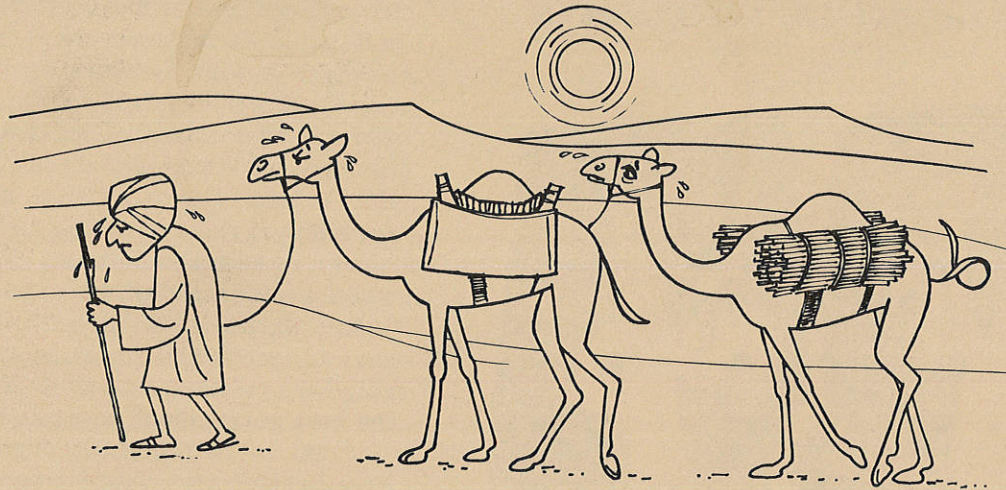




CARAVAN INTO CONFLICT



The political climate of the United States has been as hot as a waterless crossing of the Sahara. What has distressed me this bicentennial year, and even much of the preceding year, is the knowledge that a great many fine people, harassed and frustrated by repeated governmental forays against them, have organized what is called a "Libertarian Political Party" and are trying to get "libertarians" elected to office. I can sympathize with those who in frustration strike out in this manner. But I must grieve at their folly. I had expected wiser things of libertarians.

The position I take has recently been called "absurd" and "inane" by one faction of the Libertarian Party. This faction consists of nine libertarians, who with bicentennial fervor have set themselves up as a supreme court over the libertarian movement in this country. In this self-appointed and exalted position, they weigh the merits and demerits of all other libertarians in terms of the "libertarian government" they would like to impose. Recently, the nine justices-without-portfolio resigned from the Libertarian Party because of certain statements and actions taken by heads of that party. Or possibly because of statements and actions NOT taken. In any case, the resignation occurred, accompanied by the most earnest plea that they were not resigning from the party per se, but only from that portion of the party dominated by those who said things they didn't like. In the publication devoted to letting everyone know the reasons for their resignation

(which is also a non-resignation), one of this nine has dubbed my position "absurd" and "inane" (*The Libertarian Forum* newsletter IX, No. 4, 1976).

Since I have no means of responding to this charge except by this *Journal*, I am going to employ it to that purpose, trusting that those sincere lovers of liberty who receive this publication on a quarterly basis will understand and tolerate both those who take aim at me and those who cannot see my point of view. And I trust they will continue to tolerate me. I think a dialogue is important. One of the great merits of the "libertarian movement," if it can be so designated, is that there is no catechism or body of tenets to which allegiance must be sworn. The merit of the search for liberty is that an open debate still continues. No one has all the answers. Each of us fiercely supports his own view, but there is still room for dissent. Of course, those within a political party cannot permit the reminder that they may have erred. Politics is above admitted error. It must not stoop to principle. The party comes first, and virtue, if it can even be located, must be, and invariably is, shunted to a siding. Free men, acting practically and usefully in terms of market-place interactions, require no such dogma.

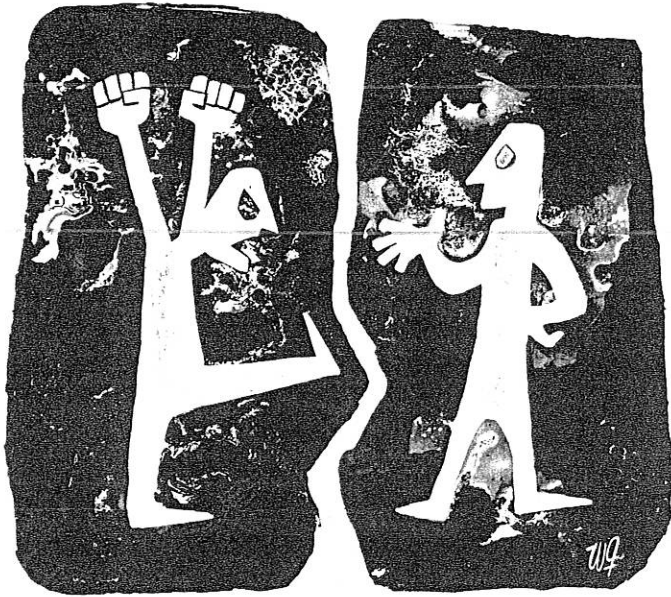
It may well be that my view is absurd or inane. But let us not be pretentious about it. To be absurd or inane is to be silly. And I guess I was silly in expecting libertarians to cherish liberty deeply enough to avoid political involvement.

And because I think that liberty is important,

CARAVAN INTO CONFLICT

(continued)

even though some feel that my view of it is silly, I wish to quote from one of my critics, Murray Rothbard. I select Rothbard as the principal spokesman for the nine ex-officio justices because I know that Rothbard has had a good education and on occasion says things that are important. He has written some of the finest libertarian economic works that I ever expect to see. Unfortunately, the Rothbardian approach does not abhor politics except when those associated with him do things he doesn't like.



But primarily I select Rothbard, not because of Rothbard but because of the slavishness of his followers who are so dominated by his thinking, or his occasional lapses from thought, as to virtually elevate him to a position of chief justice over us all. This devotion is so absorbing and total that one of the faithful has taken an old cliché and dressed it up, giving Rothbard credit for it. I quote: "I believe in the great Rothbardian principle: that of demonstrated preference. This principle holds that individuals reveal their actual values, their actual preferences, in action." The cliché, which can be stated so much easier, is: "Actions speak louder than words."

I do not seek to dispute the statement. I agree with it. I merely demur at giving Rothbard credit for an old saw in general use a couple of centuries before Rothbard was born. When a person is elevated to the supreme court, it becomes apparent that all wisdom descends from him. Rothbard might do well to issue a disclaimer when his followers assume a posture which at times borders on genuflection.

Now, I abhor politics because it is morally wrong. Unlike some members of the Libertarian Party, I see small merit in helping to elect people

to do jobs I would prefer to see undone. I remember one of my early teachers, Frank Chodorov, a man from whom I learned much, who, when confronted with this same ambivalence on the part of those who persist in taking political action, observed: "Your trouble is that you want to clean up the whore house, but keep the business intact."

