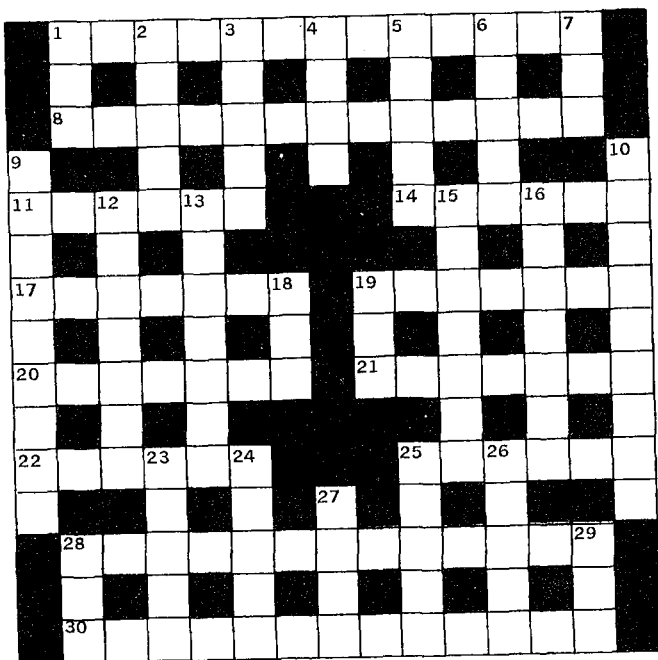


The Political Puzzle

by John Barclay



Across

1. From exterior to interior. (6, 1, 6)
8. Victim of cerebral ablu-
tion. (6, 1, 6)
11. Inventor comes back
impartial. (6)
14. Rye set for earlier day or
year. (6)
17. Adjust to knit her
sweater. (7)
19. Times and Herald are not
with it today. (7)
20. Animals to let rust. (7)
21. Used 28 down. (7)
22. Adjust gears in extreme
shape. (6)
25. Why no ears. (6)
28. He introduced Martha to
Washington. (4, 1, 8)
30. Roger Williams is con-
fused Chief of State.
(7, 6)

Down

1. Top level cover-up. (3)
2. Put spool back and it
comes undone. (5)
3. Baylor in Illinois? (5)
4. Nixon feature. (4)
5. Roy VI floats again. (5)
6. Tut and Zog, for ex-
ample. (5)
7. Aly is no priest. (3)
9. 1, 8, or 30 across, for
example. (9)
10. Hard to see, especially
for 1 across. (9)
12. There is merit in a pause.
(7)
13. Birds from the North. (7)
15. High level rite due. (7)
16. Shorten 6 down where
they sit. (7)
18. Members of select mili-
tary group. (3)
19. Regulatory body appears
for short time. (3)
23. Take the el from Hickory
Hill. (5)
24. Capital idea found in
Omaha noise. (5)
25. The right side of the
director. (5)
26. Ocular quid pro quo.
(2, 3)
27. Place to work hard? (4)
28. Goes after a moose in
Saskatchewan. (3)
29. Something lost at Vegas.
(3)

The numbers indicate the number of letters and words, e.g., (2,3) means a two-letter word followed by a three-letter word. Groups of letters, e.g., USA, are treated as one word. Answers to this month's puzzle will appear in the August issue. Answers to the June puzzle are on page 80.

(continued from page 5)

It is clear that Mr. Parker's letter is prompted less by any concern for factual error than by a need to justify such a sale of military equipment to his State Department superiors. Obviously our government must continue to claim that it still maintains a military equipment embargo against Egypt, when in fact our true policy is to maintain it except when it interferes with business. Mr. Parker is just a victim of this pious deception.

Farm Programs: Another View

The article by David Francis ("The Remembered Americans: Down on the Farm") in the April issue is shot through with inaccuracies and contradictions. It is little wonder that the "conclusions" reached are largely irrelevant.

The basic flaw in the article, I think, is that it fails to examine the farm program in the context of its purpose, which is to serve the needs of agriculture as a business. The article seems to regard a farm as a fenced area to hold people who are on welfare. If that were the case, then perhaps the equitable distribution of money would be the only problem. But farming is a business. If it is not treated as a business, then indeed the farm program makes little sense.

The farm program seeks to deal with two basic problems of agriculture as a business: 1) the farmer is unable to plan his production to fit the needs of the market; and 2) in a market place where he has virtually no power, the farmer must have price protection. Although the farm program has not dealt effectively with either of these problems, at least it is relevant. It needs to be strengthened, not destroyed.

I do not believe one can ever separate reality from myth in the farm program if one regards all payments as merely "subsidies" in the welfare sense. Subsidies have a purpose that transcends income supplementation. Their main purpose is to make it possible for a farmer to plant less than his entire acreage in a particular commodity. He has the capacity to produce more than can be sold. Yet he has bought, or inherited, the land. He pays taxes on all of it. Contrary to popular belief, idle land, like most idle machines, requires upkeep which costs money.

