The Carlisle Mercury

Established 1867

Printed and Published Every Thursday At Carlisle, Ky.

Entered as second class matter at the post office in Carlisle, Kentucky, under act of March 3, 1879.

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES PER YEAR

In State, $2.00. Out of State, $2.50.

THURSDAY, JUNE 10, 1948

Envy Of The World

The history of the world, since recorded time, has been blackened at regular and frequent intervals by terrible famines. Countless millions have died miserably from hunger. And those catastrophes were not confined to long past primitive times. In the last quarter-century scourges has stalked through China, Russia, and other nations.

Yet, in the United States, we have never had a famine. Some may say short-sightedly that this is because we are blessed with an abundance of resources. But other countries where the standard of living is abysmally low compared with ours, have great resources also. Some may think it is because we work harder. Yet in the hunger-ridden nations the average man and woman work much longer hours, and perform a great deal more manual labor, than does the average American.

The basic reason for our abundance lies elsewhere. It has been in a theory of government that encourages every man to do his utmost and reap the rewards that has stimulated voluntary, individual enterprise and thrift. This has given every man the right to compete with any other in his chosen field.

We are here this week where it works on every hand. As a small example, every American can walk into a store and buy all the meat he needs—something that is impossible in 80-odd countries. Free enterprise is responsible for putting that meat on the counter. Free enterprise has given cows, hogs and other animals into our farms that are ready for consumption. Free enterprise in the country's great packing industry has been developed to bridge the gap between the livestock producer and the consumer. It performs a vital service at a cost which is almost unbelievably small.

It goes in every field of enterprise. Free people, working in a free economy, have made the American standard of living the envy of the world.

Danger Signals

The late George Horace Lorimer, who built the Saturday Evening Post from obscurity into an American institution, once wrote: "I have passed through one panic and one depression after another. In my lifetime I have seen much ruthless exploitation of men and resources, but in the end the American this always forged ahead on the courage and initiative of its private citizens. And steadily, through all that period, I have seen business practices and ethics grow better; I have seen sentiment developing against the waste and exploitation of our natural resources, and a public conscience hardening against the old abuses. Could a paternalistic government have done better? I venture to doubt it. Granting all the waste, the mistakes, and the blunders of the past, America has done a pretty good job and so men and women have a better one. To citizens who doubt this I offer the proposition that it is easier for another thing to steadily improve than for one which is already hardened into a fixed pattern. Look at Russia, for example. Look at the Five Year Plans, which have kept the Russian people in a state of ferment for years, and which promise to keep them in a state of ferment for years to come. Look at the Marshall Plan, which is a gamble that the ferment in Europe can be quieted down by a generous application of American money. Look at the Chinese Civil War, which is a gamble that the ferment in Asia can be quieted down by a generous application of American money. Look at the Palestine Question, which is a gamble that the ferment in the Near East can be quieted down by a generous application of American money. Look at the Atlantic Pact, which is a gamble that the ferment in Europe can be quieted down by a generous application of American money. Look at the Western Union, which is a gamble that the ferment in Europe can be quieted down by a generous application of American money