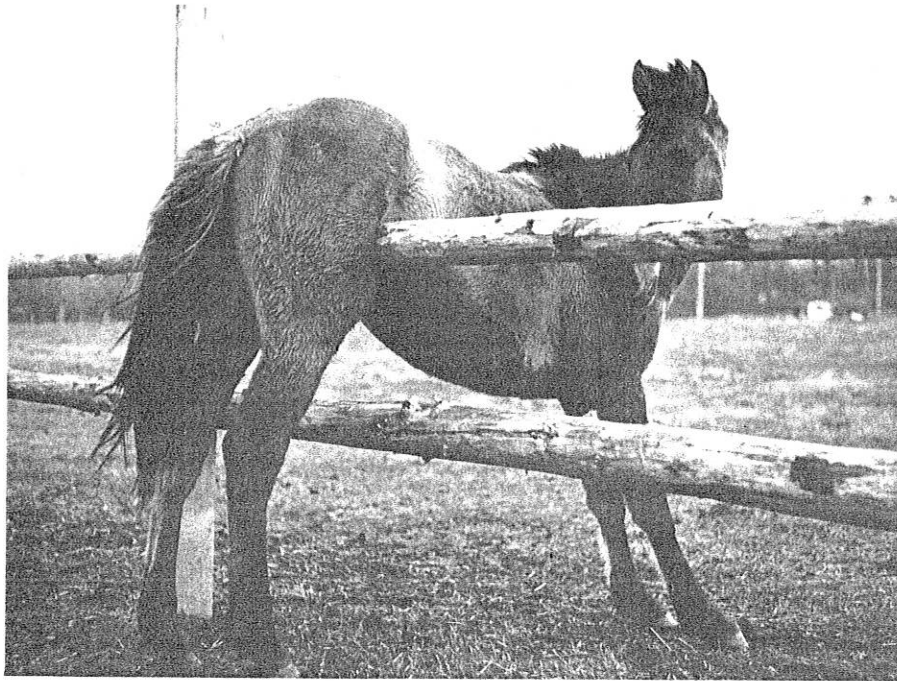
This seems to be the stance of the Rothbard group as well as of those who until recently were blood brothers within the fold. They all apparently believe that the nation's political brothel should be streamlined, made more efficient, and thus ultimately offer a better break to customers.

My own view, which may be silly, is that we ought not participate in processes which are immoral in themselves. (I am not putting a label of "immoral" on commercially exchanged sex per se. If I had to choose between a nation having no government and one having no brothels, I would of course choose the former.) What chance has a moral position today when so many remind me: "After all, LeFevre, the government is here. You have to face facts. Since the government is probably here to stay, we ought to get in and make it the best government possible."

I am so silly that although I realize that we have bankrobbers, murderers, and thieves among us, I hold to the view that my own personal integrity is of sufficient value that I do not wish to participate. Don't I realize that by not participating I am changing nothing? Do I imagine that by not voting, or by not participating in government processes, government will cease to exist? Of course I don't imagine that. But I also don't imagine for a moment that by thumping the drum for libertarian candidates I will influence the coming election.

While I may be silly in supposing that a moral view can be readily grasped, accepted, or practiced, at least I have the satisfaction of knowing that I am not a participant in what is, by definition, a wrongful use of power by some over others. Meanwhile, those who believe that by whooping it up for MacBride — Roger MacBride is the Libertarian Party candidate for president — (or for others), they are being anything but silly, ought to take a more realistic view. MacBride is spending a lot of money which might otherwise be invested in producing some useful goods or services. Instead, the money is helping to create the impression that libertarians are as eager to wield power as are Democrats or Republicans. It seems that Rothbard and I may both be silly, each in his own way.

It appears that MacBride has refused to "tell all." He favors secrecy and privacy. I heartily agree with the right of a man to refuse to say anything he wishes to withhold. To say that everyone must "spill" everything he knows is certainly to champion certain socialist objectives. But there is a vast difference between refusing to reveal what



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WOULD I LIE ABOUT BEING A LIAR?

you wish to keep secret and lying. If MacBride has the integrity to which he lays claim, it seems to me that he would wish to shake off the Rothbardian clique, which, while breaking with one segment of the party, persist in backing him. The Rothbardian clique propose that lying is sound libertarian principle! I quote: "Lying violates no libertarian principle. Certainly we can lie to a thief who demands to know where our money is. Surely, as a representative of the Libertarian Party, we could lie to a reporter who asked what we thought of the assassination of a president or king; if we thought he was a dictator and immoral, and felt it was justified to kill him, we'd certainly be justified in lying, especially when such thoughts are illegal."

This introduces what I must admit is a frank and utterly unprecedented plank in any political platform. While all politicians lie — the practice goes with the territory — here we have a statement which virtually upholds lying as a virtue under certain circumstances. Such candor is breathtaking. Were the Libertarian Party to be taken as anything but silly, reporters would immediately brand the party as one that favors assassination and lying. Since the Rothbard wing of libertarian politicians hold it to be virtuous to lie, I would have thought that their political know-how would at least have been sufficient for them to lie about being liars. It would certainly have been more politic.

But let me return to my own silliness. In this instance I quote Rothbard himself. "Let us take the strong case first, best exemplified by the pure anarcho-pacifism of Bob LeFevre. LeFevre takes the certainly consistent position that, since defensive violence is just as immoral as aggressive violence, therefore the use of the state to pass an unjust law (e.g., the draft) is no more unjust than

using the state to repeal such a law. In short, that repeal of the draft, or price controls, or the income tax, is just as wrong as passing such measures, because those who want such measures are being 'coerced.' A consistent position no doubt, but also an absurd one, and surely one that few libertarians will wish to adopt. As for myself, I have no compunction whatever about coercing criminals, either in using violence to repel their assaults, or in repealing criminal measures that some statist may wish to see enforced."

I thank Murray for his acknowledgment that mine is the strong case and the consistent one. And Murray is also quite right in stating that it is not likely to be a popular position. But by stating what he does, Murray, without intending to, perhaps, has not truly stated my position. What I am objecting to is majority rule.

Why do I oppose majority rule? Because it is, at best, no more than a gentle way of saying that might makes right. It is clear that if we are to have a coercive society rather than a free society, it may be better to coerce the minority than the majority. In a majority-seeking process, someone must be coerced. There is no way out. But how can a libertarian, supposedly a person believing in liberty, favor a coercive society? This is precisely what he does favor by his actions, when he votes. And we must always remember the great principle of "demonstrated preference."

But if we examine the matter of majority rule from the practical level, we obtain even less comfort. If a few people calling themselves libertarian are able to put together a majority of such size as to win an election, what is to prevent another group coming along a bit later with a still larger majority winning it all back?

