

who has erected a wonderful "front," reporting to business firms on our and others' worthiness to receive contributions.

Dean took Doog to his own lake, both returning for dinner with us.

July 31. The month ended with \$13,300 in receipts and \$20,600 in expenditures, a loss of \$6,300 less than I had expected.

Opitz called and took 50 pages of "In Defense of Government" for editing. Jim Rogers, back from two days in Baltimore, thought he made some progress.

Got in 8 hours work on "In Defense of Government." Doog to dinner and show with Jim Rogers.

August 1. Golfed with Bill Heep (17), Howard Miller (16), and Warren Burden (24). Won \$2.50 but shot an 87. Today, like last Saturday and Sunday perfectly splendid. Doog to the ocean with Mickey, and JB off to the same with some girl friend.

Letter from Cassius Gates that Phil Weyerhaeuser will give me a luncheon in Tacoma next month. V.G.

About 2:00 PM a feeble, 84-year old man rang the shanty door bell -- a Mr. Weed from Syracuse. He is filled with woe, his daughter being a communist and his granddaughter married a very black negro. He likes FEE and wanted to talk his problems over with me.

Doog, Ag and I drove to Parises but the place jammed so we ended up at Virginian and quite late.

August 2. Golfed with Phil Weld (16), Mr. Childress (17), and Mr. DeLand (24). Can't get my game "going." Am off in some department in every instance. Had an 89.

Cooked eggs foo for Doog's last dinner and when he saw the concoction wanted to know my name for it. Said I, "Eggs Foo on You Doog Too."

August 3. Opitz called, having spent the week end on "In Defense of Government." Some helpful ideas.

Dr. Donald Graffam of Dickinson College, who has been a Fellow at Mutual Benefit Life, lunched and spent two hours with me. He prizes his experience at Mutual and wants to help FEE. Gave him some ideas.

Some of the gals at FEE gave Doog a lovely identification bracelet, and all of the staff signed his autograph book. Ag and I took him to La Guardia for TWA's #5, 7:00 PM Constellation for San Francisco. Got to take him aboard ahead of time and introduced him to the head stewardess. She said, "My! He has a good handshake." JB had to work and couldn't be with us so

Ag and I headed for Charles a la Pomme. As we got into the city, I happened to look up through the canyon of buildings and there was a Connie at about 10,000 headed west. It was Doog's flight, the end of six wonderful weeks for the N.Y. Reads and I hope Doog felt the same. If that energy of his ever channels itself along FEE lines, our cause will be won.

Compiled a tentative schedule August 24 to October 3, appended.

Hutch phoned from Jamestown about tomorrow.

August 4. Ag and I left the shanty at 8:20 AM and headed for Jamestown, R.I. Stopped at a little restaurant in North Haven, Conn. for coffee and phoned Marty. Doog arrived home safe. Took nearly five hours to reach the Hutchinsons' place across the bay from Newport. Hutch looks as good as ever although he had a severe coronary. We lunched, napped, walked, dined and talked until 11:30 PM.

August 5. Awakened about 5:00 AM with wind from the sea beating against our side of the house and then a driving rain that sounded like hail. Really an enjoyable and lovely visit, extending through Lingusia (a Portugese sausage) for luncheon. Departed at 2:10 PM and home to broil a steak with JB at 6:10. Stupidly left my brief case at Hutchinsons.

In talk with Hutch, I confessed a FEE mistake and promised that I would make more. This reminded Hutch of the chap who said he had erred once, 25 years ago: "I thought I was wrong and later discovered I was right!"

August 6. Notified by Stanley Draper, President of ACCE, that I am to be admitted as a 25-year member at the Annual Meeting in Oklahoma City on September 20th.

Mrs. Norton, economist, divorced wife of Pete Morton, called. Looking for a job. Nothing here but had a suggestion or two.

The phone rang at dinner time: Mr. Lankikbrotsen calling from Chicago collect. Will you accept the charge? I knew it must be Inx so said "Yes." He was in Chicago for the day at the invitation of Reese's committee to investigate foundations and says he may take a leave of absence and do some work for them.

Worked most of day on "In Defense of Government." Opitz mailed me a four-page statement which I thought excellent. I phoned and said this would make a fine foreword and he replied he would be proud to have me use it.

August 7. From the standpoint of orders and correspondence, this is about the duller of the 380 weeks since FEE began. However, BF and I could not have been busier.

Hutch phoned while dinner was in preparation. Noting my September itinerary, he saw a way to re-interest Jack Millar of National Automotive Fibres in FEE by reason of my contact with



ITINERARY (Incomplete)  
Leonard E. Read - August 24th to October 3rd, 1953

August	24	Monday	Leave New York (La Guardia) AAL #5	12:00 noon
			Arrive Chicago	2:20 PM
			Leave Chicago UAL #109	2:55 PM
			Arrive Moline	3:00 PM
			Stay at home of Donald W. Innes	
	25	Tuesday	Address - Annual Lyceum, Palmer School of Chiropractic	
			Leave Moline UAL #314	5:20 PM
			Arrive Chicago	7:15 PM
			Stay at Conrad Hilton Hotel	
	26	Wednesday	Work in Chicago	
			Leave Chicago AAL #18	5:00 PM
			Arrive New York (La Guardia)	8:50 PM
September	7	Monday	Leave New York (Idlewild) TWA #91	12:30 AM
			Arrive Los Angeles (International)	8:25 AM
			Stay at California Club	
	8	Tuesday	Work in Los Angeles	
	9	Wednesday	Leave Los Angeles WAL #606	7:40 AM
			Arrive San Francisco	9:20 AM
			Stay at home of Henry Maier, 531 Warren Road, San Mateo	
	10	Thursday	Address - Annual Meeting, Pacific Coast Gas Association	
			Leave San Francisco UAL #336	12:25 PM
			Arrive Omaha	10:15 PM
			Stay at Hotel Fontenelle	
	11	Friday	Address - 7th Annual Meeting, Nebraska Small Business Men's Ass'n.	
			Leave Omaha UAL #316	3:15 PM
			Arrive New York (Newark)	11:30 PM

September 17	Thursday	Address - Scarsdale Rotary Club	
23	Wednesday	Leave Harmon 20th Century	6:46 PM
24	Thursday	Arrive Chicago	9:00 AM
		Leave Chicago Chi. & Mil. RR	11:30 AM
		Arrive Milwaukee	12:45 PM
		Stay at Hotel Schroeder	
		Address - Annual Meeting, National Association of Foremen	
25	Friday	Work in Milwaukee	
		Leave Milwaukee NWAL #421	5:00 PM
		Arrive Minneapolis	7:19 PM
26	Saturday	Leave Minneapolis NWAL #109	1:45 AM
		Arrive Seattle	6:23 AM
		Stay at Rainier Club	
27	Sunday	In Seattle	
28	Monday	Luncheon in Tacoma -- c/o Mr. John P. Weyerhaeuser	
		Leave Tacoma NWAL #606	4:00 PM
		Arrive Spokane	5:26 PM
		Stay at Davenport Hotel	
29	Tuesday	Address - Spokane Chamber of Commerce	
		Leave Spokane NWAL #1	4:30 PM
		Arrive Seattle	5:43 PM
		Stay at Rainier Club	
30	Wednesday	Address - Seattle Rotary Club -- c/o Mr. Cassius Gates	
		Leave Seattle UAL #646	6:20 PM
		Arrive Portland	7:25 PM
		Stay at Multnomah Hotel	
October 1	Thursday	Address - Luncheon -- c/o Dr. U. G. Dubach	

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		Leave Portland	UAL #604	9:20 PM
October	2	Friday	Arrive Chicago	8:30 AM
		Leave Chicago	CAL #18	9:25 AM
		Arrive Grand Rapids		10:25 AM
		Drive to Saugatuck -- c/o Mr. J. W. Wilson		
	3	Saturday	Train to Chicago	
		Leave Chicago	AAL #24	3:00 PM
		Arrive New York (La Guardia)		6:55 PM

Dr. Dubach of Portland, these two being good friends.

JB, getting ready for his vacation, worked late and Ag and I et alone.

August 8. Golfed with Ford Frick (21), Ed Moore (12), and Bobby Clark (16). Shot an 83 and won \$3.05 for g.c. bank.

JB boarded NYC's Wolverine for Saugatuck and his vacation with Grace and Joe.

Ag and I went to the home of the Bill Heeps in Bronxville for cocktails and dinner. Peek and a Joe somebody from Columbia and Ellen and Bill Traenor of Union Carbide made up the balance. We took Peek home and called on Mic Ugh who is convalescing for the balance of the month from his head thump. Home at 1:00 AM.

August 9. Golfed with Henry Kelly (16), Reeves Cook (8), and Tom Kelly (8). Broke even, shooting an 83. An s.b. B got me on the knee.

Ester and Austin Matthews took us to St. Andrews for cocktails and dinner. Played bridge at the shanty until midnight. Clobbered!

August 10. Worked on "I Dog" nearly all day. A Mrs. Olive Tynan of Stratford, Conn. and a Mr. John Lupton were supposed to call at 2:00 PM but got lost and arrived after 4:15 PM, just when I had to leave for New York to put Aunt Ruby on the train for Michigan. Turned them over to Bierly.

Ag's Italian Jenny cooked a fine spaghetti dish which we had for dinner.

Probably of all the tools to gain the respect of others indulgence of them is the poorest. Indulgence, in the first place, doesn't work and, if it did, one would forever be a flunky to insatiable whims.

For some reason unknown to me, my date before the Nebraska Small Business Men's Association was called off. Something similar occurred in Denver a year or two ago. My guess is that opponents of our philosophy raise objections and that the hired help who extend the invitations don't want to confess that they would give in to pressures. Anyway, as a consequence, I have extended my S.F. stay  $1\frac{1}{2}$  days.

August 11. Worked on my essay all day and am nearly done with first draft.

Percy Greaves and George Cless of Christian Economics, Ed Opitz, Bierly, and I dined at FEE. Did my bastard French-Italian chicken dish. It turned out v.g. The get-together was to discuss Ralph Lord Roy's new book Apostles of Discord. Roy, a young Methodist minister of the Left, goes after all sorts of culprits

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and devotes one chapter to Christian Economics, Spiritual Mobilization, and FEE. What he says about FEE isn't so damaging in itself. It is that he associates us with some others of questionable repute -- assassination by association. Percy would take legal action on grounds of libel. I counselled ignoring the thing.

August 12. Paul H. Mast, Executive Secretary of Wisconsin Association of Insurance Agents, phoned from Milwaukee inviting me to speak at their 54th Annual Meeting on October 21. Accepted.

Completed first draft of "I Dog."

Wired Nate Carter, Jr. that I would speak to Memphis Rotary on October 13.

Ben Moreell phoned about our getting together on 23rd.

My "Combatting Statism" piece delivered. Copy appended.

Phoned Hans Eggerss, Pres. of Continental Can. "Where's that list of yours?" "Coming," says he.

Wrote a note to my P/L:

There is a rapidly growing unpopularity for the idea that the fruits of one's labor are one's own.

Statism -- government's failure to function where it should and its insistence on acting where it shouldn't -- is the means by which private property is being appropriated.

"Combatting Statism" is my view, not only of the problem, but of the methods to be used in coping with it -- whether by your good self or by us in the Foundation.

August 13. Opitz called and I gave him copy of first completed draft of my essay for editing. Gave another copy to D.R. for same.

Drove to New York and lunched with Bill Treanor of Union Carbide at Roosevelt Hotel. He is sharp and understands FEE's approach somewhat. Following lunch, we called on H. F. Bulkley in charge of publicity. He appears hopeless to me so far as our work is concerned. Three solid hours of intense talk on my part and to no avail!

Joe and Paul Poirot shared a steak with Ag and me and spent the evening with us.



August 14. Ralph Bradford sends me a copy of "The Next Million Years" by Charles Galton Darwin with this inscription:

For Leonard Read  
Who cannot peer  
A million years ahead  
But who would lead  
Those who will hear  
Away from being dead --  
Deceased indeed,  
Inside the head,  
Above the ear!

C. P. Wright of First National Bank and Trust Company of Oklahoma City invites me to speak to the world's largest Lions Club on September 22nd. Accepted.

Harry Langenberg, in New York on his way to vacation on Cape Cod, phoned. What a friend he is!

Golf game with Gaillard and Reinach called off on account of predicted storm.

August 15. Golfed with Bill Heep (16), Warren Burding (24), Bill Treanor (23). Went 5 over par on last 3 holes but still had an 82. Won \$4.50 for g.c. bank.

Dean has caught me in an inconsistency in reasoning while reviewing "I Dog." I have, for long, been using life and livelihood as synonymous. From this I do retreat. Livelihood is a necessity of life but so is the sun and air and other things. They are not, however, the same as life. Life is from a higher Grantor than us. The fruits of our labor, while having a higher origin than ourselves, are nonetheless related to and flow from responses to our own wills. As Mrs. Wiener puts it, "Man's consciousness is a part of the universal energy yet has a hand in evolution." Otherwise, one must concede that will is meaningless.

Mary Homan, Gladys and Dean Russell, Betty Glenn, and Glenn Eastburn joined us for dinner and the evening.

August 16. Golfed with Chas. Schuh (13), Neil Hargon (19), Dwight Sargent (19). Had an 84 and lost six bits.

Tom and Helena Burns called at shanty. Ag took a recipe by Mary Press from Joe Deckman's cookbook: Flemish Carbovaden. v.g.

There's a first time for everything, and my going twice to a movie is a new first. Saw "Moulin Rouge" again.

August 17. Worked on office routine and mss. until 10:00 PM. I explained why "I Dog." First, I have worked like a dog; second, most who read it will call me a dog; and third, "In Defense of Government," initialed, is I D O G.

Tom Shelly, back from vacation, gave me a written report on all the folks he had seen and talked to about FEE. It was so good I sent it to all the others to see.

August 18. FEE's methods in extending the free-market, private-property, voluntary-society, limited-government philosophy are at once simple and practical -- simple because they call for work on the most approachable person on earth, one's self, and practical because accomplishment is possible when working on one's self. If enough persons adopt these methods, the problem of numbers does not exist.

Doug Burden phoned from New York. Wanted ideas on how he could best spread some of his own writings. Doug, becoming very skilled, gives FEE all the credit.

Ben Moreell phoned asking us for dinner in New York Friday.

Ag and I to Parises for dinner.

August 19. Betsy Innes writes from Davenport asking me to cook a dinner next Monday. Agreed. In writing her, I referred to a copy of Bohemian Life of October 1949 and am enough amused in re-reading it to append a copy to this journal.

Appended is a copy of our next FEE promotion piece.

Prof. Joseph F. Bradley of Penn State and H. H. Cutler of U. of Utah, two fellows of the CBE program called. Have been with New York Life. Pleased.

Paul Palmer of Readers Digest phoned. Wants me to give him 100 names to whom RD would send a Christmas gift subscription for one year -- from me. Quite a promotion idea. Maybe I'll do.

Spit-cooked a chick and then worked on "I Dog" until 11:00 PM.

August 20. Phoned Col. Henry's assistant, Assoc. Am. Railroads, about data for Fred Fairchild. To be sent today or tomorrow.

Ben Moreell phoned about a wing-ding to be held at White Sulphur Springs in November, sponsored by Young of C & O, 35 business and 35 educational big-shots. Ben, along with Henry T. Heald of NYU is to be co-chairman. Ben wants Young to include LER.

Opitz here for luncheon and also Frank Chodorov.

Bill Street phoned from Seattle and wants me for dinner the evening of September 29 and to visit remodeled Frederic & Nelson store next morning. Agreed.

A letter from Detroit Edison that my friend, Pat Lovejoy, passed away.

August 21. Jim Hance drove me to New York. Stopped at Bloomingdales and bought cheese. Went to University Club and lunched with Freeman group: Howard Pew, Jasper Crane, Heming Prentis, Henry Hazlitt, Donald Cowling, Mr. Peters, Alex Hillman, Larry Fertig. Adjourned to Freeman offices where Jim Wick and Kurt Lassen joined us. Problems discussed centered around increasing circulation and finding some "Mr. Freeman" to take HH's place. The latter problem is difficult and one on which I shall be tough. Without a head man of proper ideological bent and a devotion to the cause, all is lost. HH is inclined to be "soft" on this question.

Ag, Gladys and Dean Russell joined me in New York where we met with Kitty and Ben Moreell who had flown in to have dinner with us. Dined at Club 21 until 11:30. I bet Ben a buck that Robert Young would not include me among the educators invited to White Sulphur, a bet he readily accepted, on account he and Heald, President of NYU, are to sign the invitations. I still think my bet is a good one in spite of Ben's letter to Young in which Ben says (fat-head stuff) "I consider Mr. Read to be one of the foremost educators of our country."

August 22. Golfed with our pro, Bob Cloughen (scratch), Pete Ruffin (7), and Johnny Flynn (8). Bob, my partner, had 73, I had 80, Pete had 79, and Johnny 84. Won \$5 for g.c. bank.

Ag and I saw, at the Pix, a show we had seen on the stage "Call Me Madam." The picture, to my way of thinking, is incomparably better.

August 23. Bert Hageman (17) and I played Charley Schuh (13) and Don Dunn (12). Shot an 86 and won 5¢.

JB returned from two weeks in Saugatuck, well tanned and looking fit. Mother here for a chix a la Ag dinner.

Got a worry off my chest by writing a letter to Bill Street, appended.

Mullendore sent me a most thoughtful note on what he calls "The Universal Law of Balance," copy appended. I replied as follows:

"Thanks for your memo on 'balance.' The point is of great importance. Electric discharges, for instance, are balancing operations -- positively charged and negatively charged evening up. What we perceive as a flash of lightning is an oscillatory action, oscillation going on until balance between the two is achieved.

"Thought is not unlike this. This note is a thought response to your note. When you and I get together, we always attempt a balance, a common understanding. Sometimes, if we have been apart too long, the balance seems difficult, but thoughts fly back and forth and

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August 19, 1953

# A MEMORANDUM ON THE UNIVERSAL LAW OF BALANCE

I have previously called attention to and discussed at some length the importance of the universal law of balance. I have just been reading a book by Augusto Pi Suner, a biologist of the University of Caracas in Venezuela. In his Chapter VII of that book, entitled "Balance and Control," pages 50-51, I quote:

"Life inexorably demands balance, or rather a countless multitude of equilibria continuously following on one another in space and time. Once the genetic impulse has been received, the original living particle builds up its organism by means of extraneous chemical elements and relentlessly pursues the interchange of substance and energy from which its specific activity is derived. This naturally implies internal equilibrium between atoms, molecules, micelles, cells, tissues, and organs, as well as balance with surrounding media....

"Throughout his richly productive scientific life, Lawrence Henderson, professor of biological chemistry at Harvard, maintained the idea of order in the Universe....His generous mind ranged widely in the fields of physiology and philosophy in order to contemplate these problems in perspective in all their magnificent vastness. This is how systems in equilibrium are to be seen, wherever they may be: equilibria between the celestial bodies, in physics and chemistry, between the components of animate bodies, and between the latter and their environment. Another no less famous teacher, Walter B. Cannon, also from Harvard, systemized the leading ideas and published them in 1932 under the title, THE WISDOM OF THE BODY....

"First let us consider the chemical composition of animate beings. Each species and every individual show their own typical make-up acquired from the surrounding nutritional medium. Every animal and every plant is incessantly traversed by a stream of nutrition: food enters and its waste is expelled. The difference between incoming and outgoing shapes the living matter forming the body. Well-adjusted mechanisms cause the food to be converted into live matter as well as into the energy necessary for the vital activities of the body. This implies extremely fine controlling processes by means of which the composition of the being is kept uniform.

"...Oxidation and restoration are coupled reactions, as defined by Pasteur. Paired reactions, resulting from the syntheses dependent on the metabolic processes taking place in an organism, are to be observed in all parts of the body and in its most obscure operations. They are typical examples of chemical equilibrium extending throughout the whole course of metabolism.

"Disassimilation is balanced by assimilation. If this were not so, living matter would be consumed just as fuel is consumed by a machine. However, throughout the life of an animal or plant, its fuel is automatically replaced as the two phases of nutrition balance one another. Thus a living body which neither gains nor loses weight is said to be in nutritional equilibrium. Disassimilation, catabolism, and desmolysis signify destruction or dissolution; assimilation, on the other hand, is brought about by syntheses through which the living substance is formed or builds up fresh material."

From pages 58-59 of the BRIDGE OF LIFE: "There are also physiological equilibria between various sections of the nervous system,



the neurosomatic and the neurovegetative, for instance. If the concept of balance has a positive and universally acknowledged application anywhere, it is in the field of nervous functions in their various aspects. Psychic phenomena have to be balanced among themselves and with the somatic functions which serve as their basis, and being complex their relationships are under the ordered domination of the former. A loss of balance in the vegetative nervous system is illness, in the somatic system it is neurosis. Henri Bergson spoke of psychic strain and neurovegetative strain in the various groups of nervous functions. Such strains have to be balanced. It has long been the custom, even among laymen, to refer to "unbalanced" individuals. First Pierre Janet, then Sigmund Freud, among many, applied to psychiatry the useful concept of psychic tensional imbalance and its multitudinous ramifications. Life is balance. Physiological balance is health; disturbances of that balance are sickness, breakdown, and death. At death, the inability any longer to maintain balance causes organic matter to become converted into inorganic; this process is what we call post-mortem decomposition.

"From the equilibria of ions to psychic balance, we traverse grades of increasing complexity, some of which depend, however, on others and form an indissoluble whole which we call 'individuality.' No biological manifestation whatsoever, from the simplest to the most complex, is possible without a combination of events of different classes balancing one another. Life is a firmament of systems in equilibrium. It is Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's torch-flame: ever wasting through its everlasting renewal, constant in its very inconstancy!"

