

# VILLAGE VIEW

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Reading so-called junk mail isn't usually something I spend a lot of my time doing, but this past week there seemed to be more of it arriving than usual, and like all of us, anything with my name on it demands at least a glance. This week's receipts were of some value, were even intellectually stimulating, even though somewhat depressing; before consigning the entire pile to the circular file, I made a few notes to share with you.

"The United States government cannot solve the urgent problems plaguing our country because government is the problem." That has a familiar ring to it. Is the solution, then to get rid of the government? Or somehow to change it? The good Lord knows we've tried doing that, but with each refinement it only seems to get worse.

To support the quoted statement, another is made: "Reams of red tape and overregulation actually add to inflation instead of fighting it." Nobody's arguing. It doesn't take any genius to realize prices could be lowered if manufacturers weren't required to spend millions of dollars to assemble figures with which to support responses to all the forms any business must prepare in order to be allowed by the government to conduct its enterprises.

"Archaic competition-hindering restrictions cost American consumers between \$1.4 and \$1.9 billions annually." As one example backing up this allegation, regulations governing the trucking industry require a trucker delivering one sort of goods to a northern city from a southern one to return empty since he's licensed to transport only one commodity. He must also travel over designated routes rather than more economical ones.

"Unjustified tax advantages and loopholes enable giant corporations to pay less federal income tax than you do." Ways this is accomplished are described; it's also pointed out that when giant corporations avoid paying taxes, the rank and file--that's you and me--are required to meet the shortfall. Businesses can write off all such expenses as depreciation on equipment (don't you wish you could do that on your refrigerator, washer, dryer or furnace?), utilities, salaries paid for cleaning or ground maintenance as well as salaries paid to productive employees, and bonuses paid executives. Also deductible are company cars, planes, recreation facilities and programs, and meals that can be related to "business entertainment".

"Fraud, theft and waste in our government are estimated to cost the taxpayers as much as \$25 billion annually." Since this is an estimate, no substantiating figures are supplied; we don't have much resistance to accepting the statement, though. We only feel angry, helpless and angry, when we think how far that \$25 billion would go toward reducing the national debt. Or our personal tax burden.

Those quotations refer to the messes our/federal government is in; the ones that follow concern the even larger messes of this planet Earth. Starting with problem number one, we have, "Overpopulation makes a mockery of human rights."

Illustrating the statement are the following comments. "The world is in desperate trouble trying unsuccessfully to support 4.3 billion people. Two-thirds of them live in squalor. The developing countries are destined to lose 90% of agricultural lands now available to them due to twin forces of urbanization and desertification within two decades."

"Two-thirds of the tropical forests will disappear before the year 2000 as demands for firewood and croplands escalate."

"Planners hoped industrialization that resulted in new wealth would trickle down to all sectors of populations. It is evident now this has not happened."

"Many people believe nature will take care of everything, and the results will be satisfactory. Do they consider how nature has taken care of thousands of species no longer adaptable to existence on this earth? Some are lost entirely; the rest are preserved as fossils."

Just consider the meaning of the next quotation. "By the turn of the century there will be 535 million more people in Africa, 440 million more people in Latin America, and 2,150,000,000 more in Asia than there are today."

One foresighted scholar pointed out twenty years ago that "The future quality of our lives hinges on three things: first, holding down world population growth; second, the success people have in acquiring adequate food, clothing, shelter, health and employment; and third, the rate and ways we conserve irreplaceable resources."

And a final up-to-date observation: "World population is now doubling every thirty-five years; clearly, this is an unsustainable situation."

The statements themselves are depressing enough; the implications, the real meaning behind the words, is more than depressing; it's terrifying. If two-thirds of the world's population now lives in squalor (and it most assuredly does!), and in twenty years twice as many people will be looking for food, clothing, and shelter on lands doomed to lose 90% of now available agricultural lands and two-thirds of the tropical forests, the only possible consequence is mass starvation or possibly, as pressures build, mass annihilation of vast numbers of people in a holocaust of wars to be fought on an unprecedented scale with an unprecedented ferocity.

No nation, and certainly no nation that's operating at the degenerate level ours does at this time in history, can expect to maintain its present standard of living in the face of the pressures bound to be exerted, world-wide, in the very immediate future.

Without a thorough housecleaning from within, we shall almost inevitably witness a thorough housecleaning administered by forces from without. Even with an internal housecleaning, the demands to be made upon us between now and the turn of the century will impose crushing burdens upon our citizens, unimaginable changes in our life-styles, and sacrifices and adjustments beyond our comprehension today.

Will the demands be met? Somehow. There is no alternative. What isn't done compliantly will be forced upon our people by overwhelming hordes bent only upon destruction.

Will the changes come gradually or with ferocious suddenness? That depends to a great extent upon the foresight and leadership of all governments in the world; there's little that individuals can do unless they occupy the seats of power and influence, as most of us do not.

Will the sacrifices and adjustments be made? You bet they will. They will either be made or mankind will go the way of the Idus ineptus, the dodo.

If ever there arises another intelligent species, perhaps ours will be dubbed Homo ineptus.

And wouldn't it be apt? So much for junk mail.