



Survival

The Stable-State Society

Infinite growth is impossible. Resources are limited and most of them are not renewable. The development of synthetic substitutes creates problems as well as solving them, and reflects the growth mentality that must be altered if mankind is to survive. Population growth, economic growth and use of resources must be restricted if society is to meet the needs of man. Now is the time to do it, and New Zealand can lead the world in developing a new society, the new set of attitudes necessary to form worthwhile, satisfying communities.

Population

There is a maximum number of people which the earth can sustain at reasonable standards of living. Already a large proportion of the world's population is underfed, poorly clothed, and unable to reach its full mental, physical and social potential. The effectiveness of each and every individual, his happiness, and his ability to contribute to society will reduce as population numbers increase. Limiting population growth will enable present resources to be shared equitably around the world - without greatly reducing our present standard of living. Population growth must be reduced if "space-ship earth" is to continue voyaging through space. Education in family planning, contraception and human relationships is needed to achieve this.

A New Economic Recipe

The economic machine is geared to meeting material needs, yet it has failed to provide them for many people around the world, and for some in New Zealand. This same machine is also beginning to seriously threaten our natural environment. It is possible to develop an economic system based on co-operation, sharing and conservation, a system which meets our material needs and at the same time promotes the satisfaction of non-material needs such as friendship, play, self-expression, a sense of individual identity, social approval, self esteem, and peace of mind. Values' economic policies are aimed at producing a stable-state economy. Growth must be curbed, and existing wealth redistributed.

Primary Production

A flourishing and vital rural community is essential to New Zealand's future. Our most important economic assets are land, climate and accumulated farming skills. Measures which promote effective, efficient and rational use of land are needed to enable agriculture to cater for the needs of New Zealand, and to help it meet its commitments to the rest of the world. Farm incomes must be guaranteed. Forestry must be encouraged - but not to the extent of destroying an important natural resource, native timber. Fishing has so far been greatly neglected by the government, and deserves further encouragement.

Industrial Relations

Employees are too often not involved in decisions which affect their lives. This is a primary cause of industrial unrest, and workers must be given the right to be involved in management and control of industry. Restructuring of many industrial processes is necessary if people are to achieve job satisfaction. Unions have an important role to play in this area. Retraining schemes, the introduction of job-sharing and more flexible working hours will also greatly reduce industrial strife.

Consumerism

There are pressures on people to keep producing and consuming more. Much advertising creates artificial wants and promotes dissatisfaction - even though New Zealand is a relatively affluent society and the material needs of most people are met. Once basic material requirements have been provided, human needs are distorted by continued emphasis on material consumption. If society were operating sensibly, the more goods we obtained, the fewer we would need. Advertising should be regarded as an information process, rather than a persuasion process. Packaging of goods should be kept to a minimum. Firms should be given incentives to make longer-lived products. Consumer education is needed, and smaller, more personalised shopping centres should be encouraged.

Technology and the Future

Technology can do much to lighten the burden of work many people carry. It can make life easier and more comfortable, and give people more time to pursue leisure. But often, technology has made work meaningless, has replaced the tasks from which people derive satisfaction. Technology, instead of making human hands and brains redundant, should help them become more productive. The ethical, cultural and environmental implications of technological development should be assessed - and technology should be rejected where it does nothing to promote human involvement and awareness.

Environment

There is nothing wrong with man altering his environment. But it must be done carefully, so the alterations do not cause the breakdown of the natural systems on which every living thing depends. Limits to population growth and the development of a stable-state economy are essential if pollution is to be prevented. Products must be recycled as much as possible. The urban environment must be kept on a human scale, because one of the prime causes of social problems is the alienation of people in the places where most of us live - the cities and towns.

Energy

The demand for energy is increasing at an alarming rate. New Zealand is being forced to develop more and more expensive methods of producing electricity, and is misusing its primary energy sources. The development of nuclear power is unacceptable to the Values Party, and there is a limit to hydro-electric and other electric generation potential. Energy consumption must therefore be stabilised. Transport is one of the heaviest users of fuels, and so the economic use of public transport systems must be encouraged.