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Overview of Profile Project

Earl Butz

The podcast episode features a simulation interview with Earl Butz. The purpose of the interview is to reveal Butz's outlook on agricultural policy and his opinions on his time as the Secretary of Agriculture in the 1970s. Another important question to keep in mind is the pie problem, and what method Butz would take to solve it. He is very similar to Benson and Borlough, and favors a productivist model in which high production yields high income through globalization. Butz is the perfect figure that captures someone who is only concerned with resource sufficiency and profits, and does not give the environment any thought at all. When faced with the problem of land degradation through the intense planting and harvesting of crops over and over again, Butz simply told the farmers to "get big or get out". It is important to understand that Butz's plan to increase production and make profits through foreign trade did work in the short term. Profits skyrocketed through the grain reserve, but however, it was very obvious that the success would not be permanent.

The lesson to take from Butz's time as the Secretary of Agriculture, and this interview, is that one cannot solve agricultural issues while only looking from a singular perspective. Focusing on one aspect of the pie problem is dangerous if any of the other aspects are completely ignored, everything would be in disarray.

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