#### BALANCE IN AN ECONOMIC SYSTEM:

The application of the idea or the law of balance within an economic or social system is, of course, obvious. The necessity

for maintaining a balance between income and outgo, as in the human body, is important and vital to the health of an economic system. It is possible to stimulate an economic system so that the output will, for a time, exceed the input. This, which seems at first glance to be impossible, is explained in the same way in which the output of energy in the human body can for a time, by stimulus applied which affects the glands of internal secretion, will result in an extraordinary output of energy. In the economic system this attempt to stimulate the output of the economic system so that more can be consumed than is produced by the output is, of course, the trick of inflation or the expansion of debt.

In periods of war, in a period of inflation, we have the phenomena of the economic system being speeded up by stimuli of various sorts, and this speeding up results in an extraordinary output. Now, it is, of course, true that the physical input must be equal to the physical output, but it does not follow that in all instances the healthy input or the balancing input is equal to the output or the outgo. In other words, you can in an economic system borrow from the future and eat up capital and reserves and thus, for a time, unbalance the ratio between healthy input and output, but in the end, there is no escape from the necessity of restoring the balance in an exchange system.

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when we each say 'I see what you mean and agree'  
balance in that respect exists."

August 24. Jim Hance drove me to La Guardia for AA's #5, noon departure for Chicago. Routine, landing at 2:00 PM CDT. Boarded UAL's #339 at 3:00 PM for Moline, landing at 3:00 CST. Don Innes at airport. Drove to Innes home where I put up for night. Sis and Chet Anderson and Tom and Doris Brown came for dinner. I was guest chef doing a Shashlik and the kidney bean dish. Talked philosophy until 1:00 AM.

August 25. Chet, Don, and I lunched at Davenport Club with Dr. David Palmer. He is heir-apparent to the money-making Palmer enterprises: The Palmer School of Chiropractic, the radio and TV stations, and is President of the C of C this year. I would size him up as blasé and a bit bored with efforts such as mine. Chet and Don went with me to the big tent which is set up for the Palmer several-day homecoming, reportedly 4,000 registered. Don introduced me to an audience of not over 300, quite a shrinkage from the originally promised 6,000. However, it was very hot and had I been a registrant, I would not have been around to hear some unknown speaker. Hugh Chance, general counsel of the enterprise, is smart and interested in FEE. Was given a check for \$230 for speech. Met "B.J." old gent and founder. Understand he is about 90 but acts like he is in late 60's. Don, who along with Chet is tops in our vineyard, drove me to airport where I took UAL's #314, 5:20 PM for Chicago. Routine, landing at 7:15 PM CDT. Taxied directly to Chicago Club and to room #410, four times the size of the one I had last. Went to 8th floor bar. Empty except for genial Mike, the bartender. Experimented on Bols vs House of Lords gin and found I liked Bols better and it is the cheaper. Mike recommended the Black Forest as a place to eat, but it was late so I went to Old Heidelberg on account it was nearby. I like German food and 15 years ago when last there it was good. The place is large and very pretty. The eating audience about as small, relatively, as my afternoon's listening audience. The menu had no German dish except Sauerbraten, which I ordered. Fair. The imported Bavarian beer on draft was exquisite. The music instead of being German or Bavarian was modern American stinko and every note revolted me. I shall never again go to this dump which, except for the decor and the beer, had nothing to recommend it. To hay at 10:30.

August 26. Breakfast at Club. Went to MF and found Hughston not only with a Board meeting on his hands but swamped in details of threatening telephone strike, he being a Board member of Illinois Bell. Talked on phone with Robert Bangs, Manager of MF's book department and he is going to publicize The Law, Mainspring, and Essays.

The last week in August is no good for us. Sewell Avery, Don McLennan, Jonathan Gibson, and others I wanted to see are off to cooler places.

In talking with office, find GE sent us \$1,000, a mighty big thing in this month's revenue.

In reflecting on the Jenner report about the commies being still in control of governmental policy and then on McCarthy's attempt to get them out by going after particular persons, I see clearly the futility of this personal approach. True, many employees are a part of the Moscow apparatus. But rid ourselves of them and we have accomplished nothing. For the ideas they set in motion are supported by non-apparatus folks, most of whom would be offended and insulted if called even "Socialists." Indeed, the McCarthy approach does harm for it creates a unity among the bearers of leftist ideas. They shout, almost in unison, and with great derision, "McCarthyism." All of this fight against the commies is doing more harm than good. This will continue until a few people, at least, catch on to the fact that it is ideas that must be examined. Until a socialistic or a communistic idea is recognized for what it is, communism will continue to grow. Think how bewildered poor Ike must be, not knowing one idea from the other and, at the same time, having a distaste for the methods of McCarthy and others. Maybe I'll try a short piece on this.

Lunched at Chicago Club with Christopher Wilson, Jr., General Counsel of First National Bank, a FEE devotee, and his friend, Gaylord Freeman, Jr., a new Senior V.P. of the bank. The lunch was a bit hurried on account of my plane departure but I thought it much worthwhile. Mr. Freeman looks like a potentially interested person.

To airport for AA's #22, 2:00 PM for New York. Something wrong with propeller. Delayed 70 minutes. Routine otherwise. JB to meet me. Flat tire  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile from home.

August 27. Authoritarians are persons with low perceptions. They see people something like a dog sees a tree -- a form, something to piddle on. The dog, for instance, sees nor is he aware of any cellular structure, of roots deep in the soil taking moisture to the uppermost point, of leaves taking rays from the sun to the undermost extremity, of other wonders. If any person saw an individual, no matter how lowly, and in seeing had only an awareness of his miraculous make-up, forever after that person would be humble. It is safe to say that anyone who commends coercionist methods, no matter what his veneer of culture may be, is in a low state of consciousness -- is, for all important purposes, blind. Our modern educational methods can make dolts look like wise men, as clothes can give bums the appearance of gentlemen. However, regardless of clothes or manners or literary affectations, there is one dead give-away: the desire to control the life of another.

Was on the phone half an hour with Ben Moreell. The White Sulphur affair is a scheduled mess as I see it now. Ben wants me to go as an aid to him and, if wholly unofficial, I may do so. But to go as a member of the staff as suggested by the sponsors would be to lend credence -- such as I can lend -- to an unholy affair. The alternative is sabotage. If I sabotage, it will be under the banner of sabotage. We both agreed to play by ear as we watch developments.

Signed about 500 notes to P/L and S/L lists, selecting donor forms for each.

"I Dog" came off the assembly line, copy appended. Sent out about 100 copies to persons whose views I want.

August 28. To Union League Club for luncheon with A. L. Hammell, President, J. R. Marra, V.P., and Robert Hendon, V.P., of Railway Express Agency. This business, owned by 68 railroads, has lost \$100,000,000 a year for the last five years, and by reason, largely, of governmental competition, parcel post, etc. Later talked with Dean R. about a piece on it.

Jasper phoned from Wilmington about The Freeman and the necessity of getting a head man to replace Hazlitt come year's end.

Approved for publication, subject to approval by author, a condensation of Frank E. Holman's Dangers of Treaty Law.

The Saugatuck Hutchins for dinner. I did the Italian chix dish.

August 29. Erling Week arrived on the 9:20 from New York and spent  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hours discussing Europe and the people he should see there this Fall.

Didn't golf on account one game a week end is enough during weather so frightfully hot.

Ag and I saw "Shane."

August 30. Golfed with Carroll Little (12) and De Land (25). Started poorly and finished badly but for 9 holes, 6 through 14, shot 2 under par, having 4 birdies -- a corrected 82.

August 31. Harry Northam writes that he questions whether the Docs should support legislation giving the same tax status to the self-employed, so far as annuities are concerned, as is now given to the corporately employed, for instance. He seems to think it would be a special-privilege move. Anyway, what does LER think? My reply appended.

Hughston phoned and apologized for his inability to see me last week. Wants to set up a luncheon for me on September 23. Likes my "Academic Freedom" and wants 5 copies, particularly one for Laird Bell, Chairman of Board of Trustees, U. of Chicago. Said H, "If Laird had read your piece he wouldn't have made such a g-d fool of himself on that subject last spring.

Took in only \$6,900 at FEE in August. We will drop about \$14,000 in cash reserve.

September 1. Inx, on his way to Jamestown, phoned from La Guardia.

Made an attempt at writing on "Might Makes Right" for an appendix item for "I Dog." Copy appended.



Not for Publication.  
Manuscript still in preparation.  
This copy is for \_\_\_\_\_  
from whom suggestions and criticisms are solicited.

IN DEFENSE OF GOVERNMENT

by

Leonard E. Read

"It is for each to utter that which he sincerely believes to be true; and, adding his unit of influence to all other units, leave the results to work themselves out."

Herbert Spencer

## IN DEFENSE OF GOVERNMENT

It isn't often that one as impressed with the overextension of government as I am will come to its defense. Yet, strange as it may seem, I do so in the interest of limiting the scope of the political establishment.

Why not confine one's self to paring government down to its proper functions instead of coming to its defense? There are two reasons. Foremost, is a sobering fact: Government simply cannot be pared down in the absence of an understanding of why it should exist in the first place! There isn't any background on which to work. It is as useless as fighting phantoms.

## THE POSITIVE APPROACH

No apt analogy of this predicament seems to suggest itself, for in no other instance among human institutions is the real justification for existence so vague, so hidden in error, so shrouded in legal swindling, so little understood as is the case for government. If the reasons for the existence of the church as an institution were never any better comprehended than is the true purpose of government today, think how futile would have been Sarpi's enterprise three and one-half centuries ago in paring down the church, in separating the state from the church! <sup>(1)</sup> Had the purpose of the church not been recognized, Sarpi would have had to begin his project by showing why there should be a church. Sarpi, the Venetian priest, was more fortunate in his historic undertaking than are those of us who would

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(1) "Uncompromising as ever, Father Paul [Sarpi] continued to write letters and publish treatises which clenched more and more firmly into the mind of Venice and of Europe the political doctrine of which he was the apostle,-- the doctrine that the State is rightfully independent of the Church, -- and throughout the Christian world he was recognized as victor." Andrew Dickson White, Seven Great Statesmen (New York, N.Y.: The Century Co., 1915), p. 26.

limit government. We are confronted with the task of demonstrating over and over again why government should exist, in order to point out why and on what basis it should be limited.

#### ANARCHY IS UNTENABLE

There is a second reason, and a good one, for a libertarian, even in these days of bloated statism, to defend a legal organization by society. The reason has to do with the effectiveness of one's antistatist allies. For it is an observed fact that numerous students of liberty, particularly those who become extremely devoted to their cause, reason right straight past properly limited government to the abolition of all formal government -- as though limited government were nothing more than a convenient compromise for ideological weak-hearts who have no stomach for the whole truth. In short, some students of liberty end up in philosophical anarchy and, in so doing, lose their effectiveness as libertarians in my judgment. If this loss in effectiveness were the price of being right, then no just person could complain. But in my view the loss is for the sake of a position that is untenable.

It will be the contention of this essay that the principles which point to the proper limitation of government are the very same principles which justify government; that for one not to understand the latter is for one not clearly to see the former. It would follow, then, that effective argument for limiting government must rest on knowing why government should be instituted.

#### AN INACCURATE TERM

I wish, though, that we in America had never adopted the word "government." We borrowed an Old-World term with all its connotations of "to govern," "to rule," in an objective sense. Government with the aim of

directing, controlling, steering is not what we really intended. We didn't mean that our agency of common defense should "govern" us any more than we intend the factory guard to be the company's general manager.

Actually, in spite of the original intent, government in the Old-World sense is what we now have. Our federal agency and many of the state, district, and community agencies are not mere guards protecting the life and property of all citizens equally, suppressing and penalizing fraud, violence, misrepresentation, and predatory practices. Today our federal agency and many of the others are the citizens' general managers -- and autocratic ones at that!

It is not government as general manager of America's citizenry that I wish to defend. Rather, I wish to defend an agency of limited scope, not unlike what the Founding Fathers originally intended -- except for the slavery and tariff features, they being infractions or compromises of the original intentions.

#### NO PRECISE THEORY

As an introduction to my subject, I would like to assert as a personal belief that our original concepts about government grew out of a desire to protect ourselves from observed political evils rather than from the dictates of any precise theory. I hold this to be true, not only about our most efficacious limitation of government, but also about the revolutionary and happy theory that the people, not government, are sovereign. It is an oversimplification to put it this way, but it is my belief that our Founding Fathers had observed in the Old World that those governments which were the biggest and the most inclusive in their scope were the most tyrannical. They concluded from these observations that



"That government is best which governs least." In any event, I have never been able to find in the recordings of the Constitutional Convention, or in other papers and books of the time, an exact theory of government or liberty. One reasonable proof that no such theory exists is the fact that we never see it called into play today by those who are concerned about government being out of hand.

#### TWO DEFENSES

A precise theory of government and liberty is important. The lack of such a theory is disastrous. In the case of our own country, it is proving disastrous. As long as there were alive those who had learned from experience about tyrannical government, we in the United States were successful in keeping government limited. Succeeding generations were more and more remote from that experience. There came a time, perhaps around the turn of this century, when all connection with the experience was lost. Lacking a precise theory, we had nothing to hang on to. Experience was lost. No theory existed. Today there is no more limitation on government than that which political expediency dictates. The advocates of unlimited government are at work. We have only two possible defenses against their advances. One is to let them succeed and for us, the people, to become experienced again. In time we will revolt against tyranny as we did before. But generations, perhaps centuries, are involved. The other defense is to frame a philosophy of limitation. There is no short cut except the spelling-out and acceptance of a theory of government and liberty. If it is right that society should evolve a formal organization to protect its members and if it is right that the scope of this organization should be limited, there is, if we will but find it, a theory on which proper organization can be

erected.

I will not concede that anything can reverse the present trend toward all-out statism except a properly presented theory of government and liberty. I will concede that I cannot present the exact theory properly. But perhaps my views as to a theory will stimulate others to try their hands; and, if so, this argument will have served its purpose. Like it or not, we are now at the mercy of our own reasoning. Empiricism -- trial and error -- cannot serve us as it did our forefathers.

#### THE REASON FOR GOVERNMENT

Government would not exist, nor would there be any reason for its existence, if men did not have problems with other men. Therefore, to determine why we should have government and to find out how much of it we should have, we must first form judgments on (a) the nature of the person, (b) what one's relations are to others, and then (c) by analyzing the nature of organized force, decide on the extent to which it should be applied to these relationships.

There can be no denying the assertion that man is a social as well as an individualistic being. Both the social and the individual aspects of our own lives are daily emphasized to us. These emphases are presented so numerous and in so many forms -- indeed, so confusingly -- that it is with difficulty we can tell one from the other. Some folks are so impressed with the social emphases that they see nothing individualistic about man, and others are so impressed with the individualistic emphases that they see nothing social about man. The former are likely to end up as Socialists; the latter, as antisocial -- both wrong in my view.

Man cannot live alone. This is meant, not as a figurative, but as a literal expression. Remove from any one of us all the rest of man-

kind, past and present, and no one of us could exist. We are an interdependent breed of creation. I, for instance, do not know how to raise the food I eat, to build the home in which I live, to make the car I drive, to create the opportunities that are constantly presented to me, to write the books I read, to get from the earth the gas that keeps me warm. Relative to the advantages that are mine, I know next to nothing. Alone I am impotent to the point of nonexistence. So far as I can observe, the same thing can reasonably be said about others.

The individual does not exist as an isolated person or, at the very least, as the person he is, except by virtue of his cultural and social heritage. Deprived of the cumulative knowledge and experience of the race, man would be but another variety of curious animal -- if indeed he would have being! This accumulation of knowledge, habit, custom, convention, tradition is man's inherited energy, his natural environment -- it is there for individual availability. Incidentally, the recognition and acceptance of these facts destroy the charge of "atomistic individualism" so often hurled at devotees of limited government by devotees of unlimited government.

#### EACH IS DIFFERENT

Yet society is an abstraction. It is but a handy generalization. Only individuals count. Each individual is vastly different from all others.<sup>(2)</sup> No two think alike, have the same aptitudes and skills, see alike, hear alike, have the same tastes or the same energies.

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(2) For a remarkable and scientific dramatization of human variability, see Free and Unequal: The Biological Basis of Individual Liberty by Roger John Williams (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1953).

It is these variations among us and the exchange of our variable talents -- be they manifested in goods, services, ideas, insight, knowledge -- which account for our being alive. If, for example, everyone else were identical to me, all mankind would perish. No one could live, any more than I could live alone. No one could have any more than I know how to create. On that neither they nor I could live.

Some will argue that if others were not performing the services and making the goods I require to live, I would be doing these things for myself. True, each of us has some elasticity in this respect, and in some of us it is quite great; but, by and large, the 160,000,000 American people exist in their present relatively wealthy state by reason of their variable talents and the unprecedented exchange thereof.

#### RESULTS OF INHIBITIONS

The above claim -- highly relevant to this thesis -- needs some explanation. Observe, for example, the Mayan Indians at Todos Santos or at Chichicastanango, or aborigines elsewhere, and note the few, if any, who evolve toward those aptitudes peculiar to each.<sup>(3)</sup> By reason of inhibitory influences, they remain for their lifetimes in primitive, similar activity. Rarely does one of them break loose and become a musician, a painter, an engineer, a surgeon, an architect, a builder. Or, observe the American Indians with another low form of cooperant society -- a foraging economy. The whole area of these 48 states never supported more than a million of them. As has been since proven, the limit of the popu-

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(3) For a factual account of Mayan Indian religious beliefs, without interpretations as to the inhibitive nature of these beliefs, see Two Crosses of Todos Santos by Maud Oakes (New York, N.Y.: Pantheon Books, Inc., 1951).

lation and of their standard of living was in no way due to any lack of natural resources. Nor were these conditions caused by the absence of fertile soils and friendly climates, or by the Indians' inability to breed. Limits to population and the standard of living were due to inhibitory influences which prevented the variability in each Indian from manifesting itself. And without any marked variation, there was no reason for any marked exchange. Without variation and exchange, there could be no substantial quantitative growth; nor could there be qualitative growth -- material, spiritual, intellectual. Stagnation follows the absence of variation and exchange.

#### OUR DEPENDENCE ON INTERDEPENDENCE

Inhibitory influences, broadly speaking, are of two types. There are the sociological influences, which man imposes on other men. There are the psychological influences, which man imposes on himself or, more accurately, from which he fails to free himself. These latter are traditional pulls -- man not shaking off his animalistic background -- superstitions, fears, and taboos. For instance, the religion of many aborigines teaches that good crops or bad, ill health or good, hang on the caprice of gods such as high mountain tops; that getting along in life is not a responsibility of self but rather depends on the manner of their supplications to the numerous gods.

Consider what has happened in our own homeland. If we were to collapse time into manageable proportions, reducing the life of this planet from its five billion years to one year, we would observe in the last two seconds 160,000,000 people living in relative luxury where less than 1,000,000 had lived before -- if indeed we would call it living.

I must not, however, lose sight of the point I started to make. There are at least 159,000,000 of us in this country who exist by reason of a phenomenon that has taken place in these last two seconds! The chances are at least 159 to 1 that any one of us is in existence, is experiencing life, by reason of this phenomenon; that only 1 out of every 160 could endure the near self-containment of a foraging economy. This is another way of saying that more than  $99\frac{1}{2}$  per cent of us are the offspring of a division-of-labor and exchange society, are dependent upon it, and have a vested interest as profound as life itself in its continuance and perfection. It is also another way of saying that most of us are a highly interdependent type of being and are dependent on the smooth working of the interdependence processes.

#### INTERDEPENDENCE IS GOOD

To my way of thinking, this condition of interdependence, rather than something to be deplored, is something of which to be proud. It is a mark of progress. It is a forward step in the infinite evolutionary process. For man's purpose on earth, as I see it, is to come as near as possible in his lifetime to the attainment of those creative aptitudes peculiarly his own. Going in this direction, the principle which guides variability will cause each man to become progressively different from other men. More and more will each refine his own unique capacities.<sup>(4)</sup>

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(4) Specialization has been referred to as "analysis run riot." This dim view of an expanding division of labor would be warranted were there no possible synthesis of the human variabilities. But there is a synthesis, potentially a perfect one. It is simply free communication and exchange. Its numberless, daily ramifications can never be envisioned, let alone comprehended, by any man or set of men. This synthesis, however, has the virtue of requiring no more understanding than an awareness to leave it alone except, of course, to protect it against crookedness, violence, and "management."



And more and more will each need to rely on the products of the energies of other unique individuals.

### THE EXCHANGE PROBLEM

The problem posed by an advanced division-of-labor society is one of energy exchanges. Human energy is one of the numberless forms of radiant energy, electrical in origin, at least as far as man has as yet been able to scientifically discern origin. The fact that many of us believe in an Infinite Mind of the Universe, or God, as the source of everything is no contradiction at all to what modern physics or the new biology has revealed. Indeed, science, the more it progresses, leads man ever closer to such a concept.(5)

### SCIENTIFIC IDEAS ON ENERGY

Robert A. Millikan, renowned physicist and Nobel Prize winner for his achievements in the study of cosmic rays, has this to say:

"All light or other short wave-length radiations are caused by changes in positions of electrons within atoms. All atoms are built up out of definite numbers of positive and negative electrons. All chemical forces are due to the attractions of posi-

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(5) While this essay emphasizes the economic, social, and political aspects of creative energy and its exchange as between men, I want to acknowledge a belief which underlies all that is here written. It is that the mind of man is but a receiving set tuning in on a Divine and Infinite Wisdom; that man's mind is as yet but dimly receptive; that the evolutionary process -- man's purpose -- is an ever-increasing consciousness of Divine Purpose and Principle; that right conduct can be defined as human actions in harmony with Divine Principle, and wrong conduct as human actions in discord with Divine Principle; and that all human problems -- be they along material, intellectual, or spiritual lines or, shall we add, along economic, social, or political lines -- are moral confrontations. In a word, they call for choices between right and wrong. All subjects for study and contemplation, looking to insight, are but divisions of this One.

tive for negative electrons. All elastic forces are due to the attractions and repulsions of electrons. In a word, matter itself is electrical in origin."(6)

Renee von Eulenburg-Wiener, biochemist, most helpfully puts scientific theories about radiant energy into lay language:

"Constant change is a characteristic of the living organism and all physiological phenomena are energy exchanges."(7)

"Every substance is a system of molecules in motion and every molecule is a system of oscillating atoms and every atom is a system of positive and negative electricity."(8)

"Molecules are possessed of kinetic energy, that is, the energy of motion."(9)

"The atoms, the ultimate constituents of matter, are systems of positive and negative electricity. Electricity is a form of radiant energy and atoms may be described in terms of energy."(10)

"Of all living creatures, man alone has learned to free energy by conscious efforts. Machines, explosives, the utilization of water and wind to create power, all these are examples of man's conscious utilization of potential energy.