It is little wonder that the article blithely favors a low limitation of subsidy payments. I happen to agree that a limitation of payments is now desirable. The fuel to the fire under the subsidy controversy is added to, however, by inflammatory inaccuracy. The article says, "as it is now, the bulk of farm subsidies go to the

relatively well-to-do or rich farmer because the farm program is commodity-oriented." Yet figures given by Congressman Paul Findley of Illinois later in the article seem to disprove this assertion. Only 5,885 farms got payments over \$25,000 in 1968, says Findley. This is a fractional percentage of total farms, of course. But Mr. Francis wasn't talking about numbers of farms, evidently, but about numbers of dollars. Why then didn't he give the dollar figure? It is readily available and it is \$276,103,085. This is slightly over eight per cent of the total of \$3.2 billion. As a matter of fact, Mr. Francis later seems to contradict himself by noting a study by Walter W. Wilcox that even a \$5,000 limit per program would have cut 1968 "farm subsidies by \$400 million"—still only a little over 10 per cent of total payments.

It is rather easy to jump to the conclusion that all of this has "created hardship for American consumers," as Mr. Francis says. However, I do not know why he did not refer to a frequently quoted figure—that the American consumer spends relatively less of his spendable income for food than any other consumer in the world—16½ cents of each dollar. He could not have been unaware of it. He did point out that "the average city family paid \$1,173 at retail for its farm-originated foods." He must know that the average city family had an income nearly six times this amount. Although he suggests that the farmer is the villain, he quite accurately contradicts this by pointing out that of the \$1,173 spent for food, only \$447 found its way back to the farmer. "Middlemen took the rest," he notes.

He concludes that the poor are victimized by the "high cost" of food. I suggest that it is closer to the truth to argue that the poor are victimized by a corporate-political system that exploits them on and off the job. It is the same system that victimizes the farmer, I believe.

One of the most absurd arguments advanced by Mr. Francis is against "commodity-oriented" programs. The program must be commodity-oriented because farming itself is commodity-oriented. Simply retiring land—while it might limit the total tonnage of commodities produced—would have little to do with limiting the production of specific commodities. This is the basic flaw in the massive land retirement proposal of the Farm Bureau and Nixon Administration. It won't work. Fifty, or a hundred, million acres of cropland could be retired, yet farmers might decide to plant all, or most, of their remaining land in some one commodity in response to what appeared to be a favorable price outlook. The result would be

serious overproduction of that commodity, and shortages in others.

Mal-distribution of income is not the result of the farm program. It is part of a pattern. Ownership of capital assets is becoming concentrated in the hands of the few, not only in farming, but in the rest of the economy. Income patterns follow ownership patterns. Farm payments—most of which still go to small farmers—have delayed the corporate takeover of agriculture. They have not delayed it enough, to be sure. But that is because they have not worked well enough to achieve production management and price protection. It is easy to say when something happens in spite of efforts to prevent it, that it happens because of the efforts. But this seldom stands up in the cold light of the facts.

VICTOR K. RAY
Washington, D.C.

Mr. Ray is Director of Public Affairs for the National Farmers Union.

The author, David Francis, replies:

Mr. Ray says that farming is a business. I agree. The biggest and better farms do rather well financially in this business. The point of my article, however, was that farmers are being treated as if they were on welfare, except that most of the welfare money goes to those farmers who need it least.

I stand by my assertion that the bulk of farm subsidies go to the relatively well-to-do or rich farmer. As statistical proof, it might be noted that in 1969, 5.7 per cent of all farmers received more than \$5,000 in federal payments or 42.8 per cent of all government payments for the cotton, wheat, feed grain, sugar, and wool programs. Some 11.6 per cent of farmers got 57.4 per cent of total payments in these programs. This fact weakens Mr. Ray's claim that farm payments have delayed the corporate takeover of farming. In some cases, indeed, it may have encouraged corporations to create large farms that can most benefit from the commodity-oriented program. Proof on either side of this argument, admittedly, is limited.

On Funding the People

Commenting on the article, "Funding the People" by Malcolm E. Peabody, Jr. [May], regardless of the potential merit of the proposed program of the Administration to deal with the problems of poverty, comparison of it with the GI Bill of Rights is most inappropriate.

1. Merely to hand funds to the poor with

no strings attached makes the program sound like the "52-20 Club" (unemployment insurance), a portion of the GI Bill which is best forgotten.

2. The benefits of the GI Bill (Servicemen's Readjustment Act) were open to all veterans, regardless of personal or family means.

3. It follows that had veterans been required to attend specially constituted colleges, and later to live in specially constructed housing, probably half of them would not have participated in the programs.

4. The slur that many veterans were "no brighter or more ambitious than the next man" is very poorly taken. Veterans had to compete both with other veterans and with non-veterans for college admission and ultimate graduation.