(please turn to page 9)



BOB STONER: "As government coercion increases by leaps and bounds, your *Journal* is refreshing and welcome."

HOWARD BARROWS: "I find myself agreeing with you except when dealing with one who takes from another (either property or life). Especially the incorrigibles. I fail to see the difference between receiving payment for damages or paying for services rendered. Of course when those nefarious incorrigibles in government are finally caught up with, they, too, will have dues to pay. Even if it's through a free enterprise system of justice. I expect my children to obey me and when they don't, they receive punishment. Should anything less be done to adult violators of normal behavior involving a trespass?" *There is no way I can rightfully do as I please with another person unless I own him. I hesitate to recommend slavery (ownership of one person by another).*

PEGGY LOOD: "I wish we could ignore the state of our nation and just take care of our own responsibilities, but as one tax lawyer said, 'But you can afford to pay for welfare, we don't care how hard you worked to earn more than others.' Even our renters seem to think because we have it we should give it away. Well, I believe in paying for what I want, and I have gained much strength from your *Journal*. Hopefully before the year is over I can afford more."

ARTHUR PROSSER, Jr.: "True libertarians never make value judgments of one another . . . only of tyrants, both 'liberal' and 'conservative,' who force their value systems, or existential non-value systems, down the throats of others . . . I doubt that any of your critics who repeatedly place you in the extreme position of having your defenseless family members and

property looted and ravaged and slain would ever think of doing such things themselves, so why did they bring it up at all, then? Or as power-hungry egoists (not egoists), do they manipulate, control, handle, boss, and induce others to do this anti-libertarian dirty work for them — ostensibly for a noble reason-motive like revenge? Which is a very low motive, indeed. It's time to put *them* on the defensive for a change. Take the initiative." *Thank you. This issue takes the initiative. Peacefully. And no boundaries are violated.*

DEBBY ROSBOROUGH: "Embroidered as I am with the annual hands in my pocket by the IRS, your current issue was a most welcome respite. It's like a breath of fresh air to know sane people really exist."

WILLIAM SUNDVALL: "I was surprised to read that you have never found perfection in this life with any product or service, etc., and that we are an imperfect species, dwelling in an imperfect world. Are you really serious about these statements or are you just having some fun?" *I am quite serious. Would you be good enough to name a perfect human being (please, I said human) or a perfect good or service?*

FLOY JOHNSON: "When I read in your *Journal*, 'We are an imperfect species, dwelling in an imperfect world,' I could not believe my eyes! It's been my conviction that one of the sources of many of our dilemmas is that belief. To hold a concept of imperfect, is it not necessary to have one of perfect? If this world is imperfect to you, what is the perfect one? The ants? Whales? Haven't you found some using this concept against others to control, to give feelings of guilt, or even to excuse themselves on the demands of living? 'After all,' some mutter when they fail, 'nobody's perfect.' From my view, we are simply a species capable of mak-

ing constructive and destructive decisions and acts, rising to great accomplishments, falling in catastrophes. It's our nature to face alternatives, but is that imperfection? When I'm the recipient of damnable acts, do I excuse the doer because he is 'imperfect' or do I endeavor to get a different type of behavior? . . . I sincerely can't understand, when you advocate no control over others, and have not looked for excuses when you have incurred setbacks, why you have used that statement. Have I overlooked a vital flaw in my kind that I should know?" *The human mind is finite and cannot envision perfection. I can find only one category of action that is subject to absolute classification. The violation of a property boundary of an owner is always wrong. If one insists that the world is perfect, together with all things in it, then even a boundary violation must be perfect. Or else boundary violations don't occur. If boundary violations don't occur, there aren't any "damnable acts." And if the world is perfect, then there is no point toward which any of us can strive. We are already in paradise.*

N. M. CAMARDESE: "Is it possible for you to put this article 'A Free Society Is Built One by One' (and others) in pamphlet form? You might multiply yourself by the thousands as those of us who receive your educational material may wish to mail them to hundreds of different sources." *Sure, if someone else will pay for it. I'm too busy covering the losses on the *Journal* to undertake another publication.*

JUSTIN BRADBURN, Jr.: "Had a burglar and the rascal must have gotten off with my *LeFevre's Journal*, spring '75. Surely would like a spare one. This burglar even cleaned out the deep-freeze. I never did retaliate — couldn't find the scoundrel. If you and I were the only two left, I believe you'd be glad to have me around — am not all that bad." *It may have been the same rascal who did the same thing to me. I was able to find him, but he was too big for me to oppose physically. His name is government. Please accept the extra copy with my compliments.*

MICHAEL GREEN: "I don't seem to be able to convey your philosophy to others properly, but I guess they would need to attend one of your seminars to get the idea. Also, they have many years of conditioning which have taught them to believe otherwise. Please start sending your *Journal* to my sister, also. She is a political science major. That's pretty funny — politics as a science."

BRUCE GERSCHLER: "Always enjoy and learn from your *Journal*. But my heart is in teaching about the dangers, techniques, philosophy, and nature of communism. May all phases of our common libertarian dream that is based on truth and right be fulfilled *after we first overcome communism and all conspiracy.*" *Communism, arch-foe of personal freedom, amounts to no more than the imposition of total political control upon every person together with political control of all means of production and distribution. If that is what you oppose, so do I.*

JACK JOPPA: "The Libertarian Party here has been stepping up its activities so naturally I've been curious to follow their follies. They don't like you, Bob. 'LeFevre? Oh, he's a nut. Doesn't believe in defending himself,' comes the reply when I mention your ideas. They seem to consistently forget that defending oneself is not necessary if you supply adequate protection, and that should defense become necessary, force is not the only way to supply it. . . . I had the chance to hear a Libertarian Party candidate speak at the C.U. Law School. I was shocked. I could just as well have been listening to Dick Lamm (Colorado's governor). He was as superbly capable of the same rhetoric, false logic, and glossing over of essential issues as any other politico. Then I realized that my shock was unwarranted; that his words were actually very predictable. I broached him on the subject of absolute non-violence, mentioning you, and he remarked that your arguments 'are rather shallow and aren't the product of much thought.' At that point I gave up trying to have him consider essential issues, and can only hope now that he discovers for himself the absolute futility of his actions. Those who propose retributive violence seek shelter for their ideas with the phrase, 'You've got to look at the real world. People *aren't* like what you say.' I say that this so-called realist way of looking at things is at best just a haven for the weak-hearted idealist when under attack. If one lacks conviction of ideals on a theoretical level, how can they ever be expected to *act* according to their ideals? Time will always show that they can't." *This issue of the Journal is aimed at showing the contradiction between freedom and political action.*

LARRY LANDERS: "Love your *Journal*, Bob. Please keep up the marvelous work. My biggest problem: I can't seem to share your bright, happy, uplifting attitude. As I view our civili-



The Kremlin

zation, everything seems so downhill that I can't but let a dark, glum feeling take over. Meanwhile, I try to live what I think should be the goal of any real libertarian: MYOB. I don't think there is anything more important that any of us can do. P.S. Do you think the attitude is curable?" *Admittedly, we live in a society of mixed blessings. But one can rejoice that the glass is half full rather than moaning that it is half empty.*

DON GASTINEAU: "On self-defense I find you selfless and defenseless, yet your *Journal* indeed priceless. Please continue it to myself and friends who should not be without this desperately needed conscience."

