

# Our System Makes It Easy for Cheaters

A NEWS photograph of a May Day demonstration in Washington, D.C., showed people carrying banners, one of which read: "Don't let them kid you! The money is there!"

This bunch of supposedly unemployed and penniless people somehow made the trip to Washington in order to demand more money from the public treasury for made work or "pay for play" programs.

Demonstrations like this go on more or less continually as different groups parade to the capitol to protest spending cuts that might effect their personal benefits.

Just what they perceive their rights to be and how they came to qualify for them may be another matter. A case reported by a national newsmagazine told of a secretary who was found collecting unemployment benefits while working as a commission saleswoman.

"I worked a long time for very little money as a secretary without taking advantage of the system," she explained. "I think I deserve something." Taxpayers might not agree with her on what she de-

serves.

Investigators have found that as unemployment increases, so do frauds and swindles associated with benefit programs. Our system seems to make it easy for cheaters to operate expansively.

Before we let our sympathies overcome our common sense, we should remember labor union contracts which resulted in pricing American products out of American markets and we should look in the newspapers for page after page of "Help Wanted" ads.

A recently reported study showed that family incomes of people who are unemployed are not far below those of all families. It reported that in 1980 the average family income for an unemployed person was \$19,400, most of which was earned either by the unemployed person or by other working family members.

Only 18 percent of all unemployed had family incomes which placed them below the theoretical "poverty level."

Politicians, who are perpetually running for office either as candi-

dates or appointees, long ago found that the cheapest way for them to win support was by spending more public money.

One strategy is to find a group that is disturbed for some reason — any reason — and quietly advise them that they should seek a law and federal money. Then they volunteer to help them obtain their demands, regardless of the rights of the majority or good of the country.

By pulling together for support from several such special interest groups, many dishonest, unprincipled, unscrupulous individuals have been elected to offices of public trust.

We may blame politicians and crooks all we want, but in the end we must admit that our national character has deteriorated and that an alarmingly high proportion of our citizenry has no scruples whatever about cheating, stealing or lying to gain a dollar.

In fact, more than in the past, it seems millions will do almost anything for a dollar except do an honest day's work for it.