

## DEMICANS AND REPLICATS

It would distress me, and great guilt would be upon me, if my mention of the following topic was to inspire some sick mind to carry out the act. Long ago, someone described to me the gory result of tying the tails of two cats together. They fight each other instead of cooperating to go after the guy who tied them together.

Every day's mail and newspaper brings to my attention many examples illustrating such a war going on all the time. I could fill this column this week and for many more weeks with these examples. And I plan to bring up a few, but any reader, with very little effort can find them every day.

Older people receiving, or soon to receive, the Social Security payments upon which they had counted for so long, are definitely, and with good reason, worried about where the money is to come from to keep the payments coming. They also worry with good reason about how progressively less that money will buy even with the annual increases for inflation allowed in the laws.

The other cat in the case is the younger people who look at their paychecks and find the deductions for such things steadily increasing and realize that fewer and fewer people are remaining on the employment roll to pay the bill.

The details of the war between these two cats are familiar from many articles written on both sides. Very few raise the question of why so many people enter upon their older years with no visible means of support. Those few who do usually offer an answer ascribing to each individual victim, lack of some virtue observed in some other person. Almost no one sees the larger picture so as to see this conflict as only a symptom. Suggestions for handling this one symptom are plentiful. It is not always easy to determine which suggestion fits the Demican or Replicat platform. (Er—excuse me—Democrat or Republican.)

In the larger picture, neither of the political parties has members who have penetrated to the root causes. Every grocery boy fashions himself as a keen analyst of economic affairs. ("They" should pay "me" better and the problem is completely under control.) So the civil war goes on as to who shall get the larger fraction of the pie.

These problems will be very hard to solve until there is some concern for the size of the total pie. Inflating the money supply, as most of the modern schools recommend, will not enable everyone to buy more real goods and services until there are more goods and services available to buy. The studies ought to be directed to the production of goods and services. A knee jerk reaction at this point needs to be, and is, anticipated. You may argue that enough is produced, but poorly distributed. You may even be able to point out what appears as excessive production in a few limited areas such as raw or nearly raw materials at the extractive (farming and mining) levels. In fact, it is almost impossible to find anyone who does not have a product or some labor which he would like to exchange for someone else's. However, the rest of the story has to involve the problem of why they (farmers for instance) cannot exchange their product for what they would rather have.

An entire school of thought in the question is competing for the attention of the academic world. It will probably not force its way upon us from the academic world nor from the world of legislative bodies. So far, it appears similar to the history of some of the other major pieces of human knowledge, and the outside world will have to force it upon the world of so-called higher learning. And you are that outside world.

Nearly every summer I attend a conference of people devoted to precisely that task. At this moment, I am making preparations for that conference to be held in Pittsburgh a couple weeks from now.

More later.