Mr. Peabody's assertion that "recipients with bargaining money in their hands would stand in a much different relationship [to] the staffs of the institutions that serve their needs" is quite incorrect. Neither the middle classes nor even the wealthy have any real "bargaining power" vis-à-vis any institutions. While increased means admittedly brings added freedom of choice, no individuals (except in their capacity as leaders in government or industry) have any real "economic power."

The writer of the article, while justly critical of the "War on Poverty," does not seem to realize that this program was in fact primarily a source of political patronage, just as "Appalachia" was basically a highway building program disguised as regional development.

HUGH L. LUIGGI
Las Vegas, Nevada

The author, Malcolm E. Peabody, Jr., replies:

Mr. Luiggi has raised a point with which I agree. Handouts without strings are not effective where the goal is individual improvement, for example, to improve a person's education or job skills. Where the goal is merely to support a family without improvement, such as programs that provide basic living expenses, no-string payments are preferable to the many-stringed welfare programs. However, the funding-the-people approach envisions the restricting of funds so that they are used only for the purpose intended. A job training program, for example, which was funded directly in the manner described in the article, would allow a voucher credit to those eligible which could only be spent on the tuition for certified job training courses. The voucher would not be paid in cash, only for tuition, so the program would not become another "52-20" club.

Answering Mr. Luiggi's point on bargaining power, it is true that a single person working alone would have difficulty effecting a change in attitude of any program official, but such officials could ill afford to ignore the needs and desires of many of their clients if such clients had a choice of where to go.

Public Service Strikes

Professor Galbraith's characteristically charming and potentially influential article on "What Happened to the Class Struggle?" [February] deserves close and critical examination. The most crucial point which such an examination turns up is this: There is an essential yet quite unnoted contradiction between Galbraith's objective of achieving public control of wage bargains for the sake of the general interest in price stability and his "liberal" strictures against those who would hold on to the last restraints against the use of the most important monopolistic weapon, the strike, in the public service.

If one seriously worries about the distortions and inequities generated by unrestrained "collective bargaining" backed by the strike threat, then one should certainly hesitate to enshrine this system where it does not yet hold firm sway and where it is capable of doing the greatest harm. This latter point follows, despite Galbraith's argument that the public sector cannot pass the cost of wage increases onto "someone else," as can a private firm, from several facts: The public sector union is not limited in its wage demands by a fear of reduced demand and more unemployment. The revenue does not come from voluntary purchase but from coer-

cive taxation. A higher proportion of services in the public sector is of the "strategic" variety whose withdrawal is disruptive of the society (e.g., the loss of public transport or postal communications). Hence the strike weapon is a potentially far more powerful one in these services than in most of what Galbraith calls the "industrial heartland" (e.g., the supply of new automobiles, which can be postponed for months or even years without provoking intense outside pressure for a quick ransom to the union).

Perhaps Galbraith feels that, until and unless we develop the overall system of "incomes policy" which he recommends (not with that name), it is only fair to give public sector employees the chance to "countervail" the effects of the strike weapon in the private sector. But if that is what he means he should say so, so that the argument can proceed on proper grounds. It is most important to decide what is the first priority, to build an overall system which will protect the public interest against the varied distortions and inequities of labor monopoly action, or to strive for a thoroughly monopolistic system in the hope that countervailing distortions will more or less offset one another. I believe that, for reasons suggested in this letter, the latter system is likely to be even worse than the present state of affairs (New York City provides a glimmering of what it would be like). But I will join Professor Galbraith willingly in the fight for a public "incomes policy."

RICHARD ABLIN
Jerusalem, Israel

Mr. Ablin is a research economist.

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Getting Down to Earth on Earth Day

by Arthur Kanegis

I celebrated Earth Week at Edgewood Arsenal in Maryland, the Army's chemical warfare headquarters. The Chemical and Biological Division of the American Ordnance Association, an organization of weapons contractors, held a two-day meeting on "Environmental Pollution" there, and I attended as an observer from a church-supported ecology program. I was pretty much of an oddity. A random sampling of nametags included Pentagon R&D, Army Munitions Command, Navy

Arthur Kanegis works with the American Friends Service Committee's Ecology Action Program and its NARMIC (National Action/Research on the Military Industrial Complex). He is a co-author of Weapons for Counter-insurgency.

Materiel Command, Air Force, Rocky Mountain Arsenal (nerve-gas headquarters), Fort Detrick (germ-warfare headquarters), Dow Chemical, Bendix, General Electric, Grumman Aircraft, Olin, Fairchild Hiller, Honeywell, Diamond Shamrock, Monsanto Chemical, DuPont, RCA, Union Carbide, Continental Oil, Philco-Ford, W.R. Grace, Westinghouse, International Harvester, Owens-Corning, Sperry-Rand, Uniroyal, Lockheed, and ITT Research. Also there, identified by their nametags, were A.J. Shanahan and J. Chernack of the CIA. I felt as though I were in the inner meshes of the military-industrial complex. I observed two blacks, one man with long hair, and three women, two of them librarians and one a Ph.D. who ran the