

Jobs Require Capital

W. M. CURTISS

A RECENT editorial in *The New York Times* commented on the fact that a taxi driver in New York City, who owns and operates his own cab, must have a medallion, now worth \$26,500.

This medallion, a metal plate attached to the cab, is, in effect, a license to operate a cab on the city streets. The City fathers have seen fit to limit the number of cabs to a specified figure. As a result, the only way to become a cabbie is to acquire one of these medallions.

The market attaches a value to this privilege, so medallions are bought and sold or handed down from father to son or acquired by some other method. Once a medallion is obtained, then the owner can go about getting his auto and other tools of his trade.

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The *Times* referred to the taxi driver as "The Capitalist Cabbie" and of course he is just that. It appears that it would require about \$30,000 to set a man up in the business.

If this seems a rather big investment in a job, think for a moment of the average factory worker over the country. Someone must have invested \$18,000 to \$20,000 to set up his job. In some industries it is much more and may run to nearly \$100,000 for each employee. This investment provides the plant or place to work, tools to work with, and whatever else is necessary to make the best use of the worker's time and effort.

A farmer may invest \$50,000 to \$100,000 in a farm to provide himself with a job. A physician may invest thousands of dollars in a specialized education and in the tools of his trade before he can hang out his shingle. You can think of many occupations which must be accompanied by a sizable investment.

There is this difference: In the case of the factory worker or the farmer, the investment in the tools of his trade represents actual, physical things. The cost of a taxi driver's medallion, however, represents only a legal privilege—the cost of excluding others from the job by force. ♦



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10. Of the Civilizing of Groups

CLARENCE B. CARSON

NEWSPAPER headlines call attention to the events. They tell of demonstrations, of threatened nation-wide strikes, of freedom marches, of crowds turning ugly in their behavior and becoming mobs, of union violence, of sit-downs and sit-ins, of panty raids, of protest meetings, and of giant rallies. Pictures which accompany these stories frequently show police employing night sticks, cattle prods, bloodhounds, and fire hoses, or the National Guard advancing with fixed bayonets behind the cover of tear gas. The particular actors and causes change from time to time. In the 1930's, union violence was the most prominent national phenom-

enon. In the 1950's, rebels without a cause formed gangs of teenagers to prey upon one another, as well as the innocent. In the 1960's, Negroes and their sympathizers are the actors.

Taken together, however, these events constitute major trends of our times. On the one hand, the developments can be described as massed action by some group, which frequently is transformed by its fervor, or by some unfortunate event, into mob action. On the other, there are the harsh methods of the law enforcers, which appear to become harsher with each new device employed.

The chances are good, of course, that the headline writers will have found new topics before this is published. Shifting from ephemera to ephemera as they do, they

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Illustration: National Archives