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(6) Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1943, Vol. VIII, p. 340.

(7) Renee von Eulenburg-Wiener, Fearfully and Wonderfully Made (New York, N.Y.: The Macmillan Company, 1938), p. 114.

(8) *Ibid.*, p. 118.

(9) *Ibid.*, p. 47.

(10) *Ibid.*, p. 117.

The food man ingests is derived from the stores of energy built by plant and animal. He utilizes this energy in the maintenance of his body, in work and in play and in the processes of intelligence and creative activity. It is by these latter processes that he may transform energy to a higher level, so to speak, and thereby may partake in creative evolution."(11)

"...the individual organism is but a device for the building up of radiant energy into its higher forms as manifested in thought and consciousness. It is a product of the universal energy and yet a means for its further evolution."(12)

#### HUMAN ENERGY IS DIVERSE

Human energy, obviously, has its earthly locus only in individuals. Human energy manifests itself in numberless forms: the kind it takes to run a typewriter, to receive an idea, to bake bread, to drive a truck, to grow wheat, to be a catalytic agent in cooperative effort, ad infinitum.

The reader may get the idea that I am deviating from my thesis. Quite the contrary! I am about to argue that a precise theory of government and liberty is to be derived from the necessity for the free, uninhibited production and flow of all creative human energy.

Required, however, is more reflection on the nature of energy. There is potential energy and kinetic energy. A dammed-up pool of water is an example of potential energy. If the obstacle or inhibitory influence, the dam, is removed, the water will flow -- the flowing water being an

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(11) Ibid., p. 133.

(12) Ibid., p. 447.

example of kinetic energy. Kinetic energy is useful energy. It is potential energy put to work. In the case of hydraulics, there is a natural law, the law of gravitation, which attends to potential energy's becoming kinetic energy once obstacles are removed.

#### WHY PERSONS TRADE

Each individual has numerous types of potential energy -- for instance, the type it takes to fashion sand into wearing apparel or the type it takes to hybridize corn. Assume only two Eskimos and only two goods, clothing and food. One can produce only clothing; the other can produce only food. If there are no inhibitory influences standing in the way, the potential energy of each will turn to kinetic energy. These two persons will exchange. The natural law attending to this is the will to live. For if they do not permit their potential energies to flow, to become kinetic, both will die. One will starve. The other will freeze.

We are living in a world of 2,500,000,000 people. The goods and services that each has to offer are different -- some slightly at variance as in the case of aborigines, others vastly at variance as in the case of more advanced societies. All of this variable produce adds up to an incomprehensible total of potential human energy.

The life and the progress in life of all -- whether the 160,000,000 in this country or the 2,500,000,000 in the world -- depend on the protection of these potential energies and on their turning into kinetic, useful, flowing energy. The total potential energy will become kinetic energy with the removal of inhibitory influences. The will to live will attend to that.

Unless this point about potential and kinetic energy is understood, my theory about government and liberty will not be grasped. Therefore, let me try to dramatize the point.

### ABSENCE OF ENERGY

First, imagine 160,000,000 dead persons arranged in a huge circle, their hands clasped to a conduit capable of transmitting every conceivable type of physical and human energy. No energy would be put into the conduit by the dead persons. None could, therefore, be withdrawn.

Second, imagine 160,000,000 live persons, similarly arranged, but with every one of them having a type of energy precisely like mine. Nothing but my type of energy would go into the conduit. Nothing but my type of energy could be withdrawn. All would perish, as I would perish were I alone in the world.(13)

Third, imagine 160,000,000 live persons, similarly arranged, but with the variation of their energies being no greater and no more perfected than the energies of the American Indians. Only the low energies incidental to a foraging economy would go into the conduit. Only the energies that went in could be withdrawn. All but one million of the total population would perish and for the same reason that the American Indians numbered no more than 1,000,000.

### FLOWING ENERGY

Fourth, imagine 160,000,000 live persons, similarly arranged, having precisely the great variance of energies that the population of America has

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(13) By "alone in the world" I mean absolutely alone, that is, completely without what has been bestowed on others, present or past. Human energy, if unobstructed, flows in time, all time. Most of what any of us, and all of what most of us, possess -- materially, intellectually, spiritually -- is founded on cognition extending into the infinite past. Or, should we call it all "the eternal now"? See Living Time by Maurice Nicoll (London, England: Vincent Stuart Publishers Ltd., 1952).

today. Imagine all of their many energies freely flowing into the conduit and any American being able to withdraw any of the input energies according to his own choosing, based on an equitable exchange of his own energy. In such an arrangement, for example, the highly specialized type of energy required to cope with the toxicological effects of industrial fatigue could be exchanged for the types of energy required to build houses, provide food, write books, make autos, furnish heat, and so on. In short, were all energies permitted to flow freely, any individual in this vast population would have readily available for exchange any one or more of millions of types of energy.

#### DIVERTED ENERGY

Fifth, imagine 160,000,000 live persons, as above, but with an effective control to keep everyone's energy from going into the conduit. All would perish as if each were alone, for there could be no exchange.

Sixth, imagine 160,000,000 live persons arranged in a huge circle, their hands clasped to a conduit capable of transmitting every conceivable type of physical and human energy, but with 40,000,000 of them organized for parasitical purposes, using force or threats of force or the political apparatus to draw off energy in the amount of their demands as distinguished from value-for-value exchanges.<sup>(14)</sup> To the extent that they succeeded in drawing off more energy than could be obtained by willing exchange, to that extent would the other 120,000,000 be compelled to accept less in exchange for their energies; that is, these others would have less livelihood by reason of the organized leeching.

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(14) See my Two Ways to Stop Strikes (Irvington-on-Hudson, N.Y.: Foundation for Economic Education, 1953), pp. 9-10.



As a final example, let us imagine 160,000,000 persons arranged in a huge circle. There is no master conduit equally available to everyone, nothing but one person standing in the center and with individual conduits from the whole multitude to this single person. All energies must be directed to this person. Only he can dispense that which he has received. Here we have the dictator arrangement, applied totally. There would be, so to speak, 159,999,999 volts that could find passage only through a conduit of one-volt capacity. All of the 160,000,000, including the person in the center, would perish. Parenthetically, there are no political instances of 100 per cent dictatorship. Even in Russia the principle of authoritarianism is but little applied. There are vast leakages of free, human energy. Were there no free, human energy, all Russians would perish.

#### LIFE DEMANDS DIFFERENCES

It can be deduced from the foregoing that I do not wish others to be like me. I have a vested interest in all others' being different, in their variability, and in the excellence, the advancement, and the success of their specializations. I, like others, am so specialized myself, am myself in existence by reason of specialization and exchange, that my life depends on this variability and exchange.

In energy production and exchange, we are all dissimilar. However, we have one common similarity and one common necessity for progress. It is that prohibitions against the production and exchange of our creative energies be at the lowest minimum possible; that man not keep men from developing their variabilities and from exchanging the product thereof. Again, this removal of inhibitory influences, originating in society, serves

to benefit all of us in common.<sup>(15)</sup>

#### PERSONAL INHIBITIONS

Inhibitory influences of the psychological kind -- my ignorance, fears, superstitions -- are personal and not social, are mine and not society's, are between me and my God and not between me and other men.

Other men may regret my plight, may rue my lack of attainment and culture. But I am faced with the problem of my own creative emergence. This is the individualistic side of the problem. I am the only one who can attend to the degree and the perfection of my own variability. Others cannot, in a creative sense, do anything to me. If they would help, they must limit themselves to what they can do for me. For me, they can do nothing beyond attending to their own emergence -- materially, intellectually, spiritually. They can, by precept and example, set a standard to which I can repair. They can have goods and services for exchange or knowledge and insight to offer. But whether or not I take advantage of their offerings is a matter for my own election. No one else can decide. The creative side of man has to do with the individualistic aspect of man and must be so treated.

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(15) The voluntary exchange of the varying products of men's energies is appropriately called the market place. If man were not inclined to better his circumstances, that is, to satisfy his needs and pursue his ends with what he regards as minimum effort, he would not be led into specialization. As specialization cannot occur without the market place, it is a basic human institution. It is the foundation stone of society. If the presence of the market place did not better, but worsened, man's circumstances, no feeling of comradeship (for which the Socialists claim so much) would attend to exchange. There would be no market place, no society, no man. Man has a natural and a worthy urge to economize his efforts in producing the satisfactions of his desires. It is this urge that leads to specialization and exchange, to the division of labor and the market place. However, this is the same urge that, on occasion, causes some men to sabotage the market place, to indulge in predatory practices. Stealing is the first and the worst labor-saving device. Hence, a fundamental need -- if specialization and the market place are to exist -- is protection against market-place marauders.

Man, however, does not in every instance confine himself to his creative emergence, to getting ahead by his own competence and superiority. Failing in self-improvement and not satisfied with what he can obtain in willing exchange, he will, on numerous occasions, resort to unwilling exchange. He will draw energy from the kinetic conduit without exchanging an equivalent of his own energy. He will tap the power line, so to speak. All unwilling exchanges are examples of this: the thief who "exchanges" my horse for his own low-grade satisfaction, or the gang of voters which legally takes other people's income to augment its own.

Variability and its perfection, that is, the production of the infinite kinds of human energy, originate with individuals. While each individual in his own upgrading draws on other persons, present and past, as well as on his own gift of insight, this process of individual upgrading classifies as voluntary and cooperative. It builds only on free will and volition. It is the inspired experience of the inner self. While each of us has a personal stake in everybody else's upgrading, the upgrading is not, by virtue of this unanimity of concern, a social problem. It is not a social problem, not only because it cannot be dealt with through social instruments, but for the profound reason that the emergence of creative energy is a personal matter, inhering in individuals as they act personally and as they choose to act with other individuals.

#### SOCIETY'S PROBLEM

I have attempted in the above paragraph to establish the point that the potential energy of each variable individual is a personal and not a social problem. I have tried earlier to suggest that these infinite variations of potential human energy will translate into kinetic energy

if uninhibited -- that is, willing exchange will naturally take place if unobstructed, the will to live attending to this. I now come to the obstructions or inhibitory influences, to the actions of man which impair the source of creative energy and stifle its exchange, and also to the actions which are parasitic on the flowing energy.

These last-mentioned actions present the social problem, the only social problem there is. All else is in the realm of the individualistic. Coping with the obstructions to the production and the flow of human energy and the syphoning off of the flowing energy without value for value is a social problem because:

1. These inhibitory actions inflict penalties on all human beings, presenting an in-common defense problem.
2. They cannot properly be dealt with personally.
3. They can best be dealt with, in justice, by social control.

#### ALL ARE RELATED

The first point requires little in the way of appreciation except an awareness that variable human energy, to be useful to mankind, has to be dynamic, kinetic, flowing -- as indeed does any other kind of energy -- and an understanding that in a free market there is no person too remote to one's self to be unrelated. Recently I observed a disheveled old lady hanging around a Central American wharf. "How possibly could she be related to me?" thought I. Imagination supplied an answer: Perhaps she gathers the kelp that wraps the fish that feeds the hombre who loads the bananas which provide the dessert for the woman who cares for the man who runs the nursery that supplies the spruce from which the pulp is made for the manufacture of the Kleenex that takes the place of the less sanitary

and more costly handkerchiefs we have been using. Who else wants to harvest kelp to wrap that banana-loading hombre's fish? In the free market, every creative person, regardless of how lowly his production, is attached to the kinetic conduit -- gives energy to it and takes other types of energy from it. An obstruction of any energy exchange, regardless of how minute it may be, inflicts a penalty against the potential wealth -- material, intellectual, or spiritual -- of every person. It is a penalty inflicted in common.

#### NOT A PERSONAL PROBLEM

My second point is that these inhibitory influences against energy exchanges cannot properly be dealt with by each individual for himself. Generally speaking, these inhibitory influences are fraud, violence, misrepresentation, and predatory practices. All are bad, be they done legally or illegally. The problem here is to remove inhibitory actions. This can be accomplished by restraining bad actions or by penalizing those persons who indulge in them. This is not an appropriate undertaking for each individual to do for himself, and for the following reasons:

1. It would be wholly impractical. No individual could possibly police the numberless actions harmful to him and to others, actions he would have no way of knowing about and practiced by persons most of whom would be beyond his acquaintance.
2. If every adult person were to be a law unto himself, we would have no less than 100,000,000 governments in America -- the "law" of each varying daily with individual caprice.
3. No individual has the moral right to use coercive or initiated force against any other individual. He has the moral right to use only defensive or repellent force. This is a distinction

too subtle for noncodification.<sup>(16)</sup> Guns employed for the purpose of defending life and livelihood would, too often, be used to take life and livelihood.

4. The offenders or marauders in society would soon be in command. They would be the government.
5. If my contention is correct that the removal of inhibitory influences is an in-common defense problem, then it follows that anything less than common control of the problem is a form of authoritarianism.

#### JUSTICE IN ORGANIZATION

My third point is that these inhibitory influences can be dealt with, in justice, only by social organization.

The right-to-life concept and its acceptance must serve as the premise for this point. If a person has a right to life, it follows that he has a right to protect and to sustain that life, the sustenance of life being nothing more nor less than the fruits of one's labor -- one's honestly acquired property. The right to life without the right to protect and to sustain life is meaningless. As suggested earlier, it is impossible in a division-of-labor economy to sustain life on one's own speciality. Energy exchanges are as vital as one's produce. Therefore, the right to the fruits of one's own labor involves the restraint of obstacles to exchange, not merely to my exchange but to other people's exchange within any given society.

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(16) By noncodification is meant the absence of socially or publicly formulated rules, the absence of law.



EQUAL RIGHTS

Justice compels one other admission. If I have a right to life and livelihood, every other person has a similar right. I must assume that life and livelihood are just as dear to every other person as they are to me -- regardless of race, creed, color, occupational level, or wealth status. The universality of the will to live and the requirement that life and livelihood be protected is conterminous with society. The responsibility for society-wide protection cannot, in sound organizational practice, be vested in anything less than society. And where the responsibility rests, there also should rest the authority to discharge the responsibility.<sup>(17)</sup>

I have the feeling that this argument will appear valid only to those who grasp the interrelationship of energy exchanges; who become aware of the extent to which we are interdependent, or more precisely, dependent on these exchanges; who see the meaning of kinetic, flowing, dynamic human energy; and who acknowledge that, in this respect, we are all in one vast energy circuit which encompasses everybody.

What is everybody's problem is nobody's problem -- a good adage in this instance. I am arguing that keeping the energy circuits open is not the responsibility of any one person nor of any division of any given society, but is everybody's or society's problem.

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(17) When individuals, admittedly having the right to defend their own lives, delegate their defensive responsibilities to society's agency, the agency is in full and exclusive charge of that function. In practice, the agency should redelegate the right to defend life as an individual act in certain instances. However, it is the agency that is in control of this function, specifying when and under what conditions individual defense is permissible. Society, however, at all times, should retain the power to employ and disemploy its agency.

TO RECAPITULATE:

Before going further, let me condense the central idea of this thesis:

1. The source of all creative and variable human energy, in an earthly sense, rests in individuals. The emergence of the creative and variable capacities of each is itself a creative process that can only be attended to by the creative unit, the individual, in such voluntary and cooperative actions as he may freely choose to take. This is the province of the individual and not of society. This is the vast, unlimited area of liberty, of self-reliance, and of self-discipline.
2. Creative, variable energies will tend naturally to exchange to the benefit and life-extension of all in the absence of man-concocted obstacles. Obstacles to creative energy and its exchange -- be they in the form of fraud, misrepresentation, violence, or predatory practices -- adversely effect and subtract from life and from the potential life (emergence) of everyone and are, therefore, the problem of every human being equally within any given society. While the removal of social obstacles is the problem of everyone, it is not the responsibility of any one person. It is the responsibility of all, that is, of society. As man in America today is the product and has life by reason of division of labor and exchange, so does he inherit with birth this interdependent, social aspect of self. This is as much his inheritance as is the responsibility for his own emergence. The restraint

and the penalizing of the obstacles to creative energy and energy exchange -- not merely between one's self and another, but between all men -- must be dealt with by social prohibitions, by the law! This is the relatively small, limited province of what we have come to call "government." It is the appropriate area of disciplines exterior to the necessary disciplines not self-imposed.

If the purpose of man on earth is self-realization -- coming as near as possible to the attainment of those creative aptitudes and potentialities peculiarly his -- it follows that the law, the book of rules and prohibitions for social administration, can logically serve only the purpose of deterring man's destructive actions for the sake of giving full flower to his creative actions. The law (social rules) can have no just object beyond removing social obstacles to the release of the human spirit. An organized arm of society, within its proper bounds, can be but the handmaiden of liberty; government, but the protective servant of the individual against antisocial marauders.

According to the theories here set forth, individuals should delegate to society's agency the responsibility for protecting all members of society against such destructive actions as some of its members may bring against others of its membership.

Society, per se, cannot assume responsibility, for society is an abstraction. Society can be given entity only as it is organized, only as its members are organized.

#### PURPOSE OF ORGANIZATION

Organization is for the purpose of cooperation. There can be cooperation for creative purposes and cooperation for repellent or defensive

purposes. (18)

Cooperation for creative purposes must be left to voluntary action. Men can cooperate to use force, but they cannot be forced to cooperate. Voluntary cooperative actions transpire daily in numberless ways, most of them having almost imperceptible organization but some of them having highly formalized organization -- corporations, partnerships, educational institutions, and so on.

However, cooperation for creative purposes requires, as an auxiliary, cooperation to annul destructive purposes. Cooperation for creative purposes requires that inhibitory influences against creative action be neutralized. In good theory, it is as members of society -- not as members of a family or of a corporation or of a labor union or of a chamber of commerce or of any group having special interests -- that individuals organize themselves into a police force to cooperate in maximizing their liberty, that is, to restrain those who would impede creative effort.

We must recognize the nature of society's political apparatus. It has, ideally, the single, distinguishing virtue of being able to inhibit, repel, restrain, penalize. All personnel of the apparatus can do everything else better outside the apparatus than in it. What should be inhibited, restrained, penalized? Those actions of man which are bad; namely, those actions which themselves inhibit, restrain, destroy, or penalize creative effort.

It is society that should organize the political apparatus -- the state, government, the agency of common defense. For it is not proper that

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(18) There can also be cooperation for destructive purposes, such as a gang of thieves cooperating to rob a bank or a gang of voters cooperating to take the property of some to "aid" others. This kind of voter cooperation is based on perverting government, inducing government to use coercive force instead of confining itself to defensive force. In this stage of the essay, I prefer to discuss government ideally.

anything less than society should organize to impose restrictions which relate to all members of society equally. By the same token, it is not proper to organize society for creative effort, for in no instance are creative aptitudes society-wide. For example, it is absurd to organize society, as has been done in Russia, to make automobiles, to produce penicillin, or to run a chick hatchery. Interests and aptitudes for these creative specializations -- governed by the principle of variability implicit in any and all progressive, evolving societies -- are rarities and not generalizations. The rarities for creative effort find cooperation possible only by people voluntarily organizing themselves.<sup>(19)</sup> The benefits flowing from these voluntary organizations are available society-wide. But these benefits are available to all only because the organizations are voluntary. Energy flows in the absence of obstacles sufficient to stop it.

#### RUSSIA IS NO EXCEPTION

It is often argued that the Russians can, for example, produce airplanes by their use of force and that the production of an airplane is a creative project. It is! Admittedly, I have contended that defensive force can only be used to inhibit, repel, restrain, penalize. Is there not a contradiction here? No! The Russian airplanes -- creations -- are actually the product of voluntary, cooperative effort. And it is not the force that creates the airplanes. Defensive force in Russia, as elsewhere, inhibits,

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(19) Voluntary organizations (creative energies in cooperation) form in accord with complex human affinities that defy diagnosis, accurate prediction, and single-minded arrangement. The point is illustrated in the latter part of this essay.

repels, restrains, penalizes. But in Russia coercive force is also used which destroys. In Russia the force is used to destroy a worker's opportunities to pursue the vocation of his own choice. The worker in the airplane factory is denied the opportunity to be an artist, a cook, a musician, or whatever. Left to him are only two alternatives -- building airplanes or dying. If he prefers the former to the latter and acts in accord with his preference, he had made a choice to produce airplanes. The fact that his alternatives are thus limited by the employment of force does not alter his act of voluntarily choosing between the two. Nor does it alter the fact that all of his acts in producing airplanes, whether in inventing or doing, are voluntary acts. A person cannot be compelled to act creatively. But the areas where he would choose to act creatively can be ruled out of existence by the use of force.

#### CHOICE INCREASES EFFICIENCY

When force is used, as in Russia, to limit opportunities, thus leaving open one or a few areas for creative effort, we observe persons building airplanes when their best aptitudes are for painting, for cooking, for music. In a free-market society, where force is limited to restraining social obstacles to creative energy and its exchange, we find mostly those with aptitudes for airplanes building airplanes.

Obviously, an individual is more creative in an activity agreeable to his aptitudes than in an activity disagreeable to his aptitudes. A person knows his own aptitudes better than does a stranger -- the dictator or any possible henchman. This is a primary fact of observation. It follows, then, that total energy will be higher among a people individually choosing their own work than among a people whose work is dictated for them by another individual.



The same principle applies to exchange. We will fare better -- materially, intellectually, spiritually -- if each of us chooses what he will communicate and exchange with others than if some other individual dictates what each shall communicate and exchange. It is these differences in the handling of creative energy and its exchange that account for the differences between Americans and Russians in production, invention, personal emergence, and so forth. The Russians apply police force to creative activities and claim it to be good. Americans are now doing the same thing on a smaller but growing scale. Many of us, however, claim it to be bad, as does this thesis.

