CORPORATE CONTRIBUTIONS FOR EDUCATION

The question is often raised as to the propriety of corporate management spending stockholders' money for institutional programs such as those conducted by the Foundation for Economic Education.

While discrimination of a high order as to what should and should not be corporately supported is a mark of intelligent managerial action, the use of types of organization as a means of discriminating is questionable. Probably to a large extent, this procedure is prompted by management's desire to be relieved of the almost overwhelming pressures for financial support coming from educational institutions. By adopting a no-educational-support policy "across the board," the pains of a discriminating policy are escaped.

The Foundation for Economic Education is an educational and research institution. It is this for the simple reason that the most important economic and social problem facing the American people today requires an educational solution.

What is this problem? Stated bluntly, it is a growing disrespect for private property. Stated in reverse, it is a growing belief that society has a first claim on the fruits of any citizen's labor, providing society can present the claim in a successful way politically by majority vote. If anyone or a majority can take anything any time it so desires, it can then be said, for all practical purposes, that the aforementioned anyone or majority owns everything. For what is ownership but the right to possess? If I can move into the home you occupy solely on the basis of my own pleasure, that home is mine. It is not yours regardless of whether or not the deed is in your name.

When a person owns something, he feels the necessity to control it. And perhaps for this reason -- this feeling of an ownership of everything -- we witness society organizing itself as government and controlling, willy-nilly, more and more of the creative activities of all citizens. The citizens' agency of control -- organized police force, government -- only a few generations ago took 2 to 5 per cent of all earned income. Today the citizens are using their agency of force so extensively that its spending ranges between 35 and 40 per cent of the nation's earned income. The American people are running away from their own revolution!

The American Revolution was a set of new ideas. The Founding Americans believed: