

How Ludwig von Mises heroically defended freedom amidst the most ferocious assaults in human history

MISES: AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

by Bettina Bien Greaves &

Robert W. McGee

reviewed by Jim Powell

New!



Bettina Bien Greaves

World War I marked the beginning of unprecedented assaults on human freedom. Some 9 million people were slaughtered, and hideous socialist governments arose in Europe, Asia and Latin America. Another 50 million people were slaughtered during World War II. Afterwards the socialist scourge afflicted millions more. Even in relatively civilized places like the United States, powerful governments restricted human freedom as never before.



Among the very few individuals to identify the fundamental causes of all this carnage was the prolific Austrian free market economist Ludwig von Mises.

Way back when Lenin was above the sod, promoting famine, Mises showed why socialism always means catastrophe. He courageously challenged leading socialist intellectuals of the time, and he inspired a cadre of people to carry on the struggle for freedom everywhere.

His saga comes alive in this lavishly annotated bibliography compiled mainly by Foundation for Economic Education scholar Bettina Bien Greaves. She discovered Mises material published in Argentina, China, Japan, Poland and South Africa, as well as Western Europe and the United States. This bibliography goes far beyond a list of Mises' work, though, providing vital information about it, reproducing excerpts from books, articles and reviews—sometimes entire reviews—which talk about Mises. Greaves translated many selections from German, French and Spanish, and had more translated from other languages.

Greaves has been a Mises scholar for over four decades, since she attended her first Mises seminar at New York University in 1951. She collected everything she could find by and about Mises. She

filled many gaps from Mises' early years—his precious Vienna library

was ransacked by Hitler's storm troopers in 1938. During the 1980s, Seton Hall University accounting professor Robert W. McGee helped her and nudged her to continue despite mounting complexities.

Now you can better appreciate some of the most important intellectual struggles which raged through the 20th century. For example, in 1912, the German politician Rudolf Hilferding denounced Mises for saying that money is a market phenomenon—Hilferding insisted money has whatever value politicians say; a decade later, he was the man in charge of the disastrous German runaway inflation. This bibliography enables you to follow the often bitter debate about socialism. In 1936, the British socialist Harold Laski denounced Mises for not understanding why a super-state would wither away. Laski's comrade G.D.H. Cole, an avowed Stalin-worshipper, denounced Mises for denying "the actual achievements of the Soviet Union."

Mises deserves much credit for helping to change the future of Europe which stagnated amidst chronic inflation and suffocating restrictions after World War II. This bibliography illustrates Mises' impact on F.A. Hayek, Walter Eucken, Wilhelm Ropke and Ludwig Erhard, whose ideas turned Germany toward more open markets in 1948. The result was an economic "miracle" which influenced policy for the better in many countries.

That Mises eventually reached a global audience was due largely to the energy of a few devoted people—which affirms that individuals really can make a difference. The bibliography cites many selections by Hayek, Benjamin Anderson, John Chamberlain, Lawrence Fertig, Henry Hazlitt, Israel Kirzner, Sylvester Petro, Leonard Read, Murray Rothbard, Hans Sennholz and Greaves' late husband Percy, who did much to familiarize people with Mises' liberating ideas. And there was Rose Wilder Lane who wrote: "I think that *Human Action* is unquestionably the most powerful product of the human mind in our time."

The cut-off date for this bibliography is 1981—the task had become overwhelming, and Greaves resolved to see the work in print. Soon, happily, Greaves will begin work on a companion volume. Meanwhile, you have this one which shows how an authentic intellectual hero dueled with villains and inspired people around the world. Don't miss it.

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