#### UNANIMITY REQUIRES COMMON INTEREST

Cooperation is required among members of society to perform the negative function of prohibiting obstacles to communication and exchange. The cooperation ought to be as nearly unanimous as possible. Cooperation can approach unanimity only if the activities of the defensive agency be limited to those actions which have a common benefit to creative effort. If the agency of defense finds itself being used as an agency of plunder (coercion) -- as in the case of our government today -- cooperation will not be unanimous. For in this instance, some of the members of society cooperate to benefit themselves at the expense of the other members, employing the agency to achieve their ends. The plundered members find it difficult to cooperate with the plundering members.

Mere participation in the activities of society's agency, such as unwilling military service or the unwilling payment of income to support the agency in overextended activities, does not qualify as cooperation. Cooperation is a willing response. Willing response, approaching unanimity,

is much to be desired. But it is impossible except as society's agency is itself an accurate response to man's single social requirement: defense against those actions of man which inhibit creative energy and energy exchange. Man is a member of society in common with all other men in this respect only. His social agency, to be useful and not harmful, must limit itself to this one thing which all men have socially in common. Then reason, at least, will supply the basis for unanimous cooperation.

#### LIMITATION OF GOVERNMENT PRESCRIBED BY ITS JUSTIFICATION

Let me emphasize the above ideas in these terms: Any logical and just organization by society derives its existence from only one source: the common need for every man to protect himself against those who would limit his creative opportunities. Every human being is born with as much right to live his life creatively as any other man. Man, however, is incapable of protecting his life as a personal, individual project, and at the same time, of realizing his human potential. That part of his inheritance which designates him as a product of society precludes this. By reason of this social circumstance, he is committed, in principle, to cooperating with his fellow-men in the protective project of "one for all and all for one"; in a project that should make no distinction whatever as to persons; in a project where all ought to be regarded as equal; in a project where special privilege should be unknown. (20)

The principle which justifies society's organization of a defensive arm -- man's inheritance as an interdependent being -- also prescribes the limitations on what the organization should do. In short, the law's limi-

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(20) It cannot be too much emphasized that human beings are not equal. Yet, we should all be equal before the law in the sense that we think of ourselves as equal before God.

tation inheres in its justification.

Force is a dangerous thing. Therefore, society's organized arm is a dangerous instrument. It is not, as some assert, a necessary evil. When limited to its proper defensive scope, it is a positive good. When exceeding its proper limitations and becoming coercive, it is not a "necessary" but a positive evil.

#### TWO TYPES OF FORCE

Force of the kind here discussed is of two types. There is repellent or defensive force. There is initiated or coercive force. The latter is always evil. There are no exceptions. No man has any moral right to use it against any other man. Nor have any number of men, in or out of societal organizations, any moral right to use it. One of the most distressing fallacies having to do with government and liberty is the assumption that the state, an agency presumably of the people, has rights beyond those possessed by the people. The state initiates an action against me. For example, it uses coercive force, compelling me to exchange some of my income for the alleged prosperity of Tennessee Valley residents. No reasonable person would sanction such a coercive action on the part of any individual citizen. Therefore, no reasonable person believes that any such right belongs to the people. From what source does this extracurricular "right" of the state to use initiated or coercive force derive? It has no derivation. It is arrogated. Not only is it as untenable as the Divine Right of Kings theory, but it is the same thing under different names.

Any person has the natural and moral right to use repellent or defensive force against any other person who would aggress against him. No person on this earth has any moral right of control over any other person

superior to the defense of life and livelihood. Two persons banding together do not acquire moral rights of control over others superior to the rights held by each before their association. No increase in the number of individuals involved alters this in any way -- even when the number reaches the 160,000,000 of this nation. Rights not possessed by individuals cannot properly be delegated to an agency, political or otherwise. Society's agency, then, will find the proper limits of its scope in exercising for everyone, without favor to any, the natural and moral rights inherent in its members.(21)

#### TOOL OF LIBERTY

The above concludes what I consider to be a bare outline -- a skeleton, so to speak -- of the ideas that need to be considered in arriving at the principles and the theories of liberty. Government -- which no doubt is what we will continue to call our organized agency of society, even though it be limited to defensive functions -- is, if properly employed, an essential tool of liberty.

Government organized strictly in accord with right principle is an object more to be ardently hoped for than seriously expected. Yet, right principle must be deduced and have some measure of understanding if political expediency, controlled as it is by demagoguery and special interests, is not to rule and eventually overcome us. Political expediency feeds on the destructiveness it breeds. Every evil it evokes sets in motion other "compensating" evils. Political expediency, by its very nature, inevitably leads to a dead end.

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(21) An excellent development of this idea is to be found in The Law by Frederic Bastiat, (Irvington-on-Hudson, N.Y.: Foundation for Economic Education, 1950).

Right principle is man's only compass. He may deviate from the course it suggests, but at least he can be aware of where he is by reference to it. Right principle is a beacon to which man can return after he has ventured into the evil ways which constantly beckon him.(22)

It is my belief that right principle as relating to the limitation of government is not only deducible, but the area for precise deduction rests with the creative release of human energy and its exchange.

#### FROM THE GENERAL TO THE PARTICULAR

Now, let us assume that someone has succeeded in setting forth the precise principles which should guide men in prescribing the scope of their organized social agency. That would be a great, forward step. Yet, before much value could come from such an accomplishment, a most important, secondary step would be required. The argument would then have to proceed from the general to the particular; in short, the principle would have to be related to daily affairs. Many rules of right conduct are popularly paid lip service -- Thou shalt not steal; Thou shalt not kill; Thou shalt not covet; and so forth -- yet these same rules are not only broken but are rarely thought to be applicable when a number of persons become involved.

Is it any wonder that the federation of our states and the Constitution which prescribed and limited the scope of the federation required one of history's greatest intellectual selling campaigns? It is doubtful whether anything ever equalled The Federalist in this respect.

The ideas in this thesis are revolutionary today, although not as much so as were similar ideas in early America when contrasted with the

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(22) What is right will, of course, always remain debatable as between persons. The nearest anyone can come to practicing right is accurately to follow that which his conscience dictates as right. "Right principle," therefore, as I use it is right principle as I see it.

doctrines of the Old World. We, at least, have some history of liberty to serve us. Lip service -- even if no longer founded on deep beliefs -- is still paid to "free enterprise" and to limited government.

But revolutionary ideas are revolutionary regardless of historical precedence. And today, as in the 1780's, explanations and reassurances, in quality and conviction not unlike the excellent works of Madison, Jay, and Hamilton, will have to appear. For few among us, softened as we are by "success" and by the doctrines of police-action "welfare," can imagine how we could prosper short of the state's interventions in our creative activities.

#### HOW TO STOP THINKING

This growing belief in the use of police action as a means to direct the creative activities of a people in society, and the consequent and corresponding loss in the belief that free men can direct their own creative activities, are understandable. The reason is this: When the state pre-emptes any activity, that is, makes of it a state monopoly -- carrying the mails or whatever -- citizens cease their thinking on how the activity could be carried on as a private venture. Why waste time thinking about the impossible? With this absence of ideas as to how an affair could be conducted privately, there soon follows the belief that the activity could not be conducted unless the state conducted it.

If, for example, the federal government had decreed at its inception that all boys and girls should be provided with shoes and stockings from birth to adulthood, and the practice of this subsidy had been going on for the last 164 years, one who challenged it today would be asked, "Oh! So you favor poor boys and girls going unshod?" In this instance, we have experience to show the fallacy of any such practice. Boys and girls in



America, where shoes and stockings have been accepted as family responsibility and where freedom from state action has been greater than in other countries, are better shod than are other boys and girls.

#### EXPLANATIONS REQUIRED

Again, the ideas and principles as herein set forth, if ever they are to have significant application, will require explanations of a high order. The questions these revolutionary ideas raise will have to be answered, their humanitarianism demonstrated, their promise of a general well-being set forth in convincing terms, and fears alleviated as pertaining to the removal of state responsibility for citizen welfare. And the great bulk of these explanations will depend on imagination grounded in a faith in what man can accomplish in action free of organized coercion. The explanations will have to be made in the extremely difficult realm of what Professor Ludwig von Mises refers to as "discursive reasoning." For, as suggested earlier, empiricism cannot serve us. We cannot reflect on the evils of tyranny as did the founders of this country looking at the Old World. The tyranny of bloated statism is not across the water and behind us. We are ourselves in it, are a part of it. We can't see the forest of evil as they did. We are the evil trees and, for the most part, are unaware of doing anything wrong. Further, we are not, in this stage of our national, legalized parasitism, "feeling any pain." The American society, the host -- the world's greatest example of self-reliance, of released human action, and of energy stored in everything from man-planted forests, to productive facilities, to know-how -- is not yet "down and out."

The following, like the foregoing, is intended only as an outline -- a skeleton, so to speak -- of the questions which my arguments assuredly

will raise. The task that must yet be performed is the application by many individuals of skills and abilities far superior to my own. I presume only to suggest some of the ideas which scientific and dramatic presentations might well include.

#### IS TAXATION COERCION?

One of the first, important, and assuredly controversial points my contentions will raise has to do with taxation. I have argued that coercion is evil in all instances; that neither man nor government has any moral right to employ other than repellent or defensive force against any person or persons. Does not the forceable collection of a tax qualify as coercion? Does it make any difference if the tax be for the limited government herein defended or for a government organized to engage in legal plunder? Isn't it coercion in one instance as well as the other? Can anyone who believes as does the author of this essay logically support other than voluntary contributions as a means of financing the limited government for which he argues?

I entertain no doubts at all about the adequacy of voluntary contributions as the means of supporting limited government. The annual requirement would annually be oversubscribed. However, even holding to this belief, I would not favor this method of financing. In 1942 the United States Supreme Court said in one of its decisions: "It is hardly lack of due process for the government to regulate that which it subsidizes."<sup>(23)</sup> This appears to be an accurate statement. But, if the shoe were on the other foot, would not the voluntary contributors to government

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(23) Wickard v. Filburn, 317 U.S. 111, p. 131, October 1942.

financing soon be regulating that which they subsidize? Indeed, would not the control of society's agency soon be in the hands of those among the citizenry who had fared well financially? Would this be a proper way to distinguish who should control the government? I have tried to argue that there should be no distinctions at all between individuals so far as society's organized arm is concerned; that every individual in every way should be equal before the law; that a person is indistinguishable from any other person in the eyes of a just agency of the people.

However, the faults with voluntary financing of government are not the really valid reason for favoring taxation, or for contending that taxation does not classify as coercion.

#### ROOTS INTO THE PAST

As stated earlier in this thesis, every one of us exists by reason of a division of creative energy and its exchange. If there were no division of labor, no one of us would be alive. If there were division of labor and no exchange, no one of us would be alive. The number of persons who can live at any given material, intellectual, or spiritual level is determined by the degree of perfection of this energy equation. Also, the state of this energy equation determines the number and richness of opportunities for individual variability -- potential emergence. In short, while what we do with our potentialities is strictly a matter of personal decision, the fact that we are ourselves alive is due to the status of the exchange equation which has preceded us.

There are two sides to this coin. True, we inherit not only the benefits but life itself which division of labor and exchange confer. But, by the same token, we inherit the obligation its maintenance and per-

fection demand. In this single respect, we are as much members of the society which has been responsible for this as we are individual human beings. This membership in the societal organization that inhibits the social obstacles to creative energy and its exchange is mine.<sup>(24)</sup> That which is mine isn't anyone else's. And it is not merely mine for harvesting its blessings; it is mine to support for precisely the same reason that it is everyone else's to support. I cannot deny my parentage by the simple expedient of saying, "I don't want any parentage." I cannot deny my societal obligation by the simple expedient of saying, "I now choose not to have inherited any obligation." The inherited obligation is a fait accompli. To support or not to support a limited organization of society, based on right principle, is logically exterior to the area of free choice, unless, of course, one chooses to absent himself.

#### SHIRKING OBLIGATIONS

For me not to support that which I have inherited as an obligation is to put the burden on others. Others have a moral right to protect themselves against anyone who would burden their energy or energy exchanges, against anyone who would syphon off their livelihood. A person who by failure to attend to his own obligation, thereby loading it onto all others, engages in an inhibitive action against the society of which he is a member. He is not returning an equivalent for benefits and services received -- this equivalent being an equitable tax. Thus the agency of society must, in justice, collect from him. This collection does not, therefore, classify

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(24) While government in America has changed its nature -- going from a defensive to a coercive agency -- there is no denying the fact that it has acted defensively in vast areas and has, until lately, observed limitation better than have governments elsewhere. I feel I am obligated only to the agency as it should exist and to some extent as it has existed, not to the agency in its over-extended departments. My part in the latter is clearly a compulsion and is so regarded.

as initiated or coercive force but rather as repellent or defensive force.<sup>(25)</sup>

Some opponents of any organization by society refer to government as "slavery" and to taxation as "robbery." I do not hold these epithets to be correct. When society's agency goes beyond its authentic function of defending all of society's members equally and without favor and is employed as an agency of plunder to "help" some members at the expense of other members, then and only then, in my view, can the actions of the agency be called slavery. Likewise, plundering the honest fruits of one's labor for the "benefit" of others classifies as robbery -- legal, perhaps, but robbery nonetheless.

Adherence to the principles of limited government and the obligatory payment of its costs as herein set forth need not be offensive to any person except, perhaps, to those who have come to believe in the communistic doctrine that the state's function is to serve as a social leveler. Responsibility for one's own welfare is to be as much prized as one's rights. Obligations have the same relation to benefits as responsibilities have to rights. The idea that there can be rights and benefits without corresponding responsibilities and obligations is an absurdity. Indeed, rights and benefits are but the fruits of accepted and discharged responsibilities and obligations. Therefore, if rights and benefits are prized, it follows that their sources ought to be even more cherished. This is by way of saying that one should have as great a regard for his inherited obligation to

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(25) What is an equitable tax to support an agency devoted only to the defense of creative energy and energy exchanges? As I have tried to show later on, life or life energies cannot be taxed equitably. Perhaps it is only by the taxing of livelihood, through a medium of exchange, that equity can be achieved. This would suggest a tax proportional to livelihood and is to be distinguished from progressive taxation, which is, in fact, a form of coercion and confiscation. For an interesting analysis of the problem see Liberty and Taxes by Bradford B. Smith (Irvington-on-Hudson, N.Y.: Foundation for Economic Education, 1947).

support a properly limited government as for the benefits he derives therefrom.

#### PERSONS THEIR OWN RULERS

American history emphasizes the meaning of an acceptance of obligations for self. For instance, there was nothing mysterious or miraculous about our unprecedented American experience. Previously, political talk and debate had been about how government could more effectively rule the people. Even the best of the Old-World philosophers -- Plato, Aristotle, Hobbes, Hegel, Rousseau, and others -- thought in these terms. Here, though, we introduced a revolutionary idea: The purpose of government is not to rule! It has only the limited function of serving the sovereign people as a defensive agent! The people shall be their own rulers in a creative sense. Government, a division-of-labor project itself -- the citizens assigning certain specified tasks of their own to an agency -- shall only cope with those who would hinder the citizens in their creative performance. Government, therefore, was so limited that it could no more serve as a source of succor than could a beggar. There was no legal agency for plundering. Self-reliance -- the acceptance of an obligation for one's own welfare -- flowered as a consequence. The acceptance of obligations begets creative activity. The resulting toughness of spirit, the conviction that one is responsible for one's self and for one's own emergence, together with the energy stored in numberless kinds of productive facilities, stand as a bulwark against today's plundering assaults.

Taxation for proper government is an inherited obligation. It is not a coercive act for some members of society to keep other members of society from unloading their burdens on to them. It is a defensive act.



Further, acceptance of one's just obligations is not a hindrance to self-emergence but actually is a positive asset.

#### CONSCRIPTION

The approval of the idea that the formal agency of society can collect an equitable tax from its members and the contention that the collection is not a coercive but a defensive act will suggest to many persons that the agency can, with equal propriety, compel or draft its members for military service. On the contrary, no ideal agency of society can conscript any of its members for any kind of employment.

There is no need to discuss the superiority of volunteers over draftees for military service. Nor is it germane to this argument to explain why armed action, even for defense, should never precede a large-scale voluntary willingness to participate in the action. Suffice it to say that there never will be safeguards against war if a people can be committed to a war by a few persons, that is, if a people can be committed to a war short of a general willingness to risk, not someone else's, but one's own life and fortune.

#### OBLIGATIONS AND RIGHTS

The distinction between collecting taxes and compelling military service inheres in the difference between an obligation and a right. As I have attempted to point out, one does have an obligation to society which justifies the payment and the collection, if necessary, of an equitable tax. The societal agency, in collecting the tax, is merely performing its proper role of defending its members against those who would unload their own obligations onto the shoulders of others.

However, no person has any obligation, other than to himself, to live. He may, and sometimes does, choose not to live -- all suicides being



examples. A person is not obligated to society in this respect. To live or not to live is an affair of individual choice. It is a matter between man and his God, not between man and his society. This point is beyond argument. It is a self-evident fact.

A person does not have an obligation to society to live. He has only the right to live if he so chooses.<sup>(26)</sup> No societal organization would be justified among a people who had no desire to live. An organized arm of society is founded on and is justified exclusively by the will to live which exists in a people -- precisely the same law of nature which attends to potential human energy's becoming kinetic human energy, that is, which attends to communication and exchange among men.

#### SOURCE OF DELEGATED POWERS

The will to live is general insofar as this essay's calculations are concerned. There is no need to equate the non-living or those who do not want to live in society's current problems. The general will to live is related to our basic assumption that each person has a right to live; that is, he has a right to his life and his livelihood -- "certain unalienable Rights." I have attempted to demonstrate that these rights cannot properly be attended to as individual projects; that propriety and justice demand that they be delegated to a societal agency for attention.

The societal agency can then, if ideally constructed, be in possession of only delegated powers. These do not exceed the rights of the delegants. The staff of the societal agency has the responsibility for

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(26) This is an extremely difficult point for me to "think through." A person has the right to live but no obligation to society to do so. Yet, I have contended that a person has an obligation to support his and others' defense of life. As I see it, the obligation to support common defense is imposed on those who choose to take advantage of their right to life. There is no such obligation, obviously, on those who choose not to live.

common defense, invoking an impersonal justice, and keeping the records incidental thereto. The staff does not have the power to employ initiated or coercive force against any person within or without the society for the simple reason that the members of the society have no such rights to delagate.

We in America observe these principles when we refuse to use conscription in the ordinary staffing of our societal agencies. We do not conscript our mayors, our governors, our presidents, our policemen, our recorders. We rely upon the free market for obtaining this type of service, precisely as we rely upon the free market for obtaining many other goods and services. The free market, be it understood, has many other and often more powerful inducements than material considerations. (27)

#### CONSCRIPTION IS AGGRESSION

It is when we get into the extraordinary staffing of the societal agencies that we have trouble with these principles. When the domestic marauders have added to them a sufficient number of foreign marauders, we unwisely forsake free-market principles and frantically resort to authoritarian principles. We seemingly conclude that volunteers for defense are inadequate and that conscription is the only means of adequate staffing -- forgetting that whenever citizens fail to volunteer in significant numbers, the military action in question cannot

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(27) In peacetime it is such things as money, the preference for certain types of work, the belief that government provides secure employment, the competition in winning elections or appointments, the satisfactions that some have in being an official, and the urge to do one's part which serve as incentives or inducements adequately to staff the societal agency. In wartime, if free-market principles are to continue, other incentives become more pronounced, for instance, the urge to defend one's family and homeland regardless of the risk to life.

qualify as a defensive action. If an adequate number of military personnel cannot be obtained short of conscription, and if conscription is used to obtain the adequate number, the act of conscription itself is prima-facie evidence that the armed action in question is an aggressive action.(28)

Where there is the will to live, where life is prized and considered worth living, there also will be found the will to defend life. While it may be true that the specialists in armed defense -- the hired staff of society -- will recognize the need for defense before the citizens recognize the need, the specialists have, initially, only the obligation to advise the citizens and to await the citizens' decisions and orders. For the specialists to do otherwise, that is, to commit the citizens to armed action and then to impose conscription, is not only to aggress against the "enemy" but is also to aggress against the citizens.(29)

All societies are based on some degree of division of labor and exchange. The more advanced the societies, the more variable are the members thereof, that is, the greater are the differences in persons. As this variability becomes more pronounced, so does the need increase for a means of gauging the value of all efforts. This can be accomplished only by an honest medium of exchange, or its equivalent as established by a free market.

With this in mind, it becomes evident that society's organized arm cannot tax esoteric thinking from an esoteric thinker or inventions from an inventor or managerial know-how from an entrepreneur. The tax

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(28) See Conscription by Daniel Webster (Irvington-on-Hudson, N.Y.: Foundation for Economic Education, 1953).

(29) It does not necessarily follow that all voluntary armed action is defensive action. History is filled with instances of voluntary aggression and brigandage.

has to be in the form of a common denominator expression of value, usually money. An organized agency of society can "collect" money only in the sense that it insists on all members of society discharging their societal obligations in order that some will not have to bear the burden of others.

The ideal societal agency, organized only for the defense of creative energy and its exchange, cannot with justice go beyond this. It cannot, while adhering to sound principle, tax or conscript or collect persons, their aptitudes, their potentialities, their lives. These latter qualities, if they are to be contributed to the societal agency, will have to be volunteered. As I pointed out earlier, man can cooperate to use force, but he cannot be forced to cooperate. Defending one's life, family, property, and homeland is very often the supreme in cooperative effort.

#### WORLD GOVERNMENT

Next in importance among the questions these theories raise is:

Do not the admissions that man has a social aspect to his life, that each man has in some degree a relationship to all other men over the whole earth, and that it is the function of government to defend all life and livelihood, warrant world government, or, at least, a government of "the free nations"? If government is designed to defend persons, is it not logical to look to a supergovernment to defend nations?

