

Wage and Price Policy Avoids Real Problems



dave macrae

editorial

One of the things which has become increasingly clearer and clearer as the conditions of the system deteriorate is the inefficacy of government policy. It undoubtably is true that government never has had any great effect; it is only when the need for action is big that the lack of it becomes apparent.

The implementation of the recent wage and price control program is a case in point. Too often we assume that something like inflation is a "bad thing" without ever bothering to ask who it's bad for and indeed

if it is equally bad for everyone.

Few people would argue when I say that pensioners and those on fixed incomes suffer worst but it goes further than that. Since the total GNP has remained roughly the same during the past few years, then inflation has served mainly to re-distribute the income of the country. Some groups gain while others lose. We all know some of the losers - aside from the above-mentioned group, the biggest losers are the poor since inflation in the prices of essential services has been

more than other commodities. As for the winners, we all know some cases - oil millionaires, civil servants, etc.

What is perhaps more significant is the manner in which this re-distribution has taken place. The prime way to get ahead of the game is to be a member of a group which has some sort of power to wield. The major beneficiaries, then have been members of big unions, big businessmen, etc.

The government in its response to inflation, has consistently failed to consider these facts - that inflation has acted and will continue to act as a re-distributor of income in favor of those with the most power. It has made no attempts to rectify the imbalance nor even to consider what a just distribution of the nation's wealth would be.

It rather has restricted increases for the people it is easiest to restrict, irrespective of who is making the minimum wage and who is making \$25,000+. Profits are not to be restricted except in the most indirect of ways, agricultural products

are not to be restricted, rents are not, etc. This is entirely aside from the question of how we can control prices in the international market.

It is interesting to note that the above categories contain some of the richest people in the country: agribusiness, landlords and capitalists. There has been no consideration for the poorer segments of the population except those making less than the poverty line - and most of those have no way to redress the inequities anyway (otherwise they would not be below the poverty line).

Since inflation is not being properly dealt with by this program, then it is inevitable that it will fail. While it will probably, in the short run put some sort of damper on the problem, because it allows the extant inequities to become larger then eventually all it will cause is more unrest, more strikes, and more inflation. The solution not only does not solve the problem but makes other ones worse.



Ugly Reply

Dear Kip,
Thanks for the honor of being the "ugliest man on campus", but I feel that I am not really the ugliest man on campus, it was just that I was one of the least "cutest" men on campus, that was around at the time of voting. As far as I can see most of my worthy competitors either hid behind their football gear down in the basement of Dalton or at home under their Mommie's wings. Take one person for example, J.P. MacIntyre, (known affectionately to the members and coaching staff of the football team as Mr. Asbestos.) I think that one occasion he dared to show his face

from underneath his helmet he got 6 million votes alone and I think that he should be acclaimed as "the ugliest man on campus".

By the way, the way he got his votes was when a CBC cameraman mistakenly shot a picture of J.P. without his helmet on, causing the camera to break and the film was mistakenly shown on the CBC National News.

Yours,
Bob (Barrelhead) Palmer

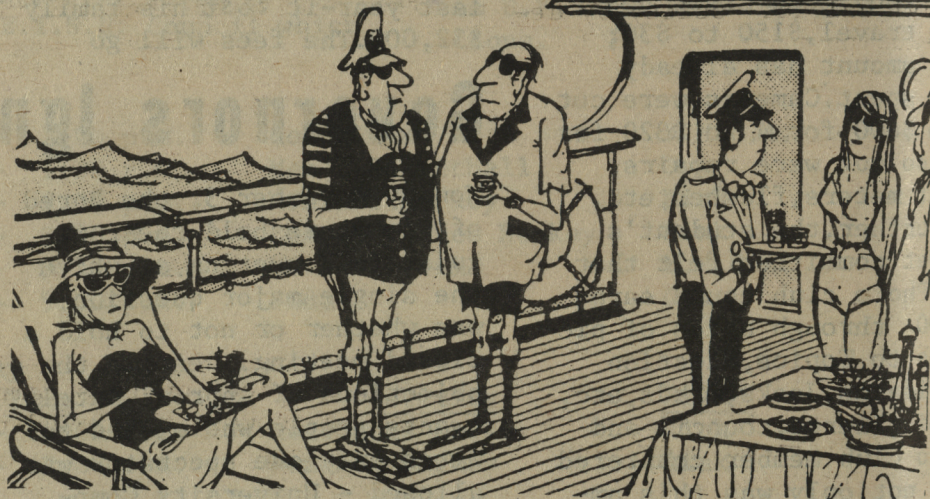
clarifying note: J.P. MacIntyre is known as Mr. Asbestos because of the frequency of his being burnt.

Offence Unintended

I notice in the past few issues of your paper, several comments given against certain articles which have offended themselves or others. May I remind these people that the purpose of a university paper is to bring controversial subjects out into the open to be agreed with or disagreed with accordingly. (but certainly not to be shit on.)

It has been aptly proven in the past that the most controversial articles

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The country's going to the dogs. Happily, it's the top dogs."

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