

outlines. Changes of national government policy have also disrupted production and nullified new investment undertaken with the encouragement of government. Bad weather and rising world prices may be used as excuses by politicians, but the mistakes of policy have overlaid and compounded the natural hazards of farming.

Mrs. Whetstone partly exonerates the Milk Marketing Board, the politicians' instrument, but criticises it for ignoring or obfuscating the recommendations on its

## Take it or Leave it Housing

DESIGNERS have "mistaken notions about what the average person does or wants and this inhibits them from giving the people what they want." So says Dr. David Canter, director of the Environmental Psychology Unit, University of Surrey (*Evening Standard*, Sept. 1). Despite the now well established fact that people do not want to live in high rise flats, Dr. Canter claims that in favouring two-storey buildings instead one might very well be exchanging one set of mistakes for another. Mistakes have been made he says, because planners have tended to consider economic factors instead of the needs of the people. Dr. Canter further claims that more money should be spent on research into the environmental needs in housing.

It has apparently not occurred to Dr. Canter to question that the "needs of the people" should be decided by anyone but the people themselves. People are quite capable of deciding by themselves the kind of house they want to live in with the help of a free market price—that is really free. Free from tariffs and taxes on building materials, free from restrictive practices in building and from the near monopoly of some building supplies. And, of course, free from the excessive demands for land on which to build. It adds insult to injury for those who cannot afford to buy their own homes, to have state charity and hand-outs conditional upon the choice of a home being left to planning psych-

pricing policies of weighty reports. The conclusion she draws echoes and reinforces her earlier research:

"The only way for farmers to end the de-stabilising of government interference is for them to opt for a free market rather than for a market in which demand and supply are regulated by governmental pricing policies."

A question-mark must however remain over the farmers' ability to respond to her challenge after forty years of subvention and "orderly marketing".

ologists, however well disposed and armed with dossiers of research they may be.

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THE GOVERNMENT has now been made more aware of one of the seemingly intractable problems of unemployed workers—their lack of mobility. Now, says a recent Press report, the Government plans to "counter the effect of low rent council housing which is partly responsible for the immobility of labour." One can well understand it. No one is likely to be attracted away from a council house (or a rent controlled private house for that matter) into an area where accommodation is simply not available—except perhaps high priced inadequate accommodation—simply because there is work to be found there.

Apparently in certain situations, workers moving to jobs outside a reasonable daily travelling area can qualify for over £1,000 in grants, including a £7.84-a-week lodging allowance for two years, fares home up to six times a year, house removal costs, a £135 rehousing grant and £250 towards estate agents' and legal fees.

The travel subsidies are limited to workers moving to new jobs which pay under £3,300 a year.

Here is a classic example of the wrong solution applied to a problem creating yet another problem—to which a further wrong solution is applied. It is our land tenure system and the Rent Acts that have condemned many to homelessness and overcrowding.

The philosophy of politicians is, if you see a problem, pass a law. If this creates another problem, pass another law.

## A CHALLENGE TO LIBERALS

AN invitation to Liberals to get their basic philosophy into sharper focus is contained in a recently published booklet\* written by Scot Young, Liberal Candidate in the 1974 General Election. Mr. Young argues that Liberal principles should be liberal principles—the principles that made the Liberal Party a force in politics at the turn of the century.

The essential argument of Scot Young is that the ownership of land differs from the ownership of wealth in both its economic and moral aspects and that neglect of this distinction has led us on the wrong economic and political path. It has resulted in the hardening of views between those who would have everything state owned and those who would have everything privately owned, setting up a perpetual tug-of-war.

Scot Young condemns both camps and insists that true liberalism does not compromise between them but takes its stand in a third dimension advocating that private wealth go to the individual and that "common wealth" (land values) go to the community.

The origins of exclusive land-ownership and the morality of it are well reasoned as also are the practical measures for putting into effect "Economic Liberalism". This involves not only the establishment of equal rights to all land values but the securing of individual rights to personal production, by the removal of existing onerous and crippling taxation.

Scot Young produces no blueprint for a free and just society; he is content to lay down foundations and leaves it to Liberals to work out the relationship of current social problems to the fundamental principles of Economic Liberalism.

"The present-day challenge to liberals, both nationally and internationally," says Scot Young, "is a challenge to the reassertion of liberal principles."

This handsomely produced booklet is excellent value for money.

\**Economic Liberalism* 25p post free from Land & Liberty Press Ltd.