N. J. HAERING: "Although most of my 'twenty-four days' slip by, taking care of my wife and home at 85 and 88, reading the *Journal* gets time. 'The longer I live the more I find by gracious out.' Enclosed check may help keep postage problem down."

MARK KERNES: "I've just read your book, *This Bread Is Mine*. It was fascinating . . . extremely useful to me since I'm supposed to represent the 'pure libertarian' position in a debate; my opponents a 'liberal,' a statist pseudo-libertarian, and a far-right conservative. Should be interesting."

W. E. LYMAN: "God does not do man's work for him but He works with him when it is according to His plan of creation. Then man should not fear doing what ought to be done. In the present state of national emergency, no action seems suicidal and cowardly. Solzhenitsyn tells us communism succeeds by force and only force will defeat it. I believe that. It is said that 'for the triumph of evil it is only necessary that good men do nothing,' be neutral, in other words. Isn't this what Jesus had in mind when he said, 'I would that thou wert hot or cold. I spew thee out of my mouth?' I do not advocate "no action." I advocate peaceful and constructive action. *If Jesus had intended that you meet force with force, would not the scriptures have been edited to delete the phrase that one should love one's enemies?*

MARY WIEBE: "I enjoy your *Journal* immensely. It's an excellent discussion opener! I just returned from a tour of Moscow/Leningrad. The difference between 'us' and 'them' was dramatic, particularly in the area of customer service; there wasn't any in Russia! It was great to get back to the land of 'May I help you?'"

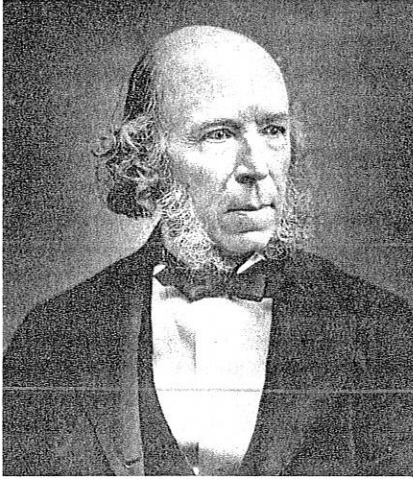
PHILIP O'CONNELL: "Your 'Free Society: Practical Considerations' should leave those who worship government gasping. It's devastating. However, your 'Theological Considerations' give us Christians very little ground except for your reference to the God of ultimate truth, scientific findings, and the laws of nature. Nevertheless, we lay claim to a lot more than that, and by we I mean the Christian Church (its leaders and members). The Renaissance in Europe of freedom, knowledge, productivity, and fabulous creativity was the result of centuries of labor by the Church. Unfortunately, the wealth of this glorious Church and family-oriented civilization (Christendom) corrupted many including secular rulers and Churchmen. Government took over and secular rulers, unhampered by the restraints of the Church, acquired all power and plundered the gains. Now, we are reaping the same harvest here. . . . Hopefully, as in Europe, there are counter-forces at work; but we must remember the source of our strength, our Creator." *I have no trouble with your historic example but do have problems in trying to consider something more than "ultimate truth, scientific findings, and the laws of nature."*

JOEL COLLIER: "Keep up the good work. Who knows what an idea is worth? Besides that, what is the price of self-satisfaction and knowing that what you are doing is *right* (not infringing upon others or their property)?"

EWALD STECHHOLZ: "If the office of president of the U.S. were thrust upon Bob LeFevre (winter '75 *Journal*) I have this suggestion: Announce to the world that — for the next four years, I will sign no official documents, make no policy speeches, hold no press conferences, cabinet meetings or legislative breakfasts, make no appointments, make no campaign trips, visit no foreign countries, and accept no salary. I will write *LeFevre's Journal* every three months and mail it to anyone on request. It is quite likely that the thrust would dissipate but, if not, you could go on just as you have and 213 million people might regain
(please turn the page)

some of their lost freedom. Good luck." *A moratorium on government is a far better idea than seeking to thrust someone into a position of power.*

JERRY BAKER: "The *Journal* is helping me to investigate a philosophical position of interest to me — natural rights or law, and Herbert Spencer's *Right to Ignore the State*. Keep it coming, it's one of the best available."



HERBERT SPENCER

A. PHELPS LANGTRY: "There is no way I can express how much I value and appreciate your *Journal*. I lack the words for the appreciation and the \$ for the value. Eleven years ago, a wonderful little secretary introduced me to Rampart College. The most disturbing pollution to me is the totalitarian mental pollution around us, so your *Journal* is like a fresh air breeze blowing through the Gary steel mills. Too bad it doesn't blow more frequently. If only I'd had sense enough to take the Freedom School courses when they were offered. Then maybe I'd have more free enterprise \$ to combine with my libertarian beliefs and do more justice to us all."

PAUL JONES: "The libertarian approach is most appealing but it strikes me as an unscriptural (anti-Biblical) view. This is what disturbs me most. The apostle Paul told the Romans (13:1): 'The powers that be are ordained of God.' And 'Let every soul be subject unto the higher power.' 'Who-soever . . . resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.' In this Paul is saying (is he not?) that civil government is God-ordained and hence is not evil, as the libertarian view seems to suggest. Re taxpaying, Jesus said, 'Render . . . unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.' This makes taxpaying obliga-

tory on those who would follow Christ. Perhaps I am in error. If so, you will be doing me a genuine service to point this out to me." *Whether the libertarian position is unscriptural or anti-Biblical depends upon interpretation. While some might suppose that Paul (Romans 13:1) was claiming that civil government was God-ordained, an even more literal interpretation might be that the civil government of that time was so distinguished. The quote is: "The powers that be are ordained of God." It does not say, "The powers that be and that will continue for all time are ordained of God." It would be difficult for a man of principle to find anything God-like or God-ordained in the behavior of the powers that be today, whether in city, county, state, or federal government. Re taxpaying, Paul Jones reminds me that according to Jesus, one should "render . . . unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's." And he assumes from this that taxpaying is obligatory on those who follow Christ. Again, a more literal interpretation would seem to me to say that taxpaying would be obligatory on those who believe in Roman law. Certainly, we cannot create a place of perfection on the earth. But we can at least stop assuming that because of some particular interpretation, the evil and viciousness of the power of the state imposed on man is somehow God-ordained. To presume this is to presume that lying, cheating, theft, war, murder, and plunder of all sorts are God-ordained.*

BOB WHALEN: "Your 'The Carrot or the Stick' carries special significance to me. Since I stopped being active politically, I've discovered a great deal of inner peace, a freedom of mind I hadn't known for years."

ANN KUEHN: "My biggest thanks to you for being there — for being one sane voice in an otherwise unsane world! I can chuckle as the horses jockey for position this election year, insisting that Nixon was really the only crooked one, the rest of them are honest. . . ."

ROBERT SCHAEFER: "I see the U.S. Constitution as a voluntary organization formed by implied agreement. Dissent is provided by jury tribunal, 100% of 12 randomly selected men who all must agree that you do or do not owe a certain amount of pledged taxes. I agree that these tribunals no longer function and are used as rubber stamps for would-be kings. On the other hand, I find hardly a soul (libertarian) who understands the voluntary na-

ture of our government or the crucial function of the jury." *The idea that a voluntary organization can be formed by implication is a contradiction of concepts. Juries function today as they always have — they tend to agree with the most ably presented emotional position. The reason it's difficult to find someone believing that government is a voluntary organization is because, at long last, people are beginning to see that it is a coercive, not a voluntary, organization.*

ED SCHARFENBERGER: "I continue to derive the most refreshing insights from your *Journal*. Please send it to the names I've listed."

JOHN BLEEKER: "I thought your winter '75 was the finest yet — the one with the gorilla on the front page."

JOHN EGOLF: "Am wondering if you could send an enlargement of the Isabel Paterson photo in the spring *Journal*." *Can do. At cost.*

CONRAD LUCAS: "I have an opportunity every couple of months to discuss libertarian ideas with good level-headed people. Some call themselves libertarians. You — I know — are not really happy that I am an air traffic controller and therefore work for the FAA — an appendage of the U.S. government. However, I enjoy prying airplanes apart — have no use for FAA management, which is why I quit being one at El Toro and moved up here. Please send the *Journal* to my daughters (15 and 17)."

JOHN THOMPSON: "More agencies than government are coercing me. . . . There are certain catastrophic occurrences that I could not easily pay for; with these I willingly buy insurance that spreads the risk. But the insurance companies have no incentive to be efficient or to properly police the cost of health care. I'm coerced into buying medical insurance. If I wrinkle a car fender, the estimate is ridiculous; the body-shop man is used to billing an insurance company, which gets a bigger premium by paying bigger bills. I'm coerced into buying a collision policy because the price of repair service is geared to a corrupt system. So many seem to feel that a payment by an insurance company is 'free' and is paid by some impersonal 'it.' We pay the cost in the premium or an employer pays a premium and pays us less as a result. How can we fight this vicious 'third-party-pay' system where we lose control of a vital part of being a responsible person?" *Free market insurance is almost a thing of the past. Government has corrupted the insurance field to a*

large degree.

P. M. THAKKER: "You've been of great help in my journey to experience the wonderful music of freedom."

JOHN BROCKWAY: "Haven't the faintest idea what you say, but am fascinated by the way you say it — your skill at putting the words together."

MITCH WOODALL: "Enclosed is Presidential Elections Campaign Fund Designation form. I've underlined 'Designating \$1 (\$1 each for husband and wife if a joint return was filed) to this fund will not increase your tax or reduce your refund.' Please explain, if designating \$1 each does not increase my tax or reduce my refund, where in the hell do they get the \$2? From some other poor slob!, or is it an example of telling you one thing and doing as they please? I still feel honored to have spent a week with you in Greenwood. Durango Coy, you don't know what you are missing." *There is no governmental magic which creates purchasing power. The \$2 taken from present taxes creates a deficit which will be met by new deficit financing, which will end as a larger tax take later.*

GARY KIMSEY: "Sorry I can't contribute more, your ideas are indeed priceless. I'm paying my own way to graduate school and this is about all I can afford."

WAYNE SELF: "You are an unconscionable scoundrel. You put the 'buyer' in the untenable position of paying what your *Journal* is worth. Thus, the 'buyer' is paying the maximum he'll pay while you would settle for less. A Yankee trader couldn't do better. But I'll buy it! While I frequently disagree with you, you provide insights to human action no other libertarian expresses . . . if perceived. One thing is certain, you keep all of us thinking. My sentiments are similar to those of Durango Coy: 'You are an amazing person — don't you dare die before I meet you.' I tried back in '68 to meet you at Larkspur but dad gum the luck, you were gone for the day. Another 'gift' will be forthcoming after my hassle with the 'legal' Mafia."

LARRY WOODS: "I agree with your priority in placing government agents and the criminals spawned in their breeding grounds as the source of most of the danger to myself and property. However, it is hard to imagine that we would be spared the problem of criminality even if the forces of government are broken." *I do not imagine a situation in which there will be zero criminality. But wouldn't it be nice to reduce the incidence of crime? The*

market place approach to protection (not vengeance) will accomplish that.

CLOYD BIRD: "I call on talk radio stations and write letters to the editor (over 100 published in two years). The *Journal* gives me much to think about. Your article on monopoly (it's all government) has helped me immeasurably in discussion with some of our 'socialist oriented' professors. It's a real stopper."

DOROTHY SOBEK: "Perhaps the excuse for a libertarian to depart from basic principles long enough to endorse a political formation called 'Libertarian Party' is that he/she gets in a hurry. I confess I was tempted! Then your *Journal* arrived and I again focused on the obvious — that a 'party' elected by X number of dedicated libertarians is not going to bring the solutions they now believe possible." *Meaningful and constructive changes always take time. In place of haste I recommend patient enthusiasm for freedom.*

PATRICK HOWARD: "It's exhilarating to know that you exist and are working for the ideals of liberty. Truth has toppled many ideologies that have tried to ignore it for the sake of power or riches. . . . Re your article on theft, I came up puzzled about one point. Is violence against another to protect oneself a legitimate use of force?" *You are always on sound moral ground in protecting yourself from others provided you cover all the costs of your protection and do not compel others to cover them.*

TED HAAS: "I enjoyed reading your articles on protection — not retaliation. The idea is difficult to accept emotionally at first but my feelings finally came around to agree with my intellect you convinced with your lucid writing. Thanks. A point to ponder: You stated that if someone put handcuffs on you, you would not break the cuffs to escape because they did not belong to you. If ownership passes to the possessor of objects, then the cuffs belong to you. This concept does not only work for the aggressors." *Good point. I have no problem with breaking my own handcuffs once I am certain they belong to me.*



FRANKLIN SANDERS: "As much as it may strain your credulity, this is about all I can spare right now. I should

say, that's about all the government has left me. Sometime when you feel like you're shooting in the dark, think about this quote from a friend of mine: 'Each victory, no matter how small, weakens the state structure. What is impossible today, becomes possible tomorrow.' "

C. A. SWANSON: "You are much more consistent than 99.44% of your fellow citizens. Some of your inconsistency is encouraging to me; for example, when you made (reluctant) allowances for not rejecting all government. You admonished all to give up Social Security. But you advised, 'When the government forces you to buy insurance, buy it' (Summer '76). Having made exceptions, you have stepped into the same mold that others have to assume at some times or others. Why do I find your inconsistency encouraging? Partly because you acknowledge the difficulty of being 'pure.' It's good to recognize that no one has all the answers. But there is another reason. Your inconsistency (small as it is alongside of most of ours) points to the weakness in your greatest consistency — as I see it. For you are consistent in your long-range goal — of no government. And this is, in my lifelong opinion, a false, unrealistic, undesirable goal." *I see myself as a realist. I consistently favor abandoning government. But I'm not so naive as to suppose that I'm big enough to stand up to the physical power of the state and win. Those who, with much breast beating, tell me how they are going to successfully use force against the bandits, are advocating what they cannot and will not do. I recommend survival if possible. Therefore, I do not propose to have a shoot-out. Instead, I consistently advocate doing without government and when confronted with its power-backed demands, I do not applaud, I submit. Submission is sensible and should not be construed as approval.*

W. KENT DILLON: "Don't remember when my last gift was, but here's another. Sure would be a sad day if you had to discontinue yours."

RANSOM HUNGERFORD: "The original Constitution has control over majority rule. How we lost sight of what I believe was noble contention, to become a people where the majority believe might makes right, I'm not sure." *Study the Constitution analytically. What we have today was predictable, for the roots are in the Constitution. Many who signed the Declaration voiced their distress with the Constitu-*

(please turn the page)

tion and sought to prevent its ratification on those grounds.

LARRY DUNCAN: "I attended your Freedom School in '72 and was completely overtaken by the truths I heard. . . . I own a new business and am doing fairly well (my first big step to freedom). I do not vote, and discourage others as much as possible, do not take handouts — but how can I learn all the ways of keeping Uncle Sam out of my cash register? And out of my free enterprise? What about Social Security — can you stop paying this? My business and I thirst to be free!" *Few of us can make a complete break with government. But rejoice in the parting of each strand. Don't fret for a lack of total freedom; rejoice in each gain in the right direction.*

DON McMURRAY: "The hardest concept for me to learn is, what if anything can one do in the direction of a free society. It seems that most conservative organizations are better than none, but they are also political in nature." *You can act now in favor of freedom, outside the political arena. A free society is built one by one. We build a free society largely by refraining from the actions which prevent it from forming.*

NEIL JENKINS: "You have stated a belief in the Declaration of Independence, yet, except for the vital 'inalienable rights' phrase, it seems to foster fully the idea of government and is, in fact, a declaration of independence of states (units of government) from a larger government (Great Britain) rather than a declaration of independence of individuals from any government." *Good point. But when you consider the individuality of the "unalienable rights" phrase and apply the principle, it goes all the way.*

ALAN HEMPHILL: "I'm about to lead a community effort to start a voucher system in our school district. Obviously, I would prefer to abolish public education, but since that is not presently practical, I'd prefer to see competition among schools, the end of double taxation to parents . . . and pluralism in teaching techniques and philosophy. And I believe this is an opportunity to surface the fact that since we no longer have the 'draft,' compulsory education is the single remaining vestige of government slavery. It can be argued that making education more responsive through vouchers will delay the eventual downfall of the archaic system; I am concerned, however, about the millions of children who will be educated and indoctrinated in gov-

ernment schools, and thereby feel that government control of other things is equally applicable." *Even if you win this one, you'll lose it. A voucher system, approved by government, regulated by government, and funded by government, will become another governmental agency hastening the day of total control over our lives and properties.*

NORRIS SMITH: "I can't possibly pay for what your *Journal* is worth to me. Talked to 205 Ohio businessmen on U.N. Charter. Asked how many had read it. Two hesitantly raised hands. Gave each a copy and went hastily through charter. Sometime ask people the following: Who was MacArthur's boss in Korea? How many members on International Court of 'Justice'? Term of office? Any from U.S.? To what does Connally reservation apply? Is U.S. bound under Genocide Act?" *Few Americans take time to read any more. They are more fascinated by pictures.*

ROBERT ORMSBEE: "Could someone say, 'I forgive you, but I'll never forget?' Well, government scores again! What the individual cannot do must be left to government: 'For refusing to assist me in an immoral act,' said Uncle Samuel, 'I grant you amnesty. You may come home, now, and do two years' penance.' "

BOB and GYNNIE BLOOM: "We postpone reading newspapers, magazines, and even mail from home to devour every word in the *Journal*. And then we inevitably find ourselves discussing it, quoting from it, sharing it with friends. Thank you."

WILLIAM HORTON: "It's always convenient and tidy to ignore nasty, troublesome details. The comptroller who ignores his debits has a glowing report for the board of directors. Every play's a touchdown for the coach who runs his team down the practice field with no opposition. . . . and the philosopher who ignores pragmatism can easily produce utopia. Suppose 99.9% of the world population enthusiastically embraced pure LeFevre libertarianism. Couldn't (wouldn't) the remaining .1% then easily impose their dictatorial will on the rest, enslaving them? You bet they could — and would! I admire your philosophy the way I admire a fine Cellini museum piece. It's beautiful, but it will never be mine — for pragmatic reasons." *Fortunately, we can make progress without obtaining unanimity. There is no single idea everyone in the world has ever accepted. Now that we are learning how to protect ourselves against that .1%*

by market-place methods, I become more optimistic rather than less. And who says Cellini wasn't pragmatic?

DAVE DINGELL: "Perhaps I like the *Journal* because it reminds me of the bit I remember of the 'Golden Age.' I figure it ended about 1930 — and I was 15! I like the stuff — I hope you can keep it up."

WALT PETERS: "You've done it again. Enlarged my concept and understanding of liberty . . . What will be the end of this can of worms called society? I doubt that it will ever discover the straight line of peace and harmony called freedom, but only coercion and violence to total destruction. Still, I am optimistic that my effort to straighten that line will make it that much less curvy, and I can see the way out of that can of worms."

ELAINE HARWIN: "I've had a brief exposure to *LeFevre's Journal*. Please send it and perhaps later I'll share with others."

REMLEY CAMPBELL: "I enjoy every issue — only wish they came more often."

CLIFF GRAVES: "Yes, a dollar earned is worth twice or more what anyone gives you. I have learned. Integrity is the word. Mother used to say, 'Every tub must stand on its own bottom.' "

DALE GREEN: "A thought: Government is a social institution for *legalizing* the use of *initiated* force in human relationships. Yours for peace and freedom for everyone."

