Clipping of Note NUMBER 40

For The Better Economic Life

WOMEN were not freed from their 18th Century servitude by feminist agitation, but by the invention of the sewing machine, the washing machine, the refrigerator, and the dish washer, together with the revolutionary developments for handling and distributing foodstuffs.

Peasantry on the farm was not banished by reform or edict, but by the iron plow, the reaper, and the tractor.

The 12-hour shift and the six-day week could not have disappeared from the scene through laws or social upheaval. It was modern machinery, developed by research, that made it possible for the American workman of 1950 to produce many times as much goods as the workman of 1850.

The automobile, preeminently a product of research, has widened and enriched lives in a manner impossible to achieve through legislation. At every hand, it is plain that the improvements leading to advancement have their origin in invention and development. There is no alternative.

Ideas formed in a man's mind, after it has been trained and sharpened by education and experience, are the basis of successful research. Without the creative brain of the scientist, all investment in research is worthless. American scientific laboratories are the best equipped in the world. Yet continued progress will be insured only if the rights of the individual to exercise freely his initiative are reestablished and jealously guarded.

American research prospered by providing rewards for success; the inventive genius of the nation was kept alive by adding to it what Lincoln called "the fuel of incentive." Further, the integrity of American research was kept inviolate; the research worker was spared the necessity of finding "political" conclusions as the goal of his investigations.

In this atmosphere of free inquiry and of freedom of the individual to enjoy the fruits of his labor, science here flourished. Elsewhere in the world, it has suffered serious set-backs.

The German scientist, once a leader, found under Hitler that he was falling behind. Specified results at a specified time could not be guaranteed, no matter how urgent or peremptory the orders. The Russian scientist under communism has learned that his findings must satisfy the official view, regardless of the facts. The British scientist under socialism has seen the rewards of his enterprise virtually confiscated by taxation.

Without freedom, scientific research and the progress in its wake will falter in the United States, as has happened elsewhere. The individual must be assured the freedom of incentive. The university scientist must have freedom of inquiry, of discussion, and of publication.

And sponsors of industrial research, such as American companies, must have the freedom and incentive to win as well as to lose—the freedom to grow and expand, as is necessary to fulfill their responsibilities. The means to carry on future research will be forthcoming only as long as it can pay its way.

When it can no longer do so, it will stop, and the retrogression process begin. In that event, a well-known principle would again be proved: a hoop rolling down hill moves faster than one going up.

Condensed from THE STORY OF RESEARCH *by E. I. duPont de Nemours & Company, and the address of the Company's President, Crawford H. Greenewalt, May 10, 1951.*

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