

There is no Utopia



Can all men be equal? Will all men be equal? Should all men be equal?

It appears to me the answer to all three of these questions is no.

I shall elucidate further, but first I must explain what led me to write this article.

In the Athenian democracy there was a slight possibility of all men being equal because of the structural form of the system where all men had an equal chance of having a say in the governmental process.

Aristotle suggests in Book IV of Politics that "if liberty and equality, as is thought by some, are chiefly to be found in democracy, they will be best attained when all persons alike share in the government to the utmost."

SINCE ANCIENT GREECE

Since the era of Athenian democracy, many utopian idealists have been arguing for equality. It was a central theme of the French Revolution, the American Revolution, and the various revolutions incited by Karl Marx.

Russia had this utopian dream in mind in 1917. Unfortunately, nowhere has it worked out as planned.

Many other equalitarian idealists will come to mind if one wishes to think about the topic.

In an article published in the October 13 issue of the Journal for Dissent an aldermanic candidate insinuated that the mayor of Edmonton is only a first among equals.

This is, obviously, not so, and the following discussion will explain why it is not so.

Finally, the graduate residence of Athabasca Hall at the University of Alberta has decided that it wishes to have a ten-member house committee, all of whose members are equal, with various specific positions being filled by a vote of ten equal members.

IDEALISTS ARE CRAZY

To all of these idealists I say—Dreamer!

There is no possibility of it. There is no desirability for it. And here is why.

Men are not born equal.

Some are born with greater inherent potential than others.

Some are born into more opportune conditions which are conducive to the greater development of the potential they have. And, finally, some get more breaks than others on their way through life.

These are three reasons why all men are not, cannot, and will not be equal.

Coming closer to an idealistic rather than a realistic approach to the problem we may ask the question, should all men be equal? It appears to me that there are reasons to think that even if they could be, all men should not be equal.

EQUALITY DESTROYS

● It could and probably would destroy the initiative of those who put all they are worth into their pursuits for the sake of a reward—economic, social, political, or otherwise.

It appears some people work hard to get from the bottom to the top. If this were not the case many people would not

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see the point of applying themselves diligently because it would not be worth the trouble.

Why should a person go through four or seven years of university if he is equal to the person who left school in grade ten?

● There would be no sifting process by which some of the people who are best able to do certain jobs could be channeled into them. Thus, how would we decide who would be the supreme court judge and who would collect garbage?

At present this depends on merit. Society's resources are used to their greatest benefit under the system we presently have.

● In the inequalitarian, open-class society, such as we have in Canada and the United States, there is the possibility that the lower class person can go up and the alternative possibility that the upper class person can go down.

This leads to a lack of stagnation and apathy which would, in all probability, result if all men were equal. The upper classes, at present, are constantly seeking to find means of maintaining their positions; the lower classes are constantly trying to find means of bettering their positions.

This is not a war. It is good utilization of resources.

James A. Froude had the right idea when in his *Short Studies of Great People* he said, "Men are made by nature unequal. It is vain, therefore, to treat them as if they were equal." George Orwell, in *Animal Farm* echoed a somewhat complementary idea in his well known phrase, "All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others."

I should qualify the foregoing presentation in order that I may not be dubbed a utopian idealist in pursuit of inequality by those who challenge my position.

NOTHING IS PERFECT

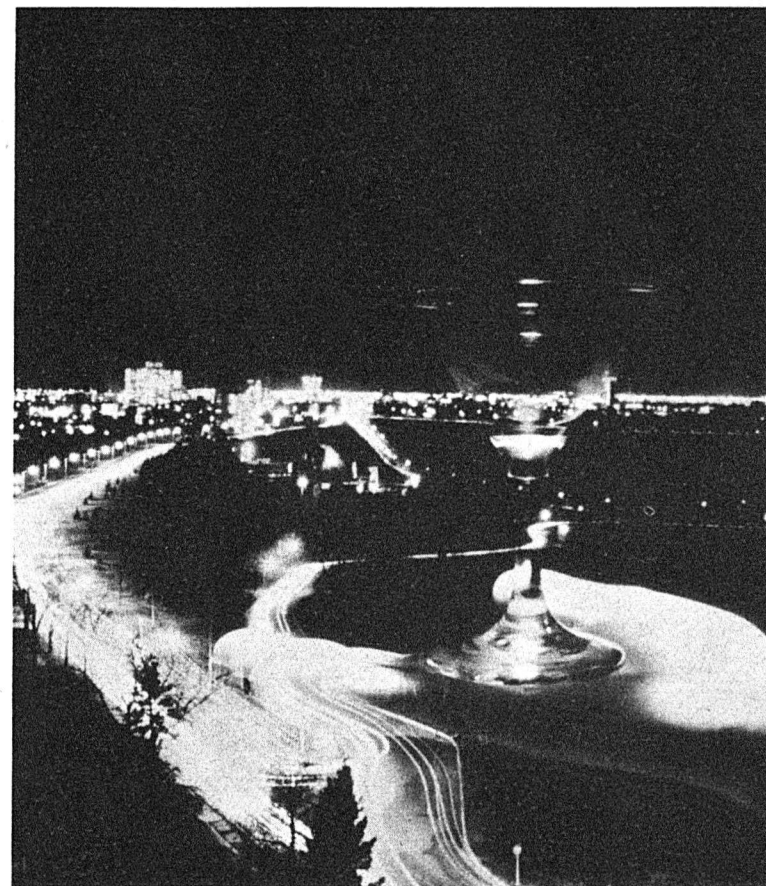
I do not maintain that our inequalitarian based society is perfect.

Indeed, it drives many people to mental instability by withholding that which they aspire to, and by taking from others what they have achieved.

This is unfortunate, but unavoidable.

There are certainly other criticisms which will come to mind but it appears these are offset by the advantages.

So if you maintain the value of equality I ask you to consider its possibility and desirability in terms of the foregoing discussion. If you



are not convinced, I respect your conviction but in the meantime I sympathize with you because I see no sign of change in the near future.

Philip J. Bailey (1816-1902) has

suggested that "the sole equality on earth is death." If you read Jessica Mitford's, *The American Way of Death*, it will be evident that, even in this area, there is no possibility of equality today.

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