STEVE ZEGLER: "Your representatives' job from sun to sun

To see that politics shall be done.
If whatever he does is not our choice,
No matter, he claims to speak with our voice.

Make an issue, get elected, make a good name,
If at fault, don't worry, just shift all the blame.

An expense account, that's the name of the game.

Then raise the taxes, we citizens are tame.

Make up a reason and make it sound good,

Don't want everyone to think he's a hood.

An election year, excitement, oh, what fun,

Let's vote and sanction politics to be done.

And what will rise from all these debacles?

Nothing can, we're all thrown into shackles."



CARAVAN INTO CONFLICT II

(continued from page 3)

Seeking majorities by the voting process sustains the notion that this method is the way to resolve difficulties and arrange for leadership. When a people begins the destructive process of relegating decision-making to the popular vote, the result is easily predictable. The persons knowing the least and exhibiting the wildest thirst for advantage, will band together into a voting bloc and win. Picture, if you will, the plight we face in this country now, thanks to the majority-seeking process. Labor unions, headed by implacable, dictatorial types, are able to swing just about any national election their way. The fact that a majority can be obtained does not justify the victory, but it does make the victory certain.

The majority-seeking process within a nation creates the same dichotomies that an arms race creates between nations. Once we start the process, it seems impossible to let go. Our actions in seeking a larger bloc encourage our opponents to do the same. This is competition aimed at amassing power; the very antithesis of a free society.

Of course it can be argued that if libertarians ever obtain a voting majority, they will have the power of dismantling the government and the majority-seeking process. How? The great masses of Americans have been conditioned to believe that voting is the only "fair" way to proceed. Any group of men in power who attempted to cancel this method by force would, at the very least, be lynched for their pains. What might well ensue is a blood-bath. And is anyone so silly as to imagine



that a blood-bath must be advocated in an effort to support liberty?

Obviously, I do not favor the statist position. But in addition, I do not favor the statist METHOD. And it is here that Murray and I part company. Murray is among those who, by *their actions*, do not oppose statism per se. He only opposes certain state policies, not others.

Thus, he favors violence against wrong-doers (assassination? beating? hanging? war?) if in his judgment the people responsible deserve to be punished.

If the foregoing is truly his view, then Rothbard would surely wish to see intervention in Angola, and possibly now in Lebanon, for there are people in both places guilty of wrong-doing. And if he is going to be consistent, then he would favor involvement so that he could do good. But of course that is silly of me to suppose. For Rothbard, through one or more of his followers, has let it be known that he favors lying. So I really don't know what Rothbard believes. Anything he says may or may not be what he believes. But why should anyone favor a group of political hopefuls who in their various protestations warn us in advance that they will lie, if only to protect their own interests, whatever they may be?

Now, if a person truly is opposed to the state on principle, then it seems to me that while it would be silly to imagine that the state would grieve, or even notice, if he had nothing to do with it, it remains that he could keep his integrity and sleep nights without the nagging feeling that by voting for a liar he may have led to the injury or death of someone.

And that introduces another towering doubt in my mind about libertarian politicking. Who is a wrong-doer?

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CARAVAN INTO CONFLICT

(continued)

I have lived a considerable number of years and have met and worked with literally thousands of people. I have never met a one of them (save babes in arms) who has never done anything wrong. Indeed, in my own case, I can be grateful that in some of my wrongful actions, performed while a good deal younger, I wasn't caught. Had a doctrine of an eye for an eye been totally enforced while I was a youth, I doubt I would have seen the sun rise on my twenty-first birthday. The difficulty with so many who claim to be libertarians is that while giving vocal support to the belief that no one should commit an act of aggression against another, they suddenly attain such self-righteousness that when they perform an act of aggression against another, it can be called defense or protection. They seem incapable of grasping the fact that the other party, the so-called wrong-doer, was in nearly all cases acting for his protection and defense as he saw it.

The political libertarian sees himself as justified in whatever he does. And if his inconsistency is pointed out, he says that what he is doing is "strategic." That excuses everything.

Of course, there will be some, like a well-known economist of my acquaintance (not Rothbard), who will argue that if we get tough enough and clamp down on the wrong-doers with a vengeance, we can reduce and possibly even eliminate crime. And wouldn't that be great! The silliness of this position is confirmed in reams and reams of serious studies that have been conducted in this area. But if one needs a quick example, might I suggest a look inside a penal institution such as San Quentin or Leavenworth or Sing Sing. Here the use of force against the offender is instantly available. However, it is *inside* the walls of such prisons, where force is relied upon to punish the offender at once, that one of the highest levels of crime in the U.S. persists even to this hour. A



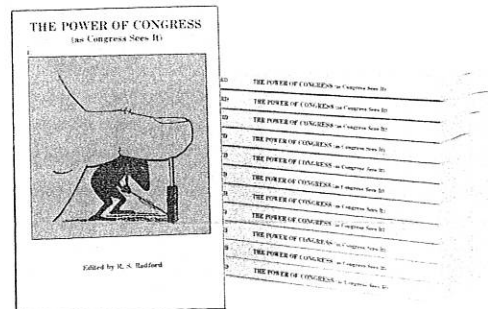
THE GRADUATE

very real problem with dealing with aggression by means of an act which is no more than counter-aggression is that, in addition to its immoral character, it doesn't work.

But to return to my own inanities, and Rothbard. "A second strategy is the LeFevrian one of converting all the state rulers to libertarianism

and wait for them to resign. I think the inanity of such a strategy should be evident to anyone with a grasp of state reality, i.e., that the state benefits from exploiting the citizenry, and is not about to cheerfully or shamefacedly surrender those benefits upon reading libertarian literature."

I certainly agree with Murray on this one. I have never presumed for a moment that anyone holding state power would resign simply because I wrote him a letter telling him how bad his behavior was or how it was negatively affecting the country. (A new book called *THE POWER OF CONGRESS* reveals the reactions of senators and representatives to just such a letter.)



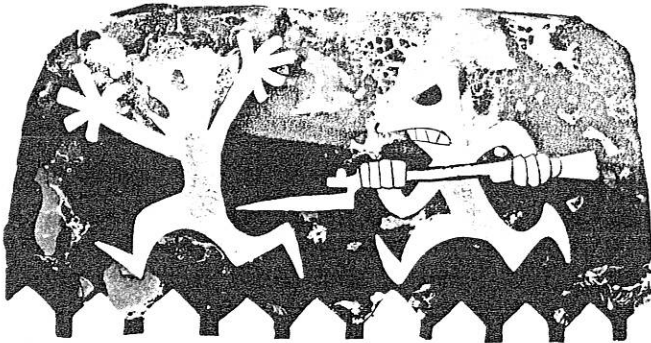
Murray in this case has just built himself a straw man. That isn't my position and never has been. Sure, I've written just such letters. And I like to send a "get well" card to those who announce for office, and a congratulatory card when someone (rarely as a result of anything I've said or done) decides to go straight and resign. I consider writing to congressmen in the same category as other fun and games one might play—not a strategy designed to roll back the state. And were it not that they have a corner on certain information, certain goods and services, I'd ignore them altogether. Unfortunately, that's not possible.

