. We have learned that keeping the whole nation employed even in the destructive industries of war which consume and waste our national resources with incredible speed, nevertheless, promotes economic prosperity and economic progress. How much more true is it then that promoting education, reducing poverty, and promoting full employment in peace-time industry will promote economic progress and economic prosperity.

Question Number Six. What about federal control or intervention? The palatability of the economic act is improved by the amount of the private, local, and state government participation which it encourages, which, of course, reduces federal control. Poverty is usually local in nature, and it is fitting and proper that local communities share in the war against poverty and in the joys of curing the causes of poverty.

As an afterthought here, I would think that the combatant in the war against poverty would receive as much satisfaction as is derived in the war against polio or heart disease or cancer. Personal satisfaction and pride of accomplishment must be one of the rewards gained in this war.

Let me speak now briefly as a political scientist. If we believe in democracy today, we recognize that it means more than the right to vote. A system that gives one the right to vote accompanied by an economic system that denies to vast numbers of people the right to education and training is not democracy. An economic system that denies sufficiency of simple food to keep one from being hungry and sufficient money for indispensable clothing, shelter, and medical care is not true democracy.

If I speak with diffidence as a political scientist, I speak with confidence and absolute conviction as a Christian. The first murderer described in the Bible denied that he had any duties as his brother's keeper. The law givers in the Pentateuch and the Prophets told us that the poor have their rights, that the handicapped have their rights, that social justice is God's will. There are those who will twist the words of the Master when He said that there would be poor people on earth after He left earth to mean that Jesus thought we should arrange our system as to make sure to preserve the poverty of the poor. This is not a sound interpretation of Him who told us the parable of the good Samaritan, of Him who preached the Golden Rule, of Him who said that all men are brothers and children of God and that the essence of all religion is love of God and love of our fellow man. We cannot express this love efficiently by occasional acts of charity to the poor. Let those who think that government stimulation of the economy and aid to the handicapped kills self reliance and initiative bethink themselves. On the contrary, any system which makes the minority groups, the aged, the infirm, the uneducated, and the poverty-stricken dependent upon charity is the system that destroys self

reliance and honest competition: and it is an immoral system.

In summary then, as an economist, I contend that the economic act of 1964 will strengthen our economy tremendously. As one interested in our national defense, I contend that the humane and noble principles which are the inspiration of the Act, will strengthen us in the battle against Com-

munist and will play their part in opening the eyes of the Communist nations and the non-committed nations to the beauty of our way of life. As a lover of democracy, I say that this act will strengthen political, social, and economic democracy. As a Christian, I say that it exemplifies the principles of justice and of love which have been given us by God.

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This method of instruction serves to accomplish several objectives:

1. It meets the needs of students by providing them with a challenging opportunity to coordinate their previously acquired knowledge to meet a practical situation—the long-range planning of an existing farm. It gives the student the opportunity to work, share, compare, and evaluate theoretical knowledge, experience and ideas with others—students, technicians, farmer, and instructor. It provides him with an opportunity to develop further his written and oral expression and to cooperate with others.

2. It serves the cooperating farmer by providing him with a well-balanced long-range plan of operation for his farm. It also gives the farmer experience in sharing and evaluating ideas and knowledge with others.

3. It is of value to the instructor by providing him with experiences at the grass-roots level enabling him to keep informed about current practices and problems in the area. It also provides the instructor with the opportunity to evaluate his students in their ability to utilize facts and to coordinate their knowledge into an effective plan.

4. It helps the university through promoting better public relations in the local area.

As a future project, based on the previous twelve years of operation, the instructor intends to have class committees analyze the plans developed for the first farms used, determine whether the plans were followed or not and why, and develop a follow-up long-range plan. During the twelve years this procedure has been followed there has been no difficulty in securing the necessary number of farms and cooperating farmers for each class.

NEWS ITEMS

COLUMBIA, MO.—Something new in reading, especially appealing to serious young adults, such as Future Farmers of America and 4-H Club members, is a new book, "Big Men, Big Jobs."

The work, a paperback, brings together the highlights of nearly 80 years of research at the University of Missouri College of Agriculture.

It is composed of 19 stories which, in popular fashion, tell some of the exciting tales of work of College of Agriculture researchers which have had a far-reaching influence on agriculture and in other fields not only in Missouri but also throughout the country.

An example of the contents includes the story of William Albrecht and his part in discovery of the antibiotic, aureomycin, at Sanborn Field on the University of Missouri campus.

This story is described by Wheeler McMillen, editor emeritus of Farm Journal, as "a fine example of the very best in agricultural writing in the past 100 years."

There is also the story about Leonard Haseman and L. F. Childers who found a control for fowlbrood, a disease which had raised havoc in the entire beekeeping industry.

The work of Marcus Zuber in developing corn with extra hard cobs suit-

able for use in the pipe industry is also entertainingly told in the 152 pages of the book.

Told is the part Dr. Ralph Mills, a medical missionary, played in bringing Korean lespedeza to the United States and Dr. W. C. Etheridge's promotion of this crop in Missouri and the mid-west.

The effective and continuous battle of a renowned scientist Ernest R. Sears against wheat rust is the subject of another story, as is the work of several researchers with soybeans.

These and other stories relate some of the important Missouri College of Agriculture milestones which have contributed and are contributing to the well-being of mankind.

"Big Men, Big Jobs" is published by the University of Missouri College of Agriculture. It is believed to be the first such institution to have published a popular paperback.

Copies can be obtained for 50c each by writing to "Big Men, Big Jobs," 198 Agriculture Building, University of Missouri, Columbia, Mo.

The author, Clyde Duncan, has spanned nearly 80 years of College of Agriculture research in "Big Men, Big Jobs," which was under preparation about two years.

Duncan, associate editor at the University of Missouri agricultural editor's office, is well known in the field of farm journalism, and was one of the

early organizers of the newspaper Farm Editor's Association.

Some of this prolific writer's works include "Find a Career in Agriculture," a best seller in the career series published recently by G. P. Putnam's Sons; and "Straight Furrows," the story of 4-H Club work published by University of New Mexico Press in 1954.

Duncan's recent awards include a literary fellowship to Villa Montalvo, Saratoga, Calif., in 1963. Only one is awarded annually. In 1962 he received a Huntington Hartford Foundation writing fellowship.

In 1955 he was presented the 4-H Club's national Alumni Award at the National 4-H Club Congress.

The color cover of "Big Men, Big Jobs" features the portraits of nine outstanding College of Agriculture researchers. It is the work of Ned Etheridge, also an associate editor with the agricultural editor's office at the University of Missouri.

He has been a practicing artist since 1939. He taught art at Christian College in Columbia for six years. He received training in art at Stephens College in Columbia, Kansas City Art Institute and School of Design, and Cranbrook Academy of Art in Michigan.

His portrait work is particularly well known.