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## SCIENCE FICTION SCENARIOS

In addition to being entertaining, many science fiction novels and short stories provide thought-provoking examples of *future scenarios* - well thought-out, consistent explorations of social and/or technological developments and their effects on a society. Some representative examples are listed below:

A society in which defense and protection are exclusively provided by private companies (they are considered too important to trust to government bureaucracies) is a background feature of "The Moonrakers" by Poul Anderson, featured in the collection *BEYOND THE BEYOND* (New York: New American Library, Signet paperback, 1969).

A variety of antibureaucratic, laissez-faire societies are visited by a government mission in Eric Frank Russell's satirical classic *THE GREAT EXPLOSION* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1962).

The implications of various biomedical developments are explored in two Robert Heinlein novels. The radical effects of cryogenic hibernation on social institutions are explored in *THE DOOR INTO SUMMER* (New York: New American Library, Signet paperback, 1959), and the development of longevity among a small minority of humans is the theme of *METHUSELAH'S CHILDREN* (New York: New American Library, Signet paperback, 1960).

The ramifications of colonizing the seabed - political, economic, and social - are considered in *THE DEEP RANGE* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1957) by Arthur C. Clarke (of 2001 fame).

A society in which children have legal rights, including the right to "divorce" their parents, is the backdrop of *THE STAR BEAST*, an early Heinlein novel (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1954).

Coexisting, competing social systems (selected for short periods in separate communities by vote) are examined in Chad Oliver's "The Mother of Necessity," included in his book *ANOTHER KIND* (New York: Ballantine Books, paperback, 1955).

A functioning anarchist society, a corporate form of group marriage, and a successful libertarian revolution on the Moon are featured in Heinlein's *THE MOON IS A HARSH MISTRESS* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, Berkeley paperback, 1968).

An elite group of philosophers and scientists sets up a research project for a galaxy-spanning project to change the course of history in Isaac Asimov's classic trilogy *FOUNDATION*, *FOUNDATION AND EMPIRE*, and *SECOND FOUNDATION* (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday & Company, 1967).

A galaxy-wide police force secretly forbidden to kill any intelligent creature is the subject of a series of Poul Anderson short stories, including "The Live Coward" in *ANOTHER PART OF THE GALAXY* (Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett Publications, Inc., paperback, 1966) and "Enough Rope" in *FOUR FOR THE FUTURE* (New York: Pyramid Books, paperback, 1959). ●

This column reports significant events, publications, and analytical findings associated with the growing rejection of corporate liberalism and the concurrent rediscovery of laissez-faire principles. By reporting and publicizing such items, the REASON community can help ensure that they do indeed represent trends, not merely isolated instances. Readers are invited to submit material for this column.

## PAY AS YOU EARN

In the special issue on education (*REASON*, April/May 1971) Christopher Jencks raised the question of how most students would ever afford college if the taxpayers did not provide the funds. Many critics charge that, despite free-market rhetoric, lending institutions would just not risk the funds to finance most students' educations: moreover, corporation grants in exchange for work commitments are generally considered unwieldy and inflexible, therefore unlikely. Now, however, a proposal is being tested that points the way toward a radical restructuring of higher education funding which could eliminate the conventional justification for taxpayer support.

The plan is called PAY AS YOU EARN (PAYE) and was first proposed ten years ago by Dr. Milton Friedman. It rests, essentially, on two principles: (1) that the fundamental responsibility for paying for college-level education should rest with the customer (the student) and (2) that education should be priced at a level that fully covers the cost of the service provided ("full-cost pricing"), rather than being subsidized by foundations, research grants, or taxpayers in general. Basically the plan calls for a college or group of colleges to raise tuition to the full-cost level and set up a massive loan plan available to (and needed by) most of the students. The unique feature of the plan is that repayment of the loans would be during a very long time period (30 to 35 years), based on a small fraction (e.g., 0.4%) of the student's annual salary. Thus, those who benefited most monetarily from their education would pay back the most, often more than its original cost, while those who benefited less (monetarily, of course) would pay less.

The potential of higher than usual repayments for long periods of time would attract investors, while the relatively low annual repayment cost would attract students. Such a plan could put to rest the

notion that "everybody" should pay for universities because "everybody" benefits. It would make explicit the benefits received and relate payments directly to the most readily available measure of those benefits - the student's income.

After Friedman proposed the concept it lay dormant for a number of years until it was picked up several years ago by Professor Jerrold Zacharias of Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the Ford Foundation. In 1967 a Zacharias-led study panel offered the plan to the Johnson Administration, only to run into extensive flak from state-supported schools, raising the old "everybody-benefits-from-education-so-everybody-should-pay" line. It has only been within the past year, as universities began experiencing their most severe financial crises, that the plan has begun to get a serious hearing. Planners at Harvard, Princeton, Yale, and other prestigious schools began discussing PAYE with the Ford Foundation last fall, and in February Yale became the first school to adopt the plan.

Under Yale's "Tuition Postponement Option" (accompanied by a \$350 increase in tuition), students may receive a full loan for their tuition and expenses, with 35 years to repay, at 0.4% of their annual postgraduate income. In March, Duke University became the second U.S. university to adopt PAYE, with a plan based on repayment of 0.3% of students' incomes for 30 years.

The progress of Yale and Duke's experiments with PAYE will be closely watched by other colleges, since a Carnegie Commission study reports that over two-thirds of all colleges are on the brink of financial chaos (Yale's 1970 deficit was \$2 million). Vernon Jordan, president of the United Negro College Fund endorses the plan, pointing out that "It's the student who gets the benefit of the education, so the burden should be on him and not on the family who doesn't have

the money to begin with." Or, one might add, the taxpayers, who don't either.

PAY AS YOU EARN could well signal the death of tax-financed universities and thereby the beginning of the separation of Education and State that educational reformers Ivan Illich and John Holt have been calling for.

## SOURCES:

"School Loan Plan Studied by Foundation," *LOS ANGELES TIMES/WASHINGTON POST* wire, 10 January 1971.

"Going to Yale on a 35-Year Loan," *BUSINESSWEEK*, 13 February 1971, p. 32.

"Learn Now, Pay Later," *TIME*, 1 February 1971, p. 57.

"Duke Defers Tuition," *CHEMICAL AND ENGINEERING NEWS*, 22 March 1971, p. 45.

## DEREGULATING TRANSPORTATION

For generations the Interstate Commerce Commission has operated as a shield, protecting and preserving economic groups from the discipline of the marketplace . . . The ICC found itself surrounded by a special interest constituency that viewed the agency as an opportunity for protection from competition and for insulation from consumer demands . . . Long before it became a pattern of our political economy, the ICC and the transport industries forged a corporate state that utilized public power for private pursuits.

Thus did Ralph Nader characterize the ICC in the introduction to the 1970 "Nader Report" on the infamous agency. Since then it has become increasingly