

"Do We Want Free Enterprise?"

By Lancaster M. Greene

V. O. Watts in his book "Do We Want Free Enterprise?" (50c, Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, Los Angeles, Calif.) gives six reasons for America's greatness; i. e.

1. Freedom of Trade.
2. Specialized Production.
3. Individual Initiative.
4. The Habit of Thrift.
5. Better Equipment.
6. Efficient Management.

The absence of trade barriers between the states and the common language spoken in all the states has permitted a more efficient use of our resources through logical specialization of production in different areas; e.g., cotton in the South, wheat and corn in the Middle West, flour in Minneapolis, automobiles in Detroit, movies in California, potatoes in Maine, and oranges in Florida and California.

To a greater degree than in any other country the American citizen has had the opportunity for self-expression, self-development, and advancement on the basis of merit. Nepotism and class barriers were less important in the United States than in other nations, which meant a more open road to advancement on the basis of individual merit

and which fostered self-reliance. Taxes were low, and enterprising people could hope to reap most of the fruits of their efforts. Our country was less afflicted by bureaucratic red tape and the artificial restrictions of vested interests which meant greater opportunities for men and women with new ideas and better methods. Private citizens didn't have to worry much about being robbed of their liberty, life or property and so were free to concentrate their energies on the production of useful goods and services.

The open road to advancement on the basis of merit has stimulated a wide and constructive competition for the positions of industrial leadership.

Because of these factors which are inherent in a free enterprise system, American industry is noted throughout the world for its high degree of managerial efficiency. Only where individual workers, consumers, and investors are free to plan their affairs, choose their jobs, make their own purchases, and select their own investments can we get great industry and great prosperity.

But free enterprise does not mean freedom to do as one pleases. It means freedom to compete with one another in serving the public better—it means men and women working out their common destiny—not under the lash of coercive authority, but under the discipline of enlightened self-interest and moral responsibility.

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