

TEXAS & PACIFIC RAILWAY

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SPRABERRY MEANS OIL

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IMPORTANCE OF LIBERTY

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ONE HUNDRED AND TWO years ago Frédéric Bastiat, a French economist, statesman and author, wrote a little book entitled *The Law*. In it appears a short chapter which I think is worth repeating. It reads:

The solution of the problem of human relations is to be found in liberty.

Does not experience prove this? Look at the entire world. Which countries contain the most peaceful, the most moral and the happiest people?

Those people are to be found in the countries where the law least interferes with private affairs;

Where government is least felt;

Where the individual has the greatest scope, and free opinion the greatest influence;

Where administrative powers are fewest and simplest;

Where taxes are lightest and most nearly equal, and popular discontent the least excited and least justifiable;

Where individuals and groups most actively assume their responsibilities and, consequently, where the morals of admittedly imperfect human beings are constantly improving;

Where trade, assemblies, and associations are the least restricted;

Where labor, capital and populations suffer the fewest forced displacements;

Where mankind most nearly follows its own natural inclinations;

Where the inventions of men are most nearly in harmony with the laws of God; In short, the happiest, most moral, and most peaceful people are those who most nearly follow this principle:

Although mankind is not perfect, still, all hope rests upon the free and voluntary actions of persons within the limits of right; law or force is to be used for nothing except the administration of universal justice.

Neither time nor man change basic truths. Thus, what this Frenchman — Frédéric Bastiat — wrote in 1850 is as true and as sound today as it was then.

The great progress which our country has made during its relatively short history stems from the individual liberties its people have enjoyed.

These liberties made it possible for the people of our nation to think, to plan, to work, to create and to venture. That is why the United States towers above all of the old nations of the world in the production of goods and services and in technical know-how.

It is the responsibility of those of us on the Texas and Pacific, as well as of all good citizens everywhere, to do our part toward helping preserve individual liberty, for upon that depends our individual and national well-being.

Application of the simple principles outlined by Bastiat 102 years ago provides one of the most effective ways of doing that.