This idea of world government became very popular in the United States. But the arguments against it, when considering the necessity of including the current enemy -- Russia and her satellites -- proved too much. For instance, the U.S.A., with more than one-fifth of the world's earned income and less than one-sixteenth of the world's population, could

easily be voted into what Americans would regard as poverty. Forming a government of "good" nations and "bad" nations had too many obvious flaws. But the devotees of supergovernment, while amending their geographical sights, continue to advocate an international layer of government -- Atlantic Union or whatever -- a government made up of just the "free" or "good" nations.

The definition of a free or a good nation apparently is predicated on the nation's opposition to the Russian brand of communism. In the popular view, there isn't anything wrong with communizing the product of all by compulsion providing it is accomplished by "free elections," or indeed by any method not strictly the Moscow type. Tito's Yugoslavia, avowedly as communistic as Russia, is "good" only because Tito prefers his own brand of communizing to the Politburo's. Peron, who resembles a Hitler or a Mussolini politically and ideologically, would no doubt be our "ally", if he would but take a "proper" international stance, that is, if he would throw his power the "right" way.

#### NO FREE NATIONS

We might as well face it. All the talk about free or good nations derives solely from the grammar of power politics. There is not today a single free nation in the world -- if by free one means the absence of coercive acts on the part of government, if by free one means that any citizen is free to engage in creative effort and exchange the product thereof with whomever he pleases.

American popularity for some new kind of supergovernment is grounded, without question, in the very best of motives. If it can be argued with logic -- and it can be -- that proper government would maximize liberty by restraining marauders among persons, why is it not

just as logical to argue that proper supergovernment would maximize peace by restraining the marauders among nations? Peace, of course, is a worthy object. Most devotees of supergovernment are also devotees of free trade -- a worthy object if there ever was one. Here in America, with the federation of our states, we developed the greatest free trade area in the world. Would not free trade be correspondingly extended were we to federate the nations?

LET LIMITED GOVERNMENT CONCEPTS BE EXTENDED

So far, the principal object of this essay has been to demonstrate that there is a sound and potentially practical basis for limiting government, that is, for limiting the activities in which government can properly engage. This can be accomplished, so my argument goes, by learning to distinguish between initiated or coercive force and repellent or defensive force, and by learning to distinguish between creative and destructive energy. Government must limit itself to the employment of repellent or defensive force against destructive energy. Government can never properly use initiated or coercive force, nor can it ever use any kind of force against creative energy or its exchange. It is possible to distinguish with a near-precision the actions to which government should be limited.

The projection of the above ideas across ever broader areas of the earth is sound in every respect, just as sound as local or regional government and just as desirable. However, without the penetration of limited government concepts, world government cannot help but multiply the world's present governmental absurdities. Government today, everywhere, is conceived in error. Increasing the scale of the error will not erase the evil thereof. We are plagued with governmental over-extension. More of the same will only put the task of correction further



beyond the reach of reason.

Working for world government or for the Atlantic Union is not the way to achieve sound government on any international scale. To achieve this end, work must be directed toward the widening of the limited government concept.

It probably is an exaggeration to assert that as many as 1,000,000 American citizens are supporters of strictly limited government. As a consequence, our own governmental structures are out of hand. Earl Browder, erstwhile head of the communist party in America, had this to say on behalf of the opponents of limited government: "State capitalism leaped forward to a new high point in America in the decade 1939-1949....State capitalism, in substance if not in formal aspects, has progressed farther in America than in Great Britain under the Labor Government, despite its nationalization of certain industries, which is a formal stage not yet reached in America; the actual, substantial concentration of the guiding reins of national economy in governmental hands is probably on a higher level in the U.S.A."(30)

Without belaboring the point further, we in the United States do not today hold the beliefs that make possible the limitation of our own several governments. We have a major project of our own to undertake before we can fix up the rest of the world. And, without question, the most powerful influence for good we could exert on the peoples of other nations would be setting up an exemplary house of our own.

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(30) Earl Browder, Keynes, Foster and Marx: State Capitalism & Progress (Yonkers, N.Y.: Earl Browder, 1950).



### RESPONSIVENESS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

It is a primary fact of observation that error in government is most easily corrected where the governmental unit is local and small and where the officials are acquainted with the citizens who employ them; that the correction of error becomes progressively more difficult as the unit of government is extended and as the officials are more removed from the citizens who employ them. We need no more verification of this than to observe the relative ease of correcting the maladministration of the local police force as distinguished from the relative difficulties of correcting maladministration at the federal level. And little imagination is required to visualize the almost impossible task that would confront us in correcting maladministration at the international level. We have the recent United Nations' war as an object lesson.

If my contentions are correct that limited government on a world-wide scale is desirable, and that its attainment depends solely on the extent to which concepts of limited government penetrate the consciousness of an ever-widening number of individuals, then it follows that work on behalf of a free world-wide society should be confined, first, to one's own improved concepts and second, to those who are within one's range of communication.

However, the idea that a federation of nations highly committed to socialistic policies -- as all nations are today -- can do other than strengthen and spread socialistic policies is patently absurd.

### GOVERNMENTS AREN'T GOVERNED

There is one fact that deserves emphasis when considering this problem. It is that a government does not police or control the govern-

ments which are minor to it. Different layers of government merely divide up the job of governing individuals. One should ask himself, when contemplating any kind of an international government composed of today's socialistic nations, just what additional government it is that he wants from such a source.

Now then, any person who believes that the purpose of government is to rule, to govern, in an objective sense; who believes that government's proper function is to wield coercive power over the creative activities of its people; who believes that world peace is a condition that can be secured by a balance of power -- that person can logically believe in and give support to world or semi-world government right now. But by the same token, those of us who believe only in strictly limited government should be content to leave well enough alone, that is, not to make bigger something that is already too big for us.

#### NATURAL BOUNDARIES

Societies, like the individuals who compose them, are highly variable. They tend to have more or less natural boundaries. These are roughly determined by the mores, and by natural geographical, ethnic, and economic boundaries being conterminous.

Governments within the respective frameworks of these highly distinctive societies -- each its own government -- would seem more conducive to moderation and to citizen control than any conceivable international arrangement that is possible today. Let the people of the Bismark Archipelago worship their divine monster, the Dukduk, and let them be ruled, if they wish, by their Elders who dress as Dukduks.<sup>(31)</sup> This isn't a bit

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(31) See Chapter IV, "The Magical Origins of Power," in Bertrand de Jouvenel's book entitled On Power: Its Nature and the History of Its Growth (New York, N.Y.: The Viking Press, 1949).

worse than other peoples of the "free nations" who look to government in the same slavish and worshipful way -- and perhaps it isn't as bad. Nothing is going to change these primitive or modern forms of occultations except an advancement in understanding. Learning begins with one's self. If good enough, it spreads to others.

As to extending free trade among nations, it is precisely as simple as extending trade among persons. Indeed, world free trade is nothing but uninhibited trade among all persons on earth, the condition which would obtain except for political interference.

One only has to ask the question, "How do I contribute to people's trading with me?" The answer is clear: Put no obstacles in the way of exchange. All the trade that I or any other person has a right to demand will take place in the absence of obstacles. Persons exchange. A great motivating force, the will to live, attends to this.

#### INCREASING TRADE

Governmental action does not cause exchange. When government is organized solely for the defense of life and livelihood (there is no existing example of this) that government restrains or destroys inhibitions to trade. When government is organized for more than this -- that is, to rule or to govern -- it becomes the means to inhibiting trade. All governments presently erect obstacles to trade: tariffs, exchange controls, embargoes, quotas, and so on.

Unless one wants to argue that this nation become a dictator among nations and compel others to do as we think wise, there is nothing this country can do about extending world trade except to remove all obstacles to others trading with us. The fact that the U.S.A. itself is an offender

against free trade argues that even were we to dictate the world's rules, we wouldn't dictate terms superior to those we dictate for ourselves.

Perhaps the greatest trade fallacy of all is that our own barriers must be removed on a reciprocal basis, in a word, removed only to the degree that we can induce others to remove theirs. We would be ruined, so the argument goes, were we to let down our own obstacles to willing exchange. Obviously, we couldn't be harmed short of someone else's offering to exchange. Equally as obvious is the fact that we wouldn't consider ourselves harmed if we wanted to make the exchange. If one will but think of this problem as a person, the whole myth explodes. Imagine that you offered to everyone on earth the right to exchange with you! Some would, and some wouldn't. However, the more who accepted the offer, the more you would prosper.<sup>(32)</sup>

Let the idea gain currency that the only function of government is to use repellent or defensive force against those who would restrain or destroy creative energies and their exchange, and we will have limited government on a world scale and probably will be unaware that it exists. We will all be too busy acting creatively.

#### DEPRESSIONS

What about "booms and busts"? Wouldn't we be in a boom or a bust most of the time if people could act as they pleased, except for defrauding or otherwise doing violence to others? Aren't the great depressions of the past proof positive that freedom won't work?

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(32) For an extension of the free trade thesis, see The Tariff Idea by W. M. Curtiss (Irvington-on-Hudson, N.Y.: Foundation for Economic Education, 1953).

I will state my belief categorically at the outset: Booms and busts have not been caused in any single instance nor to any degree by the release of creative energy and the exchange thereof. On the contrary, they have been caused by perversions of liberty -- by interventions in the market place, by government's failure to perform its proper function, and by government's insistence on indulging in improper functions.

#### LIBERTY NEVER TRIED

Liberty, like Christianity, has never been thoroughly tried. The relations between liberty and government as outlined in this essay have never been practiced. To the extent that government takes sides among the citizens -- plundering some for the "benefit" of others and indulging in special privileges -- to that extent does government become incapable of performing its legitimate function of protecting the life and livelihood of all citizens equally. It is a self-evident fact that no person or agency can protect the honest fruits of one's labor while at the same time forceably taking the fruits of one's labor. In short, the more government acts coercively, the less it can act protectively.

The history of government's acting coercively coincides with the history of government. I am aware of no instance where government has been limited to the defense of creative energy and its uninhibited exchange. Even in America in 1789 -- the nearest known approach to strict limitation -- slavery and tariffs were acknowledged as appropriate coercive acts of government. The principle of coercion, once admitted, had either to be denied and destroyed or approved and expanded. While Negro slavery was later denied and destroyed, the principle of governmental coercion was not stamped out. Some of the coercive seed remained in embryonic state, and

by 1900 governmental actions were taken which led to the development of the embryo.(33) By 1913 this perverse principle was so thoroughly established that we inscribed on our American banner -- proclaimed and adopted as national policy -- the Marxian ideal.(34) This ideal, the Sixteenth Amendment, legalized a new slavery in lieu of the Negro slavery earlier disposed of.

"What is essential to the idea of a slave? We primarily think of him as one who is owned by another....That which fundamentally distinguishes the slave is that he labours under coercion to satisfy another's desires....What...leads us to qualify our conception of the slavery as more or less severe? Evidently the greater or smaller extent to which effort is compulsorily expended for the benefit of another instead of for self-benefit."(35)

This new slavery advances in direct proportion to the application of coercion by government. It is not my intention in this essay to outline or statistically verify the tremendous growth in governmental encroachment since 1913. There are many excellent readings on this phase of the

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(33) A remarkable account of governmental encroachment, how it started and the manner of its growth, was written by John W. Burgess, founder and for many years head of the Department of Political Science at Columbia University. The book, Recent Changes in American Constitutional Theory, (New York, N.Y.: Columbia University Press, 1923) is out of print but is available in many libraries.

(34) "In a higher phase of Communist society...society [can] inscribe upon its banner: 'From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs!'" Karl Marx, Capital and Other Writings (New York, N.Y.: The Modern Library, Inc., 1932) p. 7. The progressive income tax is the application of this ideal by coercion. It legalizes the political practice of communizing the product of all by force. It sanctions social leveling by government.

(35) This is extracted from the chapter "The Coming Slavery" in Herbert Spencer's The Man Versus the State (Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1946).



problem.<sup>(36)</sup> I only wish to leave the impression that coercive intervention by government has a thorough historical record and that booms and busts cannot logically be blamed to the free market and limited government for the simple reason that no such arrangement has ever been more than approached. It has never been practiced.

#### UNEMPLOYMENT

The severity of busts or depressions is usually measured by the degree of unemployment or the contraction of business activity. Unemployment is a phenomenon of the partially rigged market. A minimum wage law, for instance, that would make illegal the payment of less than \$100 per week for department store workers would throw out of employment all marginal workers, that is, all workers worth less than \$100 per week to the employer. Other economic rigidities--there are literally millions of them in America today -- such as \$3 per hour for carpenters coercively established by a labor union, will disemploy carpenters whenever the demand for carpenters at this rate declines.

Full employment exists and always has existed in two types of situations and is assured in a third:

1. Full employment exists in primitive societies -- foraging and exclusively agricultural -- where division of labor

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(36) The Federal Budget in any one of the last 20 years (Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office).

Thomas Barber, Where We Are At (New York, N.Y.: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950).

Ben Moreell, To Communism Via Majority Vote (Irvington-on-Hudson, N.Y.: Foundation for Economic Education, 1952).

F. A. Harper, Liberty: A Path to Its Recovery, Chapters 12-13 (Irvington-on-Hudson, N.Y.: Foundation for Economic Education, 1949).



and exchange are minor and where there is no perfection of a societal agency devoted to the protection of creative energy and its exchange. The American Indians or the Mayans have not had unemployment problems.

2. Full employment exists in slave labor societies, where the government acts coercively to a high degree. There is no unemployment problem in Russia.
3. It is inconceivable that there could be other than voluntary unemployment in a free-market society were government limited to restraining all inhibitions to creative energy and its exchange, assuming of course that government performed this function effectively.

Involuntary unemployment, except for acts of God and total disability cases, originates with man-made obstacles to creative energy and its exchange. Free the market and remove all marauders, and there will be as much work to do as one wants to do. What one will obtain for the work will be determined by what others will willingly exchange for it.

#### PURPOSE OF STATISTICS

Reporting on business activity in our argued-for free society would have only one purpose, namely, to aid in economic calculation on the part of participants. Whether the aggregate activity were high or low would be of little more than academic concern. It would only reflect the extent to which citizens wanted or did not want to produce and exchange. Business activity, unlike today, would not be a gauge of how ineffectively economic rigging is working. Nor would it, as today, be the source for exultation

or fear. Relatively-low business activity would not classify as "bust," any more than an individual's taking the day off would classify as personal failure.

### MONEY

There is, though, an extremely important aspect of the bust or boom problem that must engage our attention. It has to do with the medium of exchange.

If we will reflect on the kinetic conduit idea -- all types of human energy flowing into the conduit and available to anyone and everyone on a value-for-value exchange basis -- we will readily recognize that the flowing current is not and cannot be measured in terms of the many energies themselves. So much esoteric thinking as such is not exchanged for so much wheat as such. In a highly developed division-of-labor and exchange society, most human energies are and must be translated into a denominator that is common to all energies -- in a word, into a common denominator that will serve as the measure of energies. The alternative to this is to use no common measure (barter) which, understandably, has a very limited flow potential. The required common denominator, this measure of energies, is appropriately called the medium of exchange and is commonly referred to as money.

Imperfections in the medium of exchange can destroy an otherwise perfect division-of-labor and exchange economy. These imperfections can and do cause booms and busts. It is of the utmost importance that the subject of money be mastered.

What, however, is the extent of understanding? I have often said, and not too facetiously, that not more than one person understands money and that I am unaware of who he is. The reason for this far-from-professional

assertion is that among all of the money "experts" of my acquaintance, I do not know of any two who are in agreement. Therefore, there cannot be more than one among my acquaintances who is right; and not being in a position to judge for myself, I have to ask, "Is the one right?"

Oh, yes, there are many of us who can write reams in justified criticism of the present money hodgepodge; who readily see the fallacies in monetizing debt, in taking gold off the market, in modern but subtle forms of coin-clipping, in demanding that money serve as a medium of exchange while at the same time insisting that it serve as a fixed, inflexible depository of value, in money-making by credit. In short, many of us know how money in ignorant manipulation is used and always has been used -- more innocently than designedly -- as the greatest instrument of fraud ever known to man.

Why, however, cannot someone write the specifications for an efficient medium of exchange that is impregnable to fraud? Why, when confessing to one of the world's acknowledged leaders among economists that I had never been able, even in a simple equation, to figure out an ideal medium of exchange, did he reply, "Neither have I"? Of one thing we can be certain: This distressing situation is not caused by a shortage of thinkers sincerely devoted to finding the right answer.

#### A FALSE BASE?

Let us make a supposition: What if these devoted persons have been basing all of their thinking on a false assumption? In this case, no matter how devotedly or ingeniously or indefatigably they thought, they would come up with wrong answers -- all of them! And the false assumption would account for the confusions -- any enduring agreement among sincere and reasonably intelligent persons is possible only if their premise is

right. Any right conclusion must be founded on a right premise.

Throughout all recorded history, with but minor exceptions, the assumption has been that money matters fall within the province of government. The idea has been but little questioned. Americans, from the very start, accepted this assumption. Article 1, Section 8, of the Constitution of the United States, delineating the powers of Congress, reads: "To coin Money, regulate the Value thereof, and of foreign Coin, and fix the Standard of Weights and Measures." Without question, it is correct to say that nearly all thought on correcting our money troubles is premised on government as the agency "To coin Money, regulate the Value thereof."

Government should not have anything more to do with money than it has to do with labels on patent medicines! Government's task is to restrain fraud and misrepresentation in one as much as in the other, and its function is no more in one than in the other.

#### A CUE?

It seems to me fortuitous that the writers of the Constitution should have included in the same sentence "To coin Money, regulate the Value thereof" and "fix the Standard of Weights and Measures." For by associating these two activities, they implied that they gave the same validity to one as a function of government as to the other. And here, I believe, is a cue as to why Americans, having revolutionary ideas about government, got off to a wrong start. At first glance these two functions appear to be identical in principle. Yet, careful reflection reveals a world of difference between the two.

There isn't any reasonable doubt but that the Founding Fathers regarded government as an agency to defend life and liberty. For, after mentioning "Life, Liberty" in the Declaration of Independence as "unalien-

able Rights," they hastened to add, "That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men...."

The writers of the Constitution were true to their objective when prescribing that Congress "fix the Standard of Weights and Measures." It would be impossible to accept the responsibility for restraining and penalizing fraud and misrepresentation, and for adjudicating differences appertaining thereto, unless there be "the Standard." A bushel and a yard had to have definition. Let it be noted, however, that there was no hint here of "coining" the bushels or the yards, that is, governmental production of bushels of wheat or yards of cloth. Nor was there any hint that the government should "regulate the Value" of wheat or cloth. All that was done was to set up "the Standard" by which fraud and misrepresentation could be judged, by which justice could be administered.

#### THE BIGGEST GOVERNMENTAL ERROR OF ALL

"To coin Money, regulate the Value thereof" missed the whole point of government as an agency to secure "unalienable Rights." Indeed, regulations written under the powers to "fix the Standard of Weights and Measures" would have sufficed. There would, for example, be a need for setting up standards to assay the fineness of gold and silver; for judging whether all citizens' representations as to fineness were accurate; for stamping out all counterfeiting, whether motivated by fraud or by innocent credit mechanisms; and for estopping any and all means by which media of exchange could be employed to enrich anyone at the expense of others.

"To coin Money, regulate the Value thereof" put government into the one business which, among all of the government-in-business errors, should have been most studiously avoided. This move put our hired guardians

into the production of the purchase orders which have a command over all the goods and services our guardians were hired to protect. In short, it did in fact make rulers out of persons who were intended to be, and who ought to have been, protectors.

All of mankind's devilry does not originate with men themselves being devils. Most of the troubles among men are set in motion by ill-advised institutions, that is, by men faultily organizing themselves. If all men were wise, they would comprehend the harmony of their interests. Wisdom being but relative and minor, men err in interpreting their true interests, and, consequently, suspect a multitude of antagonisms among themselves. They devise institutions for the purpose of cooperating along the lines of their suspicions. Men cooperate better to effectuate their unfounded antagonisms, even as they cooperate better to effectuate their acknowledged harmonies.

#### ENEMY OR SERVANT?

Government as an agency of society -- if well-conceived, properly limited, and soundly organized -- is a cooperative arm of society. It is but another item in the division of labor. Its true interest lies in protecting the society that created it.

Government is composed of persons, as is society. Organize the persons in government in such a manner that they can readily realize that they will fare ill if the society which hires them disintegrates or that they will fare well if the society prospers, and society will have a good and faithful servant. But organize the persons in government in such a manner that they get the idea that society is only a host to be exploited, and society will have a bad and parasitical servant.



One of the requirements for promoting cooperation between two or more persons -- or between society and government -- is that their interests in the project in question be recognized as in accord; that the self-interests of all parties be understood by the parties themselves to be in harmony. But let the idea prevail that the self-interest of one is served at the expense of the other, and the two will not cooperate; instead, each will work against the true interest of the other.

#### BLANK CHECKS

It is bad organization to give government -- society's presumed protector of life and property -- a blank check on society's livelihood and property. A "blank check" is precisely the right term for government's power "To coin Money, regulate the Value thereof." This cannot help but reverse the intended relationship and turn protectors into exploiters. This sort of organization emphasizes the idea that society is only the goose for government's plucking; that government has an interest, not identical to, but at odds with the society it allegedly serves. The history of the last 40 years provides ample evidence to support these views. The many millions on society's growing payroll are highly organized against society -- cooperating to thwart society in its numerous efforts at redress.

Perhaps my point can be made clearer by posing simple analogies of what we ought to have done and what actually we have done. Visualize a community. The spokesman for the citizens says to an agent whom the citizens have selected:

We believe that each of us has a right to his life and to the honest fruits of his labor. We are all specialists and find that we can prosper if we exchange our specialities. To aid



our trading, we have our own medium of exchange. The tokens we use are soundly based, but these tokens are purchase orders and are accepted in exchange by all of us for all of our goods and services and for all of our properties. It is of the greatest importance, in addition to protecting us against the common variety of marauding from within and without the community, that you protect the sanctity of our medium of exchange. Guard this as you would our lives, for our livelihoods do, indeed, depend on its remaining sound and honest.