I am frequently asked by students in my classes if it might not be useful to set up a course of study to be attended exclusively by lawmakers. I have consistently told my students, and I've written about it many times, that politicians are the least important people in the country. No point in wasting time with them. Further, since they have a vested interest in wrong-doing, my arguments would fall on deaf ears. Moreover, just sitting in a class of mine would be a traumatic experience for them and doubtless for me as well, and I do not enjoy baiting other people. And finally, I remind my students that even the politician has nowhere to go unless he can enlist media support, which as yet is a market-place phenomenon in this country, beleaguered, inept, and inaccurate though it often has been. So I try to talk to people who are important. These are people who are private citizens, hopefully dedicated to the task of making a living and in process producing useful goods and services.

There is another point that needs clarification. Note that Rothbard says that "the state" benefits

from exploiting the citizens. The state is a collective and doesn't think or assume anything. I have never asked "the state" to resign. What the politically motivated libertarian is prone to overlook is that the people in government are people. He confuses the personnel with the mechanism. And since the mechanism was put together along the lines of a philosophy that says "some men must rule all others," the men hired for the purpose are merely acting out the philosophy.

Rothbard clearly indicates that present-day office holders are engaged in exploitation. Exploitation is an unfair usage of some sort. Taxation, for example, is exploitative. Taxation is also a form of theft, legalized but theft nonetheless. Theft is a crime. Rothbard says: "As for myself, I have no compunction whatever about coercing criminals, either in using violence to repel their assaults, or in repealing criminal measures that some statists may wish to see enforced." This leads one to suppose that Rothbard views office holders as criminals, engaged in enacting criminal measures. More to the point, it leads one to suppose that he is willing to use coercion, including violence, against them.

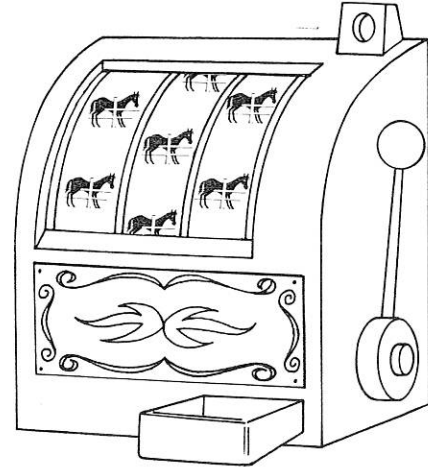


But one does not correct a bad set of ideas by punishing the people who may happen to believe them. The worship of Baal cannot be stamped out by punishing the followers of Baal. Both Christians and Jews have been put to death at various points in human history because of their beliefs. The result created martyrs and entrenched the beliefs.

The Rothbard statement leads one to suppose that anyone in government is an exploiter and a villain. Most of the people in government are good people. They are employed to do terrible things. But like the headsman who wielded the axe at the block in olden times, they do what they do because they are led to believe that it is good and necessary. Something a trifle more profound than genocide against government employees ought to be considered. Politically motivated libertarians might benefit from the realization that a person presently holding office is still human, despite his employment.

Another criticism that is often hurled at me by Rothbard, et al., is that I advocate doing nothing.

Actions speak louder than words, if you will pardon the cliché. My actions indicate that I believe in doing. I believe in taking moral action. I see no merit in trying to exchange the government we have, which is certainly immoral, for what might be put together by a group of persons who admittedly will view assassination of dictators a good thing (whoever they decide is a dictator) and who will lie about it when it suits them.



JACKASS POT

I advocate action. But I advocate taking action in the market place where things can be done effectively. I advocate refraining from political action totally. Political action, in fine, is the opiate of the self-righteous. They imagine that by voting they are doing something. By voting, they are agreeing that they will do nothing and are passing the buck to the politician.

In short, political action, so-called, is a cop-out.

Finally, I'd like to say something about the label that has been pinned on me by many. I am accused (the word is accurate) of being a pacifist. This is wholly unjustified if by use of the word it is supposed that I favor uncomplaining and docile submission to tyranny. I never have favored tyranny in any form or manner. Nor do I believe in acquiescence before it. I believe in carrying the fight to the enemy. My enemy is the state; not the people in it. My weapons then are not and cannot be the weapons the state employs. Its weapons are used against people. My weapons are ideas, ideas that can establish a new philosophy based upon the nature of man as a self-controlling individual, and concurrent opposition to any set of ideas that counsels that some men, of right, can rule other men.

What is really cute is the way so many write about me disparagingly as being a libertarian-pacifist, an anarcho-pacifist, or a blankety-blank pacifist. It would appear that to them peace is a negative factor we should all despise and avoid.

Now, anyone knowing any of the fundamentals of economics knows full well that voluntary ex-
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CARAVAN INTO CONFLICT

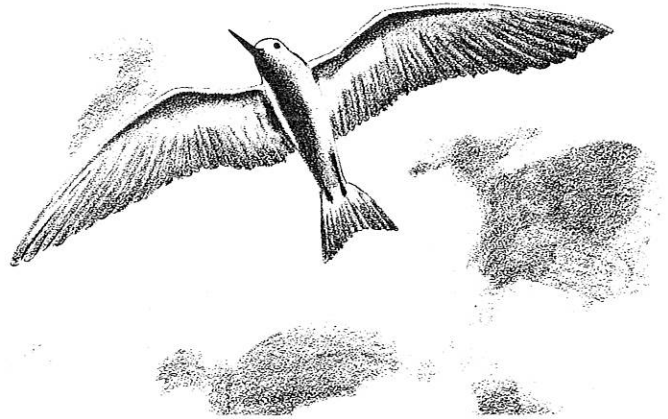
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change, the core of market-place activity, only takes place properly when peace is present. The freedom to produce, exchange, and consume is predicated upon a climate of peace. Without peace there is no freedom, for surely war is the anti-thesis both of peace and freedom.

In short, freedom and peace are handmaidens, each potent, each masterful, but in total harmony each dependent upon the other. So, quite properly I favor peace. I favor it because I must if I believe in liberty.

And that is the core of my silliness. I believe in freedom and peace. I believe in a moral view. I do not believe that the end justifies the means. If I did, my counsel would be as questionable as any who tell you, "Vote for me, and after I get power, see the marvels I will do for you." I've heard that

promise from hundreds. Hearing it from those who say they are libertarian doesn't even provide a variation in the lackluster, moribund theme.



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