

Junior Achievement

Indoctrination for Fun and Profit

By Gerald Van Gorp

Halifax business leaders are undertaking a project to orientate high school youth to big business through a program of practical education in capitalism. Organized and directed by management personnel of local corporations, the course hopes, by the end of the school year, to have its participants "acquire a realization of the importance of risk capital to the past and the future economic growth of our nation".

Already well established in other parts of Canada and



the U.S., the Halifax Junior Achievement program is operating through the four local high schools.

Corporate structures are formed of eighteen to twenty two members comprising a board of directors, working force, and sales staff. Each corporation engages in either small commodity manufacturing (example: jewelry, house number signs, candles, etc.) or does advertising and accounting for other Junior Achievement firms.

The articles are sold door to door, to stores for resale, and sometimes to distributors. Businesses are capitalized through public sale of stock at \$1.00 per share "to parents, friends, relatives, neighbors, teachers, and the general public. For many it is their first experience in stock ownership". Between 75 and 80% of the corporations show a definite profit.

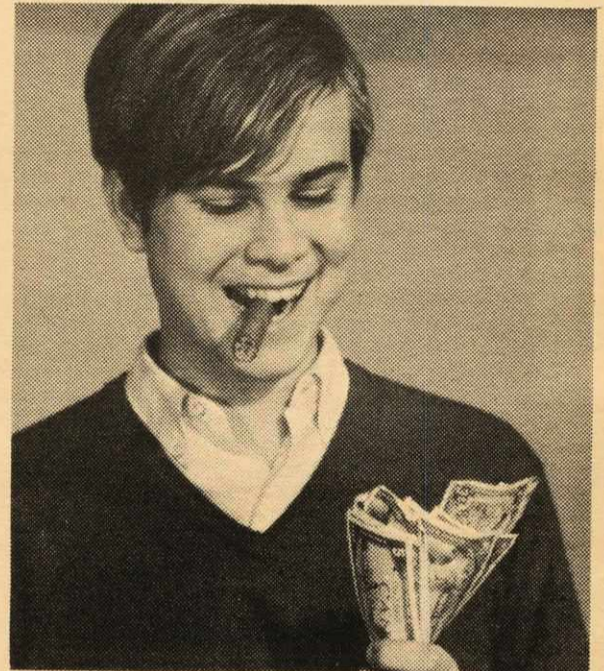
Students pay themselves salaries and wages as management and working force, also deciding on sales commissions for themselves as salesmen.

Norman Walters, Executive Director of the Junior Achievement of Halifax, states the organization's objectives: "to provide students with practical business experience while still in high school and demonstrate how the private enterprise system works".

It is not at all surprising that the program is receiving enthusiasm from the students to whom it has been presented. To run their own token corporation and determine their own profits is a novel idea for an extracurricular activity.

As Mr. Walters points out, the benefits to be reaped include "winning awards and making valuable contacts with business men". Even less surprising is the choice of high school students as eligible trainees in a program which hopes to recruit capable youth to work for a capitalistic system, at least ideologically.

Present high school education offers no study of social theory to include an analysis of our private enterprise economy and monopoly capitalism. The average high



school student is not aware that big Business does not exist to improve the lot of the consumer, much less that it supplies the funds necessary for the operation of two of our major political parties.

Meanwhile, local high school administrations offer their co-operation, facilities and students to Junior Achievement; that "learn-by-doing practical, economic education program".

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