NOTES from FEE

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LOOK FIRST TO THE THINKING

YE OLDE grist mill was turning out nothing but weed seed meal and the customers were unhappy. Some agitated for a new management. Others, knowing that the machinery was in disrepair because of long inattention, insisted that its restoration be the first order of business. There were a few, however, who pointed out that if only weed seed were put into the mill, only weed seed meal could come out as grist. These few argued that feeding into the mill a raw material superior to weed seed should be given first consideration.

Today, in the USA, Ye Olde Federal Mill is turning out socialistic grist. Many of us have no stomach for this product, and we agitate for a variety of remedies.

Some of our persuasion, who are politically oriented, insist that a change in the governing personnel be the first order of business. They observe socialists in the political chairs and reflect on how much better it would be if only those of our own choosing were to occupy these seats of power. As a consequence, they emphasize putting "the right men" into public office.

Others of our persuasion, who also are politically oriented, give top priority to a repair of the governmental structure. They quite accurately observe, for instance, that the foundation of the federal mill has broken down. Gone is the base on which it originally rested, namely, "All men are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights." The Constitution and Bill of Rights have been warped into shapes which the builders would never recognize as their handiwork. The tax apparatus is cluttered with inequities. Government is burning up the peoples' income at an accelerating rate. To keep itself running in its overextended role, it is inflating and thus eroding the medium of exchange. Its socialistic grist bears ever-increasing price tags; and the people are compelled to take the grist whether or not they want it. Confronted with "a long train of abuses and usurpations," these libertarian mechanics see repairing the machinery as the first order of business: constitutional amendments, repeal of outrageous statutes, new laws to nullify bad ones, and so on.

THE politically oriented, however, do not have the libertarian field all to themselves. Among those of us who dislike socialism and who agitate for remedies are the educationally oriented. Though perhaps no person is oriented exclusively one way or the other, there does exist an honest difference of opinion as to where the emphasis should be placed, what logically and practically should come first.

Again, I wish to present the case for the educational emphasis. For, as some of us see it, grist mills grind what is put into them, be it #1 hard red winter wheat or weed seed. Sure, we prefer a mill with competent operators.