And the following is roughly analogous to what we have said: We believe that each of us has a right to his life and to the honest fruits of his labor. We are all specialists and find that we can prosper if we exchange our specialities. To aid our trading, we shall need a medium of exchange. The tokens should be exchangeable for any of our goods and services and for any or all of our properties. Now, what we want you to do, in addition to serving as a guardian of our lives, our incomes, and our properties, is to take command of this medium of exchange -- in fact, to coin it and to regulate its value. We will be paying you and your establishment in the very coin which you are to produce and to regulate. Don't let any of us cheat each other; but if you find it expedient to enlarge your force, to look after the material welfare of any of us who in your opinion are in need, or to enter into business competition with any of us, you just go ahead and use your own judgment. If you find that your requirements are more than we will willingly put up in the form

of taxation, it will be quite all right for you to obligate us to indebtedness. Indeed, if the political situation seems to require it by reason of our demands being too numerous, it will be all right for you to monetize our debt; that is, you are empowered to coin money, not only on our real wealth, but on our indebtedness. If you spend \$100,000,000 on an aircraft carrier, let us not be \$100,000,000 shy in our own purchase orders. By monetizing debt we can have \$100,000,000 more in purchase orders! Remember, though, you are our guardian, our servant.

#### THE SERVANT AS SOVEREIGN

The American revolutionary idea -- the people to be sovereign, government to be the hired agent -- was, without doubt, the most important political idea in all history. But the founders of the idea, not unlike their progeny of this generation, bent, gave ground, compromised with what they held to be right principle. After all, these nearest political practitioners to purism had, to some extent, to be "practical." So they accepted several "practical" and, to my way of thinking, preposterous courses. Negro slavery was the most obvious. Tariffs "for revenue only" were the least offensive. The most preposterous of all, however, was the idea that they could employ a servant to protect life and property and, at the same time, give that servant complete control over all livelihood and property by giving to him a monopoly of the "coining" of all claims to income and property (money) and, concurrently, the power to "regulate the Value thereof."

History has already recorded the result.<sup>(37)</sup>

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(37) If one wishes to gain an idea of how extensively our own government has intervened, money-wise, in the market place, read Economics and the Public Welfare by Benjamin McAlester Anderson (New York, N.Y.: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1949).

What are the precise specifications for a medium of exchange not "coined" and controlled by government? I do not know the answer to this question for the same reason that I do not know the answer to many other questions. I only know one thing about the money question: Get government out of it entirely except to police, restrain, inhibit, and penalize all unethical or dishonest practices. As if by magic, men in the market place will put the specifications on paper and into practice almost overnight. After all, no brains are lost to the money problems by telling the cops that their job is not to manage, but rather to police the medium of exchange.

#### TOO MUCH GOVERNMENT CAUSES BOOMS AND BUSTS

There is no point at all to government except to organize a staff of persons to act defensively, protectively, against inhibitory influences to creative activity and its exchange. Individuals can act creatively only when acting personally and cooperatively. They cannot act creatively when applying force of any kind. Erecting an effective, honest medium of exchange calls for creative effort of a high order -- this to be found in the market place. Because a medium of exchange lends itself to fraud so easily, defensive actions of a high order are called for -- these to be found among specialists in uncovering and restraining fraud, that is, among competent civil servants having a delegated power to use repellent force.

Let there be a realignment of our thinking on money. Let the economists and other specialists in exchange media premise their thinking, not on government, but on the folks in the market place "coining the money." The market will do the regulating of value. And let the folks in government specialize in detecting, exposing, and repelling any fraudulent practices which may arise in the market place.

Booms and busts are caused by government's acting coercively and managerially in the market place and by government's not performing its proper function of restraining violence, fraud, misrepresentation, and predatory practices in the market place. Stated another way, booms and busts are the result of government's becoming a predator rather than serving as it should in the restraining of predators.

It is just as absurd to blame busts or depressions on creative energy and its exchange as it is to blame your and my personal hardships on the exchange of your eggs for my potatoes.

#### MORE ON COERCIVE AND DEFENSIVE FORCE

It would appear necessary, before challenging some of the more popular -- currently, even sacrosanct -- activities of government, that I make crystal-clear the distinctions between initiated or coercive force and repellent or defensive force and, also, that a method be suggested for one to determine where defensive force is logically in order.

Let us first consider the problem of defensive force and its use. Nearly anyone who reflects on the problem under discussion readily sees the justification for using defensive force to repel a would-be thief or murderer, or to restrain any action that would inhibit creative energy or its exchange. Thievery, murder, suppression of personal emergence, and the barring of energy exchanges are clearly antisocial. Everyone is, to some degree, adversely effected. Society must take some measures against destructive actions of this type. "But," ask my friendly critics, "doesn't the ignorance of some bear deleteriously on all? Or a potato blight, to use another example? Should not society use defensive force against these maladies the same as against thievery, for instance?"

Here is my own method for distinguishing between the proper and improper uses of defensive force: Take the one person with whom my acquaintance is the most highly developed, namely, myself. First, I think of myself as having only creative powers -- the power to learn, to discover, to invent, to think, to produce, to cooperate with others, to express ideas, to exchange on a two-way willing basis with another, and so on. In short, I think of myself as a person wholly devoid of any faculties whatever for physical defense. This is my creative self.

Next, I think of some defensive faculties being added, such as fists backed up with muscle, a policeman's club, a machete, a gun. This is my defensive self.

A thief enters my home, or a man tries to kill me, or another threatens violence to my family if I continue to work at my job, or still another takes your and my earnings if you exchange your clothing for my food. I will, if given the chance, use persuasion before using my powers of physical force. But persuasion in this case has the reality of my defensive powers behind it and is, therefore, a part of the defensive paraphernalia.

#### ESTOPPELS

It is important at this point to consider the nature of this defensive force. It is a physical force and if confined to defensive purposes has the power to restrain or to annul that which would destroy. We can be accurate if we think of defensive force simply as a man and his machete. True, a machete can be used creatively to cut down a banana plant or to trim the lawn. That is not the man-machete combination in mind. The one in mind is a man using a machete to estop. Estoppels!

That is the precise term to describe instruments of defensive force. Defensive powers can be employed only as estoppels.

Now, let us take the case of ignorance, the case of a person adjudged by me to be ignorant. What is there to estop? What can be done about ignorance by using a machete defensively? Nothing! Clearly, my only way of coping with my own or anyone else's ignorance is to employ my creative faculties. The machete is useless. Similarly, with potato blight. Creative, not defensive powers are called for. I must discover or invent a spray or perhaps search for a strain of potato immune to the blight.(38)

Society, being an abstraction, cannot act defensively or creatively. However, all of the persons in a population can organize to form an arm of the population to do certain specific chores for all of the people. But, in justice, all of the people cannot organize to carry out a task that is not of common interest to all. Creative action is highly variable action. In common, is only the estoppel function. In the ideal society, as I see it, all of us do, in effect, turn over our estoppels -- our defensive powers -- to an agency of defense. We give this agency a monopolistic control over all fists, all policeman's clubs, all machetes, all guns.

This is quite an agency. It is composed of persons with ambitions for affluence and power not unlike many others of us. And it has a control of all the machetes, so to speak. The political problem posed by such an agency is to limit the use of these machetes to repellent or defensive purposes. There is no known method of limitation except broad understanding of the distinction between defensive and coercive powers.

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(38) If my potatoes had a certain contagious blight and thus threatened other people's potatoes, society would be justified in removing the hazard. But justice would require that society duly compensate me for my loss. This is assuming the blight to be "an act of God" as distinguished from a negligent or a willful act on my part.



FROM DEFENSE TO COERCION IS SIMPLE

The same machete that can be used to estop an aggressor can be used as an instrument of aggression. The machete is indifferent to its function. How it is used is dependent solely on the judgment of the user. If all persons had delegated all of their machetes to me for the purpose of defending their lives and livelihoods, I would, with this monopoly of physical force, have to exert good judgment not to use the machetes to take life and livelihood. If I should happen not to have good judgment, and if coupled with this there were constant and insistent arguments from large sectors of the population that I actually could do good by using the machetes for other than defensive purposes, there is a likelihood that I would do so. I would, perhaps, use these defensive instruments coercively. I, the presumed defender against aggression, would myself initiate aggression against others.

How would I do this? Take the case of potato blight. It cannot be cured by the use of defensive force. But the defensive machetes could be put to coercive purposes: the forceable collection of the income of everyone, the proceeds of which would, theoretically, be used to employ persons to act creatively on finding a cure for potato blight. The injustice of such a practice, of course, is manifest. No person possesses any right to impose his judgment on others, even for doing his brand of good. Nor can a person properly delegate to me or to anyone else, even to government, rights which he himself does not possess.

PUBLIC HOUSING, AN EXAMPLE OF COERCION

Yet, this is the way government acts today in ever so many areas. As this is written, I am told of the advocacy of a public housing project



by two leading citizens of a mid-western community. They agree that there is no housing shortage. But "there is a slum condition." These gentlemen do not like this condition. Regardless of their dislike of it, however, neither of them would rob my safe or my granary (use coercive force) as a means of satisfying his instincts to "do good" to others. Such a thought would be repulsive to them. Nor would members of society forgive them for an act so lacking in respectability.

But something "respectable" is open to them. All they have to do is to agree between themselves (and get some others to join in) that the agency -- the policeman having control of all the weapons -- shall rob my safe or my granary. It is that simple. Nothing in the way of personal accomplishment on the part of the two mid-westerners is required. The most stupid of people are capable of indulging in such action. And the two gentlemen who don't like "the slum condition" will "do good" by the mere act of deciding that the policeman shall take my property without my consent<sup>(39)</sup> to serve their purpose! The act is legal and is "respectable" for the same reason it is legal -- it has popular approval.

This "respectable" act is more evil than outright, disrespectable robbery! The common thief, at least, would take some risks in approaching my safe or granary. He, like the highly acclaimed Robin Hood, would offer

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(39) The taking of one's property without consent is a good rule for determining when coercion is being applied. There are two observations to keep in mind, however. The first applies to the collection of taxes to finance society's agency limited to defensive functions, and for the reasons I have earlier outlined. The second has to do with eminent domain. The taking of property for the purpose of facilitating energy exchanges is not a violation of consent, providing there be due compensation.

some personal compensations for his "benefactions" at my expense.<sup>(40)</sup> And I, at least, would have a sporting chance of stopping him, a chance denied to me by the do-gooder's political procedure.

Let's analyze these "slum" do-gooders as typical of a cross section of many adult citizens. There are things they want to see done. There is help they want to render unto others. The idea of any such achievements with their own ingenuity or to aid their fellow-men with their own goods, appears too slow, too difficult, and often impossible. The institutions of voluntary cooperation and of personal charity are, for them, outmoded. For they are, in fact, "progressive." They wish to progress faster than their own mentalities or their own means permit. They want to realize their ideal of Utopia during their own lifetimes, and in using government they seemingly have found the means to achieve their ends.

The means is simple enough and, like the first dose of an opiate, is without any pain. They will resort to the coercive power, the governmental agency, and instruct it to take just a little, "a mere pittance," of everybody's property in the nation. Presto! The slum area is rebuilt. They can actually see it. It can be photographed, and contrasting pictures of what was and what is are put in the papers for all to witness. It is their "accomplishment." And they have the lovely feeling of having done a solid good.

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(40) Robin Hood, a figment of fiction, has always been and remains popular. His popularity derives from his robbing the rich to aid the poor. If the rich he robbed came by their fortunes fairly, Robin was a brigand of the first order. If, on the other hand, the rich were robbers themselves, then Robin was nothing but a show-off. If he had been intelligent and seriously interested in those he purported to help, he would have contributed his skills to the stopping of the robbers in the first place.

PARASITISM ENDORSED

What these do-gooders fail to see, perhaps because the damages of their mischief cannot be cartoonized or photographed, is the effect of 160,000,000 "mere pittances" taken from all the people without the people's consent. If their legal robbery were to be the only robbery of the year, it could be borne as any robust tree withstands a minor parasite. But, by their action, they endorse the principle of parasitism. They stand sponsor for every plunderbund in the nation, numberless extorted "pittances," even extortions that fail to qualify as "good" by their own inconsistent standards. The sponsor of public slum clearance cannot logically or consistently oppose rent control, farm subsidies, or RFC loans to a failing business, any more than a sponsor of TVA can logically or consistently oppose the proposed St. Lawrence Seaway. They are all members of the nation's legal despoilers by the mere act of engaging in only minor spoliation.(41)

THAT WHICH IS NOT SEEN

What these coercive do-gooders fail to see are the uses 160,000,000 of us would make of the fruits of our labors were these fruits not taken from us. Perhaps we would do a little charity in our own neighborhoods, anonymously, without any publicity or praise. Maybe we would create jobs for some persons that would permit them to repair their own "slum" conditions. It isn't unthinkable that we might use this income, were it not taken from us, to release ourselves from the confinements of subsistent

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(41) Aside from members of the Moscow apparatus who are bent on the utter destruction of capitalism, it is next to impossible to find an avowed Socialist who is in favor of all the socialistic items being practiced in America today. Our grand total of socialism results from different groups wanting only their own item of socialism. The man who argues for "free enterprise" except a protective tariff on his own commodity is a case in point. Socialism in America is the aggregate of a lot of minor socialistic advocacies.

living. As a consequence, we would have a better opportunity to develop our own potentialities and, incidentally, to become better generators of energy, thus increasing what others could obtain in exchange for their own energies. All of us -- 160,000,000 varieties of us, acting in accord with our 160,000,000 differing judgments, developing our lives as we interpret ourselves -- add up to quite a creative force. Conceivably, all of us might do better with the fruits of our respective labors than the two mid-western do-gooders can do with all of our labors. We would do better unless it is true that these two have a greater energy than the aggregate energy of all the rest of us. If their energy is only average, and I suspect it isn't more than that, then why should we try to put 159,999,998 "volts" through their circuit which will transmit only two "volts"? Deaden our energies in this manner, present us with obstacles of this kind, not only in housing but in all aspects of ideas and goods, and we will be deadened -- period!

These do-gooders, I submit, are the initiators of obstacles to creative energy and its exchange. They keep you and me from becoming our potential selves. They take away our sustenance which is but the extension of our lives. They, in this action, differ from Robin Hood only in that they are less direct. Intellectually there is no distinction whatsoever. Both actions add up to the same thing -- the taking of property (livelihood) without consent. Whether the action is given the unattractive label of "legal thievery" or the attractive label of "social welfare" is of small comfort to the persons from whom property or livelihood is taken.

These do-gooders, in this action, differ from Malenkov only in that they are less competent. Malenkov uses the coercive power more

efficiently to force others to conform to his will than they use the coercive power to force others to bend to their will. He needs only to utter a command; they have to organize a gang of voters. In principle, these do-gooders aim to substitute their will for yours and mine.<sup>(42)</sup> True, they are only penny-ante dictators. But they are so numerous! How fortunate all of us would be if we had only the obvious to cope with -- a Robin Hood for instance!

#### THE FATE OF COERCIONISTS

The next aspect of this subject about which some questions ought to be raised has to do with the persons who wield the coercive power, the persons in government who administer the coercive acts asked for by many citizens.

No analysis is intended of bureaucrats as persons.<sup>(43)</sup> Such a project would be as useless as it is impossible. Nor need we examine the bureaucrat who performs only the defensive function. It is natural for an individual to defend his life, his family, his country, his property. And, it would seem to follow that the individual to whom the defensive function has been delegated would act just as naturally. The neighborhood cop, performing only a defensive role, is as much of the neighborhood as the neighbors themselves.

The questions that need to be raised pertain to the effect that the wielding of coercion has on the wielder. Regarding these persons who coercively pattern our ways to their wills -- be such authority

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(42) My analysis of do-goodism by coercion has assumed no other motivation than to do good. This system, however, presupposes a harm to some equal to the "good" for others. Considering the number of persons who get a positive pleasure from harming others, isn't it likely that much of the do-goodism is born of an impulse to do harm? The whole "soak-the-rich" category of epithets answers the question affirmatively.

(43) Ludwig von Mises, Bureaucracy (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1946).

usurped or immorally granted -- how do they compare with their former selves, before they exercised any such authority? So much of our lives is in their hands! Are they made wiser by reason of the possession of this coercive authority? Are their moral standards improved? Or, possibly, is there some diminution in their wisdom and character? If so, the rest of us lose rather than gain either by letting them usurp coercive authority or by improperly granting them these powers.

First, I should like to re-emphasize the nature of coercion. What kind of an act is it? Obviously, it is not creative. One cannot coerce another to think, to imagine, to invent, to develop. Coercion is confined to restricting or destroying creative energy and its exchange. If I am strong enough, or have a monopoly of the weapons, I can decrease the use of your energies and inhibit the employment of your faculties by putting you in chains or placing you behind walls. I can get rid of your energies and faculties entirely by killing you. Or, in modern American terms, I can keep you from using your livelihood by taking it away from you. I can keep your livelihood low by forbidding you to accept what others are willing to pay in rent for the use of your house. I can reduce your income to zero by giving some of my coercive powers to goon squads who, in turn, will keep you from opening your plant, although others may want to work for you. I can reduce your income to zero by forbidding you to procure the raw materials that your finished products require. The instances are endless in variety. And, no matter which one is chosen, it will be found to be an act of restricting or destroying creative energy and the exchange thereof.

We need make no inquiry about the effect on those of us on whom coercion is practiced. That it is destructive of our energies, our



beings, our emergence as persons is self-evident. Let's think about what it does to the purveyors of coercion.

I cannot perform a creative act while I am destroying you. This is by way of saying that I cannot grow in my own stature while I am reducing your stature. Indeed, if I take your property I must spend my time in concocting schemes and arguments leading you to believe that I have done you a positive good. Otherwise, I shall have your enmity on my hands. Perhaps I shall take some of other people's property and give you part of it. That will show at least that I am equalitarian in my injustice. But, then, the enmities I face will be multiplied. Maybe I will increase the volume of the money so you and the others will have more dollars than you formerly had, a neat trick if I can get away with it. And if you begin to catch on by reason of prices' going up, I will pass a law making it illegal for prices to go up. If all of this results in slowing down production, which assuredly it will, then I shall pick out certain groups in the population and place the blame for my mess on them. But have no worry -- for then I'll save you and all the other people by taking over the whole productive process!

Look who is in charge of everything! A person who has degenerated from the decent citizen he once was to that point of ignorance where he believes all of us would be improved were we to be cast in his image. He hasn't a Napoleonic complex, rather he has come into possession of a Messianic complex. In simple fact, he has "gone off the beam."

Now, admittedly, this extreme does not take place in all coercionists. This extreme happens only to a few of them. However, the reason it happens to only a few is because of the moderation most people use in



practicing coercion. Still, any person is destroyed to the extent he becomes a coercive ruler. One not only cannot work toward his own potential while he is restricting the potential of others, he works away from his potential. Degeneracy sets in as acts generating degeneracy are practiced. A slave owner, to the extent he practices slave mastery, brings himself to as low a status as the slave he masters. The man who holds me on my back is as permanently fastened on top of me as I am fastened under him. Both of us are useless. It is that simple.<sup>(44)</sup>

#### COERCIONIST "LEADERSHIP"

What is the basis of this urge to get on top of others, to have others "knuckle down" to one's will? Why is this type of "superiority" so widely sought?

Quite likely it derives from egotism and covetousness -- in short, from ignorance. The many observe the few getting ahead of them. The few who attain any genuine superiority do so by the extension of their own personalities, by the realization of self. Over the long period, it is always such persons who are looked up to for the reason that they are the ones primarily responsible for progress; indeed, the general welfare depends on them. Thus, they are held in high esteem. There are many who envy those to whom this deserved tribute is paid. They, too, would like to feel needed, and they envy the importance of those who are needed. Failing to understand the distinction between getting on top by the development of self and getting relatively on top by holding others down,

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(44) For an excellent spelling-out of this idea, see My Freedom Depends On Yours by Dean Russell (Irvington-on-Hudson, N.Y.: Foundation for Economic Education, 1953).

they take the latter course. They reject achievement and adopt coercion as a means of getting on top. Nothing is required of them except the organization and application of brute force. It is as though a baboon had Goethe on his back and were exulting in his superiority -- egotism gone simian!

Those of us then who vote for coercion, who ask that the governmental agency become responsible for our welfare, not merely destroy our own potentials, our own energies, and the energies of millions of others who are suppliers to the kinetic conduit and on whom our existence and fortunes depend, but we destroy the potentials and the energies of the ones to whom we give this coercive power. The process lessens the aggregate potential energy and destroys kinetic activity on a wholesale basis.

#### LEARNING BY ROTE NO GOOD

One question that assuredly will be raised at this point will be: What are these instances, specifically, of destructive coercion? Can they not be named, and then memorized, as a means of avoidance?

There are several hundred thousand words in Webster's unabridged dictionary. If one will reflect on the impossible project of memorizing the infinite variety of combinations into which all of these words can be arranged, one will have the answer as to whether acts of coercion can be identified by memory. These acts cannot be learned by rote. There is no limit to their possible variations.

Furthermore, it is quite useless to engage in negative explanations -- showing why a particular act of coercion is wrong. Prove only that it is wrong to steal potatoes, and one is left with the endless task of proving that it is wrong to steal every other item of property.

Multiply this by the number of ways that life and property can be taken without consent, and one can appreciate the hopelessness of negation as a technique of comprehending and of doing away with coercion.

The technique of negation could be used to prove, for instance, that the world is not square. Then there would still remain the endless task of proving that it is not any one of thousands of other shapes. But prove that the world is round, and there the argument about the shape of the earth is ended.

And, so it is with this problem. Proving that the taking of life and property is wrong is not enough. Required, also, is convincing affirmation of the moral principle on which it rests: The highest purpose of each individual's existence, regardless of race, creed, or color, is the fullest possible realization of that existence -- that is, striving to reach the perfection with which one is endowed.

