

Welfare

The Values Party's policies on economics, technology, community development, education and health are fundamental to our welfare policy.

An objective of all Values policies is to create the kind of society in which there is no need for social welfare as it is traditionally understood. Traditional social welfare should rather be carried out in the normal course of community interaction.

Basic to this objective are our policies on the redistribution of income, wealth and opportunity. Our concept of a guaranteed minimum income adequate for living needs and available from current production, would replace most benefits and superannuation schemes.

Superannuation

Superannuation has become a political football, with the main parties focussing on what each scheme will cost the taxpayer and what each person can expect to get. The only good feature of the present bickering is that it is one of the few signs that either party can look further than three years ahead.

The Values Party rejects the whole idea of a separate superannuation scheme, which implies that when citizens reach a set age they are turned-out into a special pasture. Senior citizens are still people - who have not only contributed to society but who still have a lot to contribute. They should be part of our total economic structure and not a separate compartment.

Our minimum income policy, would always be geared to the current cost of living. The level would be high enough to make privately funded schemes unnecessary.

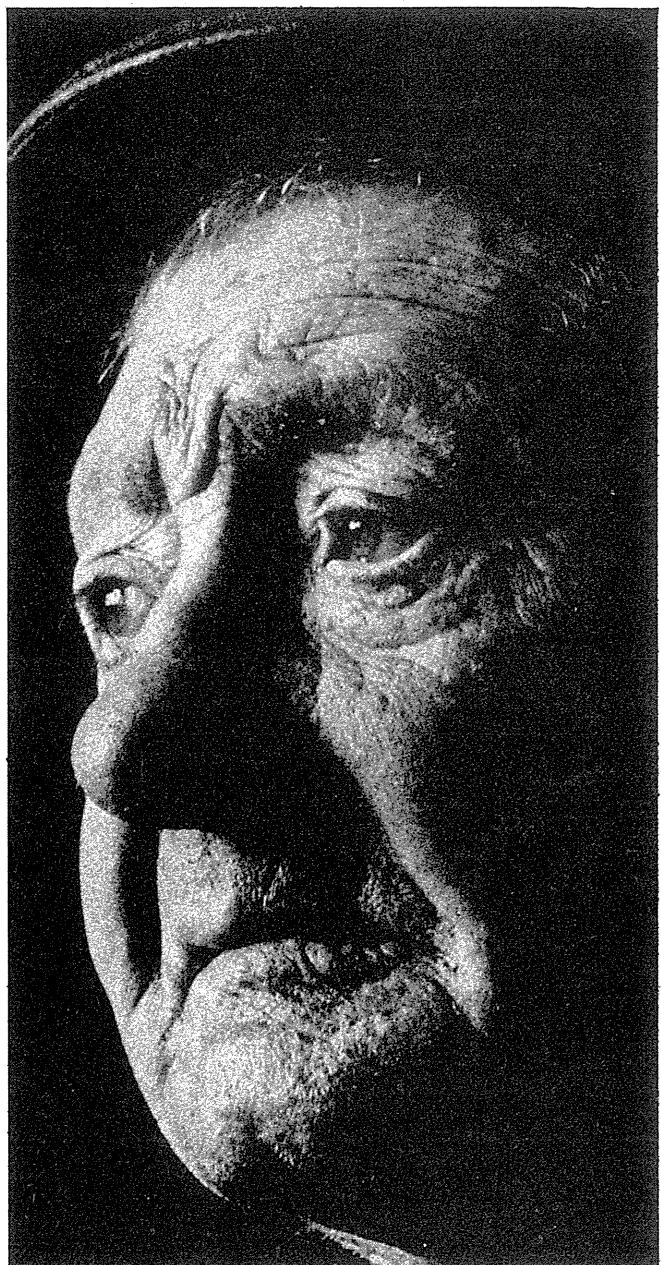
The section on economics has more detail on policy in this area.

The Values Party

- Sees its objective as ensuring that the total payment received is adequate to maintain dignity and well-being.
- Believes that Social Security should apply not only to those in sickness, hardship, unemployment or old age, but also to solo parents, parents of handicapped children, home workers, and the lowly-paid. Such social security would apply until Values' redistribution policies came into full effect.
- Would not alter existing rate, telephone and television rebates for the elderly, or child benefit allowances.
- It would seek to liberalise regulations governing the permissible income of beneficiaries.

Preventive Welfare

The 1972 Values Party manifesto emphasised preventive rather than supportive social welfare. We suspect that traditional problem-orientated social welfare merely reinforces existing problems of division and isolation of people from the community, while maintaining rather than attacking the forces that created the need for outside help.



We nevertheless recognise that there will be a continuing need for traditional forms of social welfare. We believe that the policies we are evolving to meet these needs can also be a means of altering the direction and focus of social welfare. As we said in 1972 the Values Party seeks to change the system so it meets the needs of people instead of changing people to meet the needs of the system.

The Values Party feels that many of our welfare needs arise from the effects of the nuclear family lifestyle. Our industrial relations, housing, land, town planning, and environment policies would all have the effect of carrying through our general policy of encouraging the development of alternative lifestyles.

There should be an expansion of "common situation" groups like Alcoholics Anonymous and Solo Parents

Inc., bringing people together to discuss changes in their lives. People who have moved house many times have some wisdom to impart to those who are moving for the first time. Divorced people can help those who are still caught in divorce proceedings. People who are promoted, demoted, who have gained a child or lost a spouse, can be helped to make the transition by simply being able to talk with others who have been there before them.

The Values Party would

- Decentralise the monolithic Social Welfare Department on a

regional and community basis. [Our proposals for changes to the administration of education provide a model.]

- Increase support for voluntary, locally-based social and community workers, especially in rural areas. This support would include positive steps to meet training needs.

- Seek to establish agencies for co-ordinating requests for aid and service at the community level where such agencies do not exist already, and support them where they do. We see considerable advantage in locating such agencies close to similar ones proposed in health and education.

