

Ferdie J. Deering

JUN. 6 1978

Youth Lack Attitudes for Success

A news item describing the collapse of a classroom "capitalist democracy" set up by seventh grade pupils in California upset some Oklahomans, who fear that it might have sinister implications.

In the experiment, students printed money and then counterfeited more. They bribed "officials" for favors and to escape punishment. The country went broke and wound up with a dictator.

The instance is a proper matter of concern for patriots, but it should surprise no one. The pupils merely were imitating examples they've seen at home, at school and in national politics.

Ever since World War II we have tolerated permissiveness based upon the fallacious notion that everybody ought to be allowed to "do his own thing." Now we are reaping the results.

There has been a decline in self-reliance and obvious erosion of the

work ethic that made America great. People have been encouraged to look for easy but not necessarily honest angles for getting by, and to surrender freedom for a government dole. Many youngsters get little in the way of moral instruction or training as responsible citizens.

It is no wonder that they are addicted to idleness, or to violent, sex-centered movies, to vulgar lyrics in over-amplified "music," to pornographic reading material, and to slovenly attire as a mark of their "independence" from established ways of life.

In a recent survey, youngsters were asked to name Americans who impress them most. Virtually all top choices were entertainment world figures, plus a few political names.

Conspicuously missing were names of authors, lecturers, religious leaders, scientists, inventors, business men and leaders in other fields. They aren't impressing many

of the teen-agers.

The idea seems to be to have all the fun you can, avoid work and responsibility, and look to government for what you need.

Inadequate schools, alcohol and drug abuse, and addiction to television are among causes blamed for such attitudes. But the primary molder of character and motivator of ambition is the home. A Colorado youth recently filed suit against his parents for allowing him to grow up without proper direction for life.

Certainly, not all of today's teen-agers are erratic, unreliable and indolent. Top flight youngsters hold to traditional American values and achieve more.

The fact remains that millions of young people aren't being taught the fundamentals of successful living in a free country. They won't be taught until their parents and teachers learn them.