With this premise once established, one cannot accept or justify any act of coercion, no matter how cleverly contrived or for whatever purpose. I cannot, for example, agree that you have a right to your life and the fruits of your labor and then take some of you and of yours without your consent -- to help me or others -- without standing in bold contradiction of my own premise. If I do not accept this premise of life and its realizable fullness as valid for others as for myself, I must logically accept the only alternative premise: Might makes right. All coercionists, knowingly or unknowingly, are supporters of the might-makes-right theory. This fact requires no more proof than its declaration.

The object of any serious person who would avoid becoming the victim of one conflicting plausibility after another, who frowns on

living a life of contradictions, should be to find an acceptable premise to be used constantly as a point of reference. All proposals, then, whether one's own or someone else's, can be referred to the premise and answers quickly obtained. Is the proposal consistent or inconsistent with the premise? If the premise is right, all proposals become right or wrong according to their consistency or inconsistency with the premise.

#### MEANS AND ENDS

Coercion, however, will rarely be totally rejected by persons who retain the belief that, in some instances, it is the sole means to ends they think good. There are many who fail to see how activities they believe to be useful could be carried on in any manner other than by force. Even though they may believe that the compelling of one to abide by another's judgment is evil, they prefer the practice of some evil to the abandonment of what they think are worthy objects. They subscribe to and live by the vicious philosophy that the end justifies the means. It isn't conceivable that evil means can achieve good ends. Either the means they employ are not, in fact, evil, or the ends they have in view are not, in fact, good! Something has to be wrong with the evil-means, good-ends equation.<sup>(45)</sup>

"It is right for poor Joe and his family to pay lower rent. True, it is wrong to force Mr. Houseman to take less for his apartment than others are willing to pay. But, on balance, Joe's right overpowers Mr. Houseman's wrong. Thus, rent control is right!"

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(45) "Cause and effect, means and ends, seed and fruit, cannot be severed; for the effect already blooms in the cause, the end preexists in the means, the fruit in the seed." Ralph Waldo Emerson, The Complete Essays and Other Writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson (New York, N.Y.: The Modern Library, 1940) p. 176.

That is an example of a supposed good end justifying the use of an acknowledged evil means. Important, also, is the fact that the person who reasons in this manner believes himself to be right. He believes himself to be just as right as the person who rejects evil means for any and all purposes. The distinction between the two is in the value they place on evil and good. There are those whose aversion to evil is so pronounced -- and whose belief in its inefficacy is so confirmed -- that no object, however desirable, can move them. These are not the persons under discussion.

END PRE-EXISTS IN MEANS

The persons under discussion are those who believe that a good object can be attained by an evil means; that the good object would otherwise go unattained. There are two rational approaches to such persons:

1. Demonstrate that evil can never beget good; that whatever evil begets is not good, even by definition; that evil is the impairment of one's own development or that of others; that coercion -- compelling others to respond to one's own will -- is an impairment of one's self and of others; that any product of evil means is an evil product, for the very simple reason that the end pre-exists in the means.<sup>(46)</sup>

2. Demonstrate that all proper ends can be accomplished with-

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(46) An elaboration of the idea that there is no such thing as short-range evils adding up to a long-range good, and vice versa, is to be found in an article of mine entitled "Let's Be Practical" which appears in Reflections on Faith and Freedom (Los Angeles, Calif.: Spiritual Mobilization, 1952).

out any coercion -- the use of any initiated force --  
whatsoever.

The first point would appear to be self-evident to any person who elects to think on the subject. And it ought to suffice as a guide to action without any discussion of the second point. But, in most instances, it does not suffice.

IF THERE WERE NO COERCION AT ALL

The questions posed by the second point are: What would things be like if the governmental agency in all its forms -- federal, state, and local -- should confine itself to the securing of the rights to life and property of all citizens equally? Writing the code of DONT'S appertaining thereto, adjudicating and administering them, and keeping the records incidental thereto? Employing no force beyond repellent force? Never using an iota of initiated force? One hundred per cent free of coercion? All the rest being left to citizens in voluntary effort and to charity? What would happen?

True, there wouldn't be any pyramids or their equivalent. There wouldn't be a Tennessee Valley Authority or any municipally owned utilities, even municipal sewer systems or water works. There wouldn't be any public golf courses. There wouldn't be any Marshall Plan or Point Four Program. There wouldn't be any rent control or other wage and price controls. There wouldn't be any public post office. There wouldn't be any publicly subsidized businesses. Indeed, there are many thousands of millions of dollars that would not be spent each year through public agencies.

By the same token, however, the citizens would have these same many thousands of millions of dollars to use annually in accord with the



dictates of their own judgments. What would they do with all these resources were they not de-financed by the public agencies?

FAITH IN FREE MEN

Of one thing I am certain: There would be more progress than there is now. In America, where the agency has been limited more than in any other country, the progress has been the greatest. Where the obstacles to creative energy and its exchange have been the least, the release of energy has been the most.

Another thing we know: These unobstacled Americans would provide themselves with power and light. There is proof of this. Other countries, all more socialistic -- that is, more coercive -- than America, failed in approaching our production before we permitted any public agency to get its foot in our electrical energy door. Power and light would, without question, be cheaper under private ownership than it is in the subsidized Tennessee Valley.<sup>(47)</sup> In addition, all the rest of the citizens of our country would have their own positions improved by not being compelled to finance the deficits of TVA and other socialized electrical projects.

Strange as it may seem to most folks, there would be sewer systems and water works if these necessities were left exclusively to private ownership. Hundreds of communities in the United States, even today, have sewer and water services privately supplied. There is no valid reason why this should not be unanimous.

And golf courses? By what stretch of the socialistic imagination

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(47) It is difficult to imagine how low all prices would be relative to wages and salaries if the activities of government included no coercion. Not only would there be the deductions of the costs of coercive actions, but there would be the release of all energy which coercion now restrains. Prices of goods, relative to wages and salaries, would trend downward with the advance of technology and efficiency. And, if government effectively defended against fraud in money, there would be the absence of inflation-caused price rises.



should the wealthy Mr. Heminway or the widow Doakes, neither of whom has any interest in golf, be made to pay for a sport out of which I happen to derive a pleasure? There is some evidence -- thousands of cases -- that golf can do with voluntary arrangements.

Aid to foreign countries? Following the bleak days of our Civil War, it was not the governments of European countries that made loans to our industries and transportation systems. These loans came mostly from British, Dutch, and other investors -- private investors. Were our own federal government not pre-empting international lending, American capitalists (savers large and small) would lend the required capital to foreign countries, and the loans would be made to prospectively successful enterprises instead of to socialistic governments that use the funds primarily to maintain themselves in power.

How would prices be controlled? By the market, the thoroughly honest system, the only method known to man for determining the value of one's services or goods. Prices would be where all the people placed them with their purchases or lack of purchases, not where some coercionist expediently would like to have them, not as a political cover-up for the dilution of the money supply.

The mails too would be distributed -- more efficiently and at a lower cost. For example, milk is more perishable than a cashier's check, a personal letter, or a catalogue. Yet, under private auspices, milk is delivered every day to millions of people -- honestly, punctually, efficiently.

Health? Good health is a problem in the creative area. Here as in other problems, the agency of government has only the defensive function to perform, that is, the restraining and penalizing of all

practices which would endanger life. The police force, for example, shouldn't permit the selling of polluted water, the running of unsanitary restaurants, the existence of cesspools that would spread disease, or misrepresentation of medicines.

BUT WHAT ABOUT COERCION IN EDUCATION?

The above, it is obvious, are relatively simple matters, requiring little thought to realize how we could achieve good ends by men in voluntary action. However, it is as useless as it is impossible to try to cover the field. But no student of this subject can stop here. The issue might as well be faced. What about education? No single object rates higher in approval, and no end relies more on coercive means than "free" education. Public education is always the final test tossed at anyone who takes a thoroughly anticoercionist position. Answer this, they say, or the theory of voluntary action does not apply in really difficult areas. With the agencies of government restricted to securing rights to life and property, would not all progress cease in education?

Coercion is employed in education in three ways: The agency compels attendance; the agency dictates curricula; the agency collects expenses for education by the use of force. The absence of individual choice as to attendance, studies, and payment is implicit in the public or "free" educational system.

Originally, there wasn't much question raised as to whether coercion in education would have a good or bad effect. The point seems to have been glossed over. Education, somehow, had to be insured or guaranteed. A country having a people's government could not take the risk of having ignorant voters. If citizens were left to their own resources, they might let their children go uneducated. Surely, this was a department of life

where only coercion could remove such dangers. So went the argument, and so it still goes. And the argument has become so indelibly imprinted on the minds of Americans that, today, education without coercion is viewed as a figment of fancy -- an impossibility.

But here this point-blank question is raised: Can coercion produce any education at all? Can a machete get rid of ignorance?

If coercion is evil -- and if the end pre-exists in the means -- then it follows that compulsory education is evil. Or if education is good, then it cannot possibly be the product of coercion. These conclusions must be correct, or one or both of the assumptions must be proved to be wrong. I believe that the assumptions and the conclusions are correct. And I believe that education is good.

If Pierre Samuel du Pont de Nemours, Thomas Jefferson, and Horace Mann -- all of whom were leading sponsors of public education because they sincerely believed that representative government could not function without an intelligent electorate -- could see where their "educated electorates" have taken this country, might they not want to re-examine their idea for guaranteed enlightenment? For surely, these men, devotees of limited police force, would be shocked were they to observe the socialism of present-day America.

#### COERCION BEGETS COERCION

Hindsight is more illuminating than foresight. Indeed, is not most foresight based on hindsight? But isn't it now obvious that any system of education which had coercion as its essential characteristic might well result in coercive thinking? How a child, during the formative years of life, could spend a large portion of his waking hours in a socialistic institution and not emerge with socialistic ideas, defies the

imagination. If I were called upon to name the one single behavior more responsible than any other for socialism in America, I would, in truth, be forced to name the coercive elements in our educational system. All the furor now going on against our schools, if carefully diagnosed, would be found to stem from this one evil. The fact that false reasons are assigned -- teachers being blamed, organization considered imperfect, taxpayers not paying "sufficient" salaries for instruction, or whatever -- is due only to casual analysis. The cause lies with the chief identifiable evil -- coercion.

This is not to say that a great amount of good education is not going on in public schools in these United States. This is not to assert that all teachers who are employed by the public school system -- a socialistic institution -- are Socialists. Many of the most admirable people in America today, as measured in terms of my philosophy, are to be found among our public school teachers. This, however, is my point. The good work being done in education is in spite of, not because of, coercion. This is the single point in the educational argument for which I wish to contend.

#### IF COERCION WERE REMOVED

Now, let us imagine that all the coercive aspects of education are removed -- the forced attendance, the dictated curricula, the compulsory collection to meet the expenses thereof. Let us imagine that the entire educational endeavor is left exclusively to self-determination -- as self-determining as religion in America now is.

What would happen?

I don't know! Some will say that this is a retreat from my argument. On the contrary, it is in support of my argument.

I can predict what will happen to you if you are compelled to do as I say. I can predict that you will not function fully in a creative sense if I or others can succeed in coercing you, in placing obstacles in your way. But I cannot know what you will do creatively if released from obstacles. Indeed, you cannot make such predictions yourself. What new idea will you have tomorrow? What invention? What will you do if a new necessity, an unexpected responsibility, presents itself? I do not know.

Confining the discussion to education, assume that you are no longer compelled to send Johnnie to school. No public committee prescribes what Johnnie shall study. No tax collector takes a penny of your income for schooling.

Is Johnnie in any less need of learning than before? Are other persons -- teachers, for instance -- any less wise or less available for counsel and employment? Is there less money for educational purposes? Would you spend your tax refunds on cigarettes or whiskey or vacations rather than on Johnnie's education? If so, you value Johnnie's education less than you value your own consumption of cigarettes and whiskey or the taking of vacations. In this case you make a choice -- a choice that you obviously think to be the better alternative. Else you would not do it because only a moron would claim that he had decided to choose what he values least when he could choose what he values most. Shall we say I think your judgment is bad if you decide to favor whiskey over education? Do you wish me to force you to behave my way? Or someone else's way? You can't possibly say that you think your choice is the best and accept, at the same time, my verdict that it is the worst. That is utter nonsense. Coercion, if applied to you, can only contradict your judgments. If

applied to others, it can only contradict their judgments. Who possibly can be the appropriate coercionist, they or you? Or a political committee which cannot be better than the lowest common denominator of they and you?<sup>(48)</sup>

#### RELIGION AND EDUCATION

Why should not education be just as self-determining as religion? Is education more important than religion? Americans condemn Russians, for instance, more for being ungodly than for not knowing how to make anything but vodka and caviar that can compete in international trade.<sup>(49)</sup> If we frown at Communists for their ungodliness, how can we support ungodliness by favoring coercion in our own country? Coercion is but man trying to cast others in his own image, "...no other gods before Me."

Are high moral standards and improving attitudes toward one's life and toward the lives of others -- prime objects of religion -- of less value than knowing how to read or to write or to add two and two? Indeed, are not education and religion intimately personal matters, one as much as the other? Is the education of another any more of my business than the religion of another? And if I am concerned, should I seek to attend to my own interest by placing obstacles in the way of others, that is, by acting coercively toward others?

In most countries, and certainly in America, the idea of compulsory attendance at churches, or the dictation of certain subjects clergy-men must speak about, or the expenses of religious institutions forcibly

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(48) For a discussion of committees, men acting in council, see my On That Day Began Lies (Irvington-on-Hudson, N.Y.: Foundation for Economic Education, 1949).

(49) Their MIG 15's, for example, which we hear are relatively efficient killers, are not in international trade. They have not offered as much as a button in such competition.



collected by the tax man would be repulsive in the extreme. Why do people believe in coercion for education and self-determination for religion? Logically, there appears to be no basis for the distinction. Tradition, custom -- living with a mistake so long that reason is rarely brought to bear -- may be the explanation.<sup>(50)</sup>

THE FOOL IS ALWAYS SOMEONE ELSE

Having for long been a disbeliever in coercion in any and all forms, I make it a point to ask individuals in various occupational levels if they would let their children go uneducated were all coercion to be removed. The answer is always the same, no matter to whom the question is addressed. In effect it is: "Do you think I am a fool? I would no more think of letting my children go without any education than I would let them go without shoes and stockings. But some forms of compulsion are necessary, for there are many persons who do not have the same concern for their children as I have." And there you have it! Coercion is always for the other fellow. But try to find this other fellow! This awful other fellow -- the one who has no interest in self or in his offspring -- exists more as the product of the imaginations of coerced persons than as the product of unfettered humanity. If every parent in this country were to consider coercion in education as applying

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(50) Another explanation may be the belief that parents simply would not adequately finance the education of their children. In one city (Pittsburgh, Pa.) where some research has been done, it is estimated that voluntary contributions to all churches exceed \$15,000,000 annually. This is three-fourths of the annual, compulsory collection for all public schools! Right or wrong, most people think that education in temporal matters is more important than instruction in spiritual matters. There is no question whatever about adequate voluntary support of education were there no compulsory financing.



only to himself and could divorce from his thinking the "incompetency" of others, there would be no coercion whatever in American education. I challenge any reader of this monograph, regardless of wealth status, honestly to try this exercise and arrive at any other conclusion.

#### CHILD-PARENT RELATIONSHIP

A child, from the time he is born until he reaches adulthood, is but the extension of the parent's responsibility. The child's education, no more than his religion or his morals or his manners or his sustenance, can properly be turned out to pasture. There can be no more proper shifting to others the primary responsibility for the child's education than there can be a proper shifting of responsibilities for the parent's virtues. There are some things that properly remain for one's own attentions, no matter how enticingly and powerfully specialization and division of labor may beckon one. And, the education of one's children is a case in point.

This does not mean that the parent should not have help -- a lot of specialized help -- with the educational responsibility. It does mean that the parent cannot be relieved of the educational responsibility without injury to himself, that is, without injury to his own person and to the child who is but the extension of his personal responsibility.

#### EDUCATION A LIFE-LONG PROCESS

According to the premise on which this thesis is based, man's highest purpose in life is the unfolding of his own personality, the realization, as nearly as possible, of his potential, his emergence. Such achievement presupposes that the educational process will go on through all of adulthood, as well as through childhood. Indeed, school for the

child, if it is to have any meaning, is but the preparation for a dynamic, continuing process of education. The test of whether any primary and secondary educational system is meeting the requirements of education is: Does it set the stage for adult learning?

How does the application of coercion bear on this question? It tends to relieve parents of educational responsibilities and, thus, to dismantle any educational stage they have set up for themselves. Coercion says, in effect, to the parent: "Forget about the education of your child. We, the government, will compel the child to go to school regardless of how you think on the matter. Do not fret unduly about what the child shall study. We, the agency of compulsion, have that all attended to. And don't worry about the financing of education. We, the instrument of authority, will take the fruits of your labor to pay our expenses. You, the parent, are to be relieved of any choice as to that."

These coercive devices lead to two grave educational errors. First, the parent is robbed of the educational stimulus that would be his were he to be responsible for the education of his child. Joe Doakes would be educationally more fit if he had to understand what Johnnie is supposed to learn. He would have to "keep his hand in."

Second, these coercive devices falsely earmark the educational period. They say, ever so compellingly, that the period of education is the period to which coercion applies. The ceremonies of "graduation" -- diplomas and licenses -- if not derivatives of these devices, are consistent with them. This coercive system is resulting in young folks coming out of school thinking of themselves as educated and thinking of the beginning of earning as the end of learning. If any devotee of coercion will concede

that learning ought to be through all of life, he should, to be consistent, insist on coercive devices for adults as well as for children -- for the octogenarian as well as for the teen-ager. For what profit is there in a system which, were it to meet its claims of giving a start to education, puts an end to learning just at the time when the spirit of inquiry should begin its most meaningful growth?<sup>(51)</sup>

#### MORE AND BETTER EDUCATION

I stated above that I am without knowledge as to what would happen were there to be no more coercion at all in education. That isn't quite accurate. For instance, I know that creative energies would be released; that latent potential energies would turn to kinetic activities. Creative thought on education would manifest itself in millions of existences. Such genius as we potentially and compositely possess would assert itself and take the place of present deadening restraints. I know, without any qualification whatsoever, that there would be more education and better education. And I am confident that the costs would be less. There wouldn't be any coercive items for which to pay. Nor would there be the financial irresponsibility that characterizes those who spend other people's money.

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(51) "The normal human brain always contains a greater store of neuroblasts than can possibly develop into neurons during the span of life, and the potentialities of the human cortex are never fully realized. There is a surplus and depending upon physical factors, education, environment and conscious effort, more or less of the initial store of neuroblasts will develop into mature, functioning neurons. The development of the more plastic and newer tissue of the brain depends to a large extent upon the conscious efforts made by the individual. There is every reason to assume that development of cortical functions is promoted by mental activity and that continued mental activity is an important factor in the retention of cortical plasticity into late life. Goethe...[and others] are among the numerous examples of men whose creative mental activities extended into the years associated with physical decline....There also seem sufficient grounds for the assumption that habitual disuse of these highest centers results in atrophy or at least brings about a certain mental decline...." Renee von Eulenburg-Wiener, op. cit., p. 310.

Not only is this faith in uninhibited, creative human energy rationally justified, but also there is evidence aplenty to confirm it. In other words, this faith is supported both theoretically and pragmatically. Except for the pathological cases of those who are temperamentally slaves -- those who seek a shepherd and a sheep dog, those who are revolted by the thought of self-reliance, those who are ideologically attuned to authoritarianism -- there does not exist a single activity now being conducted by man in voluntary action that could, in most people's opinions, be improved were it to be owned or controlled by agencies using coercion. But put any one of these activities, now voluntarily conducted, under state control, leave it there for a few years, and general opinion would then conclude that it could not be conducted voluntarily.

Twenty-five years from now, after the electric power industry has been nationalized for a decade -- an assured event if past trends maintain -- there will be only a few people in America who will favor a return to private ownership and operation. The vast majority will not understand how that activity could be without coercion and still serve the people.

It is this same remoteness that accounts for much of the shortcoming in faith as to educational productiveness were the educational system relieved of restraints and compulsions. The restraints, be it remembered, are in the form of taxes -- the taking away of the wherewithal to finance one's own educational plan. The compulsions are in the form of forced attendance and dictated curricula.

#### AIDS TO A RESTORATION OF FAITH

Several aids to the restoration of faith in freedom for education are:

1. Observe activities not yet socialized, that is, not yet conducted by coercion. They are doing all right by man in voluntary action. The less the socialization of activities in any country, the better off are the people in that country.
2. What is there which we know how to do, and for which there is an effective demand, which remains undone in America? Not a thing except what coercion restricts! There are many thousands of individuals, expert in educational techniques, that have the know-how.  
  
Effective demand? Can anyone argue with reason that there can be education of those who do not want it? The answer to that question is simply the answer to the question, "What can anyone force me to learn?" If we want education -- and we cannot have it if we do not want it -- we will have education. Coercion -- applying force -- is antagonistic to the extremely sensitive spirit of inquiry, the will to learn. Remove all coercion, and we remove education's chief initiated obstacles.
3. While one cannot know of the brilliant steps that would be taken by millions of education-conscious parents were they and not the state to have the educational responsibility, one can imagine the great variety of cooperative and private enterprises that would emerge. There would be thousands of private schools, large and small, not unlike some of the ones we now have. There would be tutoring arrangements of a

variety and ingenuity impossible to foresee. No doubt there would be corporate and charitably financed institutions of chain store dimensions, dispensing reading, writing, and arithmetic at bargain prices. There would be competition, which is cooperation's most useful tool.<sup>(52)</sup> There would be a parent alertness as to what the market would have to offer. There would be parental responsibility for their children's and their own educational growth. Socialism would not be taught except, possibly, to the children of the well-to-do who could afford the luxury of such foolishness. The market, by its nature, would rule out most of the frills. Competition would dictate that.

4. Reflect back to 1900. Suppose someone had been able to conjure up a picture of a 1954 automobile and all of its wonderful performances. And suppose you had been asked how it could have been produced at that time. You could not even have grasped such a miracle, let alone have described how it could have been made. Yet, it has been produced, and without coercion. Indeed, what would the 1954 car be like if the state had compelled attendance at research laboratories, dictated the subjects to be studied, and forcibly collected the revenues for same? Would there be any car at all? And, if so, would anyone have the money left to buy one? Millions of unobstacled man-hours

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(52) Without competition among bakers, for instance, I have no basis for deciding on the baker with whom I will exchange, cooperate.



of ever-increasing skills and thinking have made the 1954 car possible. And so it would be with education in a free society. We cannot foretell what would happen were the mind of man applied to this activity, were as much creative, noncoercive thought put to education as has been put to motor cars. As it is, hardly a person has given more than cursory thought as to how to educate without the agency of compulsion. No wonder! We cannot imagine what we have not studied, reflected on, thought about. Remove all initiated obstacles and the kinetic activity of man approaches his potential energy. Coercion as a means to the educational end is but a modern superstition. It is a form of witch doctoring, differing only in the garb that is worn. It is a form of idol worship, obeisance to a god-man with a whip.

5. The children of the poor? They got food before we practiced governmental alms, and clothing -- more than ever known of before. But education isn't as important as food? Education is only as important as life itself. Furthermore, remove the bill we are paying for coercive activities, and poor parents will not be as poor. And literally millions of Americans would like nothing better than to practice charity -- than to give an education to those who might be in such unfortunate circumstances that they could give no formal schooling to their children. The acceptance of charity is degrading? That is an unforgivable socialistic cliché. It is precisely the same thing as saying that the voluntary giving of one's goods to another

is degrading. For how can the giving be a brotherly act and the receiving be degrading? Perhaps charity isn't as agreeable to the recipient as living off the fruits of his own labors. But it ought to be more agreeable than living off the livelihood of others taken without their consent. This dispute is Judeo-Christian charity versus legal thievery. I prefer charity. (53)

I have belabored the educational question primarily to demonstrate that there is no valid case for coercion in the one instance in which coercion has its greatest number of devotees. If coercion has no rational basis in education, it has no basis for use in any creative activity. The fact that we cannot imagine how we could do without coercion in education or in any other activity is to be laid to the weakness of our imaginations and the paucity of our thoughts, not to the inefficacy of man in unrestrained, creative action.

#### OPPOSING COERCION IN EDUCATION

Now as sure as the sun will rise, some "patriot" will say that I am opposed to the education of children because I am opposed to coercion in education -- to governmental control over the minds of children. Such a deduction could come from confused thinking only. Am I to be accused of

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(53) The one who believes in government limited to defensive functions rejects, of course, all thought of police grants-in-aid as a means of satisfying his compassion for others. His reliance is on Judeo-Christian charity, a voluntary response that needs a far better understanding than it now has. See Charity: Biblical and Political by Russell J. Clinchy (Irvington-on-Hudson, N.Y.: Foundation for Economic Education, 1951).

being opposed to religion because I am opposed to government control over our ministers and churches? Am I to be accused of being opposed to eating food because I am opposed to governmentally owned and operated grocery stores and restaurants? In all three instances, it seems to me that the only fair accusation is that I have faith in freedom, that is, faith in the release of the human spirit. And for that, I apologize to no one.

In my view -- regardless of how devoutly we may desire a pyramid, an auditorium, prosperity for a person or a group, or any other object requiring creative activity -- what we cannot accomplish without coercion should be left undone. That we would have more than we now have is certain. That our material, intellectual, and spiritual possessions would be different is certain. That released, creative human energy is more productive than restrained human energy is also certain.

#### CONCLUSION

It may seem strange to many persons that the free-market, voluntary-society, limited-government philosophy has the reputation of being harsh and severe, of the "dog-eat-dog," "back-to-the-jungle" type, while the socialistic, social-leveling-by-coercion philosophy has the reputation of being kind, considerate, charitable, liberal, humanitarian. And, indeed, this is strange for the reputations should, in all truth, be reversed.

There are numerous reasons for these erroneous reputations, and it is important that the reasons be known. If there is not a better understanding of these philosophies and the reasons for the antagonisms they evoke than now exists, most people will continue to exert themselves in opposition to the interests of themselves and others.

The first reason that comes to mind has to do with motivations. While fresh air and good drinking water are essential to health, one will

not find active protagonists for either of these among a country people where fresh air and good water are in abundant supply. These essentials are taken for granted. Their unquestioned availability no more activates articulate supporters than do the life necessities of breathing and sleeping. They fall in that vast category of phenomena that just "comes naturally."

#### THE FREE MARKET AND PROTAGONISTS

Creative energy and its exchange belong to natural phenomena. They are necessities in the sense that a necessity is something one has to have or else he dies. And, as with fresh air, water, breathing, sleeping, they do not tend naturally to create protagonists. We don't observe speakers and writers taking time out to support Old Sol, yet without the sun all of us would perish. Similarly, Mrs. Jones does not wax eloquent over the swapping of the shawl she has made for the goose that Mrs. Smith has raised. The Jones-Smith free market is as natural as life itself. The Jones-Smith free market is, indeed, the living of life. But the living of life does not tend to inspire vocal advocates. It is a taken-for-granted affair. The taken-for-granted assumption is that life has a higher Grantor than the likes of us.

#### SOCIALISM AND PROTAGONISTS

Now, consider the motivations on the other side of this controversy. If I were going to offer people substitutes for fresh air, water, the sun, I would have to become adept at conjury and devise some pretty sharp talk to put over my schemes.

Reflect on all of the persons who are covetous, on all who derive a satisfaction in pulling others down to their own level, on all who are

gullible, on all who would attain affluence regardless of method, on all who would have others behave like themselves, on all whose compassion for others is beyond self-satisfaction and who would, if they could, reapportion the possessions of individuals to fit their own concepts of justice. These folks, added together, make quite a multitude. There is but one means to their "worthy" ends: Gain power over others, not repellent or defensive power for themselves, but the power to initiate coercive force over those whose lives they would redesign, the power to direct the number of hours Mrs. Jones shall work making shawls, the power to direct Mrs. Smith to "plow under" a specified percentage of her geese, the power to direct the conditions of exchange, in short, the power to direct the living of life. It takes clever talk to sell these schemes. Such talk has been going on throughout recorded history, and much of it has succeeded: coin-clipping, the Divine Right of Kings, monetizing debt, rent control, "social security," and thousands of other instances of inhibited energy and thwarted exchange. (54)

The socialistic, government-as-ruler philosophy has over the years developed a line of distinguished arguers, facile talkers, adept protagonists. If my aim were to gain power over you, I would first try to convince you of the advantages that would accrue to you. Success would be possible if I could persuade you that my overlordship would do you good; that to take from others and give to you, or to take from you and give to others -- there is no difference -- would qualify as kind, considerate, liberal, charitable, humanitarian. Success would be assured if I could wean you away from your natural ways of acting creatively and exchanging. I would

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(54) See my Two Kinds of Exchange (Irvington-on-Hudson, N.Y.: Foundation for Economic Education, 1953).

associate these natural ways of yours with greed, selfishness, tooth-and-claw behavior, jungle tactics; in short, I would drown these natural ways in a sea of derogatory epithets.

On the socialistic side of the controversy are the motivations for "selling." And, the "selling" task is made easier by the simplicity of authoritarian "welfare." It is, divested of legal trappings and sleight-of-hand frills as employed in monetizing debt, as simple as the Robin Hood technique. Indeed, it is the same thing.

#### THERE IS NO FREE-MARKET BLUEPRINT

On the free-market or creative-energy-and-its-exchange side of the controversy is the lack of natural motivations that develop protagonists. In addition, there is the difficulty -- the impossibility -- of explaining phenomena that defy complete diagnosis. The free market is not a system in the sense that it can be blueprinted. It is energy and energy exchanges. The workings of human energy are so complex and diverse that man, at his intellectual best, stands in awe of its wonders. He can do little more than to make observations of certain aspects of its workings, draw deductions therefrom, and live in harmony with the truth as he discovers it. This side of the controversy tends to motivate research and discovery in men, not salesmanship. The selling that can be done is the revealing of that which has been discovered. This is vastly different from peddling a scheme, something that can be simply blueprinted, put in a package, so to speak. Indeed, the free market can be "sold" only in the sense that some persons can induce other persons to go in search of truth themselves.

Let us, however, not accept socialism as humanitarian and the free market as harsh on the say-so of those who have social packages to sell.



Admittedly, energy and energy exchanges cannot be completely described. But one can catch glimpses of their workings, at least enough to develop a healthy skepticism toward the human plans for planning human beings.

THE FREE MARKET IS HUMANITARIAN

Recently, I was conducted through a paper mill. I was shown a new and huge machine that cost \$2,500,000. Numberless types of human energy and energy exchanges, extending into the infinite past, went into its making, as did the type of energy required to accumulate that much capital.

At the beginning of the machine was a series of large pipes. These delivered, with considerable force, a whitish liquid that contacted a rapidly moving copper screen. The screen wended its way through and around dryers, ironers, and other devices, emerging at the end as a wide sheet of white Kleenex.

"What is that liquid?" asked I.

"That's nothing but highly gyrated water containing wood pulp.

As it makes contact with the copper screen, the water goes through, but the pulp is evenly distributed, continuing on for ironing, drying, and other processing, and emerges as the finished product."

"What kind of wood do you use for the pulp?"

"Spruce."

"One of these days you folks will run out of spruce. Then what will you use?"

"We are planting spruce faster than we are harvesting it."

"How long does it take a seedling, after planting, before it is ready for harvesting?"

"Eighty years here in the north country."

"Where do you get the seedlings?"

"We have several large nurseries. It takes about three years from the time the seed is planted until the seedling is ready for transplanting."

At this point, I visualized a man who had the skills for and had a primary interest in this type of husbandry. In this, his chosen field, he would, in a lifetime, start hundreds of thousands of spruce trees. I thought of this man's energy going into the planting and the nurturing; of that energy stored for 80 years in a forest while nature expanded it; of its flowing through the pulp stage and, finally, of its going through the machine and coming out as Kleenex. The human energy of this nurseryman, among literally millions of others over the whole period of conscious man, is manifesting itself as Kleenex!

I thought to myself, "What does this man's energy in the form of Kleenex accomplish?" Among other things, it is an aid to sanitation. Then, an historical fact came to mind: In England, less than 300 years ago, a mother had to bring 20 children into the world in order to assure that two of them would reach adulthood. The decrease in infant mortality has been due to improvements in sanitary methods to a large extent, products of creative energy and its exchange (the Industrial Revolution). Anything, then, that contributes to sanitation and thus to the extension of human beings is humanitarian, if the term has any meaning at all. This product also relieves human beings from menial laundering, releasing them for higher callings. That's humanitarian too! All of this time, I was thinking of the nurseryman's creative energy flowing, growing, and taking new forms in the forest, flowing through factories and over highways and

railroads and in the air, freely attracting to it numberless other forms of human energy, flowing on as an aid to millions of people. A man attending to his own interests, developing those potentialities peculiarly his own! And, at the same time, contributing to the welfare of his fellow-men!

#### SOCIALISM IS JUNGLE LAW

Very interesting, indeed! Why not, though, test this energy concept in a socialistic equation and see what happens? So I imagined France as having a prohibitive tariff against Kleenex. Embargoes, import quotas, and tariffs are schemes of man to help some while restraining exchange on the part of others -- as socialistic as TVA or socialized medicine. What would be the effect of a French tariff against Kleenex? The answer came clear: The nurseryman's energy would be prohibited from flowing to the benefit of millions of French men and women. And so I concluded that socialism was the truly severe, harsh, back-to-the-jungle philosophy.

#### ENERGY AND ENERGY EXCHANGES ILLUSTRATED

At this point I would like to expand an idea previously expressed, namely, that the free market is not a system that can be blueprinted; that it is energy and energy exchanges; that it is complex; and that man stands in awe of its wonders. To do this I shall draw on and paraphrase Frederic Bastiat.<sup>(55)</sup>

Let us take, by way of illustration, a man in the humble walks of life -- our nurseryman, for instance -- and observe the various services he renders to society and receives from society. We shall be greatly im-

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(55) The next 11 paragraphs are paraphrased from a chapter entitled "Natural and Artificial Organization" in Frederic Bastiat's Harmonies of Political Economy (Santa Ana, Calif.: The Register Publishing Co., Ltd., 1944).

pressed with the enormous disproportion which is apparent.

This man employs his day's labor in preparing soil, planting seeds, fertilizing the tender plants, and so on. If he is at all like the vast majority of people, he complains of his condition; yet, in truth, what does he receive from society in exchange for his work?

First of all, on getting up in the morning, he dresses himself, and he himself has personally made none of the numerous articles of which his clothing consists. Now, in order to put at his disposal this clothing, simple as it is, an enormous amount of labor, industry, and locomotion, and many ingenious inventions, must have been employed. People from other states must have produced cotton, some others indigo, and still others wool, flax, and hides; and all these materials must have been transported to various towns where they have been worked up, spun, woven, dyed, finished, and prepared for merchandising.

Then he breakfasts. In order to procure him the bread which he eats every morning, land must have been cleared, enclosed, labored, manured, sown; the fruits of the soil must have been preserved with care from pillage, and security must have reigned among an innumerable multitude of people; the wheat must have been cut down, ground into flour, kneaded, and prepared; iron, steel, wood, and stone must have been converted by industry into instruments of labor; some men must have employed animal force, others water power or electrical energy -- all matters of which each, taken singly, presupposes a mass of labor, whether we have regard to space or time, of incalculable amount.

In the course of the day, this man will have occasion to use sugar, oil, and various other materials and utensils.

He steps to the telephone and calls headquarters in Neenah, Wisconsin. The creative energy of Alexander Graham Bell and of tens of thousands of others past and present -- metallurgists, electrical and mechanical engineers, scientists, entrepreneurs, linemen, operators -- in an instant are at his service.

He sends his son to school, there to receive an education which, although limited, nevertheless implies anterior study, research, and an extent of knowledge which startles the imagination.

A neighbor goes to law with him. He finds advocates to plead his case, judges to maintain his rights, officers of justice to put the sentence in execution -- all of which implies acquired knowledge, and, consequently, intelligence and means of subsistence.

He goes to church. It is a stupendous monument, and the book which he carries thither is a monument, perhaps still more stupendous, of human intelligence. He is taught morals; he has his mind enlightened, his soul elevated; and in order to do this, we must suppose that another man has previously frequented schools and libraries, consulted all the sources of human learning, and while so employed has been able to live without occupying himself directly with the wants of the body.

#### THE WORLD OF MIRACLES

If our nurseryman undertakes a journey, he finds that, in order to save him time and exertion, other men have removed and leveled the soil, filled up valleys, hewed down mountains, united the banks of rivers, diminished friction, placed wheeled carriages on bands of iron, and brought the force of animals and the power of steam and electricity into subjection to human wants.

As modest as are his means, he steps from his cottage into a vehicle that will, if necessary, transport him 100 miles per hour, truly a magic wagon for no person on the face of this earth knows how to make one. (56)

It is impossible not to be struck with the measureless disproportion which exists between the enjoyments which this man derives from society and those he could obtain by his own unassisted exertions. I venture to say that in a single day he consumes more than he himself could produce in ten centuries! What renders the phenomenon still more strange is that all other men are in the same situation. Every individual member of society has absorbed millions of times more than he himself could produce.

Yes, the example of our nurseryman could be extended indefinitely. Yet, there is not a living person who could precisely explain these energy phenomena. They defy definition and complete understanding, as does electricity or one's own autonomic nervous system. We can but observe these phenomena with care and make deductions therefrom.

There is, however, one unmistakable fact that can be gleaned from observation: Authoritarianism (coercion) is a fake! There is not a man

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(56) A realization of this fact as applied not merely to automobiles but to thousands of other productions will aid one in appreciating how dependent we are on a wide admixture of energies. Reflection will readily reveal that these energy confluxes are by far more the result of natural than man-directed organization; that is, they gravitate naturally and affinitively toward satisfying human demands as distinguished from being put together by any single-minded direction. Successful head men, or leaders, of corporations and other organizations are themselves the suppliers of a relatively scarce and essential energy; for instance, they are adept at selecting persons who have creative energies to release and who won't inhibit the like energies of others in the enterprise. The good head man is the one who gives others "their head" and, by example and suasion, sees to it that his associates do the same. The good head man does not blueprint, arrange, and command creative energies for he realizes his own limitations. He is a specialist in getting creative energies released along valuable lines.



nor any set of men who ought ever to have coercive power over creative energy and its exchange. Man's forceful intervention can only thwart, restrain, detain, repress, destroy. Let man intervene only to restrain destructive energies, otherwise leave human energy alone! Contemplate the utter absurdity of any person's directing the energies relating to one day in the life of our nurseryman! What man, then, is ever to be trusted who would direct the energy and energy exchanges of a whole nation of people? Counsel should never be accepted from the victims of hallucinations.

It is the riddance of authoritarianism in all its forms about which we need to concern ourselves socially. Authoritarianism is destructive energy, and all destructive energy is authoritarian. Creatively, I have myself. I have you. I have creative energy exchange. The rest I leave to the Mind of the Universe. (57)

Man's intervention to restrain destructive action demands a society-wide organization -- government. It is this defensive intervention that justifies as well as sets the limit for government. The defensive function is extremely difficult and calls for experts in the science of defense. The fact that incompetents get elected or appointed to public office, and substitute coercive meddling in others' affairs for the defensive work which they find they cannot or will not perform, in no way lessens the need for government limited to defense.

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(57) The use of repellent or defensive force does not qualify as destructive energy. If a person attempts to destroy me and he is destroyed by my defense, it is he who is accountable for his own destruction. He initiates the act that brings about his downfall. In effect, he commits suicide.

### CLICHES

Of late, however, we have become the victims of a meddlers' selling job. Many of us are coming to believe in the meddlers and their meddling or, if not, to give way to their blandishments -- to their guns if in Russia, to their epithets if in America. "Back to the jungle," "What would you do, let them starve?" "Property rights are above human rights," "Harsh," "Severe," and other derogatives seduce those who are gullible and frighten the weak-hearted. They join the ranks of the modern Robin Hoods who are "kind," "considerate," "charitable," "liberal," "humanitarian." I put these terms in quotes for these are the things they say of themselves.

### THE PURPOSE OF LIBERTY

In concluding this essay, I should like to emphasize the idea that every living human being, if he would correctly interpret his own welfare, has a vested interest in the creative emergence of every other human being; that each person has a vested interest in the free, uninhibited flowing and exchange of the energies thus released; that the true interests of all, therefore, are in harmony; and that, finally, every individual has a vested interest in common with all other men in restraining all inhibitory influences to creative energy and creative energy exchanges. It is this latter common interest that constitutes the social aspect of man and warrants his organization of government within societies for defense. All else is individual, voluntary, and cooperative as individuals may choose, for all else is creative. This is the vast, indeed, the infinite, area of emergence.

Emergence -- man's highest purpose -- has two primary requirements. The first is an awareness of an Infinite Consciousness that man's emergence may have conscious purpose and direction. The second is liberty that

emergence may be uninhibited and possible. Liberty can be defined, psychologically, as man freeing himself from his own negations and, sociologically, as man not playing God.

## MIGHT MAKES RIGHT?

Many persons of high repute, over the period of recorded history, have proclaimed that might actually does make right.

(Here a quotation, perhaps from Holmes, and some comments.)

To me, the notion that might makes right is an utter absurdity. Yet, how can one explain the assertions to the contrary made by many eminent scholars?

These claims, it would appear, inhere in (1) a belief that government should govern, should rule, in an objective sense, and (2) that majority vote (might) -- the determinator in any justly conceived government -- by establishing what is to be thereby fixes upon what is right.

If one believes that the scope of government properly extends over creative actions, then it follows that majority vote decides the nature of these actions. All actions are moral confrontations; that is, all actions are subject to being right or wrong. Relatively few persons -- philosophers, businessmen, or whatever -- have, in their thinking, relegated government to the defense of the life and livelihood of all equally. Thus it is that many persons think that questions of right and wrong are matters of state; that what the majority approves is ipso facto right. One cannot, if he believes in the all-inclusive state, conceive of right and wrong as having a determinator exterior to the state.

Majority vote (might) does not determine whether an action is or is not right. What is right is purely a subjective matter so far as any individual is concerned. What is right to me is that which I believe to be right. The same applies to other individuals.

Majority vote is only the right origin for governmental actions. But that does not necessarily make the action right to me or to any other

individual. Indeed, a majority decision is more likely than not to appear wrong in some respect to all members of the majority and minority in any given action. Majority vote, as a rule, expresses the lowest common denominator opinion of the majority, as distinguished from being the accurate expression of what the individual members of the majority believe to be right. A million persons do not vote on the varying views that each holds to be right. Instead, they search for two or three composites of all of these views -- few if any of the composites being identical to any of the individual views -- and then vote on which one of the several composites they will adopt.

If a majority decides to take a minority's property, the taking is precisely as immoral as if the minority takes the property of the majority. Might doesn't make right, any more than weakness makes right.

If, however, the majority concludes that everyone's property must be protected against all marauders, the rightness of such actions can be questioned only by would-be thieves. I concede that the thieves have a point -- they believing that thievery is right -- but will, if possible, dissuade them from the notion that thievery is right.

If the majority decides on Joe Doakes as Chief of Protection, the rightness of the action can be questioned only by those who favor someone else. I concede that the opposition has a point -- its members believing that their candidate is more right than Doakes -- but will, if possible, convince them that any legitimate society-wide problem must, in justice, be dealt with by society-wide devices.

If the scope of government is confined to defense against destructive, coercive actions, and if defensive actions are conceded to be right, then it follows that actions originating with majority-vote decisions will at least be within the general framework of what is right. Such actions will have to

do with descriptions and definitions of defensive actions (law) and with who should administer the actions (officials).

Those who coerce others or organize brute force or the threats of force to impose their will believe that might makes right. Similarly, those who advocate that government employ force to coerce others, whether for a TVA, public housing, or whatever, believe that might makes right.

Those who believe in no coercion by themselves or by their agents believe that might does not make right.