



November, 1971

Recent classes of mine have contained a large proportion of graduates from several prestigious universities. I can report that in many cases, the economics they are now learning on these campuses, while containing a firm Keynesian slant, is nonetheless an improvement over what students enrolled ten years ago had suffered at the hands of their instructors.

There is, however, one major point in which virtually all graduates of university economics courses share a blithe and incomprehensible ignorance. That point relates to the question of monopoly.

Apparently university professors, with only rare exceptions, insist that a free market leads inexorably to monopoly and that government intervention must occur (they say) to prevent monopoly, cartels, conspiracies, and so on.

This is such an obvious fiction, the opposite is so conspicuous, that you would think more students would rise up to challenge their professors on the issue.

To find monopoly, one has only to look at government. Here we have an interlocking directorate, owning and controlling (and manipulating) the largest amount of investment capital in the world. The daily cash flow exceeds the gross income of our largest private firms. Not only does the government manage and keep its hands on the bulk of the money, it also owns and controls more than 700 different kinds of businesses, ranging from rentals of houses, apartments, and hotels (government is the largest landlord), insurance (government is the largest insurer), farming (government is the largest owner of farm lands), retail operations (government is the largest wholesaler and retailer), but, in addition, government is engaged in manufacturing everything from rum to electricity. And the students express concern that corporate income is so large!

The fact is that government has become a monopoly-capitalist of staggering proportions, and it has troops at its disposal to collect those sums it forces even its non-customers to contribute!

Yet the students say they fear monopoly.

Obviously, if a person does worry about monopoly, calling on the government to preserve competition is like yelling for gasoline when your auto is afire.

Even if we concede that there may be a thousand major firms in the nation with gross incomes in excess of five million a year, and if we acknowledge that there are at least a hundred thousand other businesses which are growing and prospering, at least here we have a diluted, distributed capitalism in the hands of millions.

But when we turn to government, we find billions in the hands of a President and a legislature, who manage to dispose of about two billion dollars on a daily basis, both by spending and by increased debt. And the cure to the bigness of corporations is supposed to be a surrender of still more in the way of controls and powers into the hands of the state. This will cure monopoly? On the contrary, this IS the only true monopoly.

Additionally, we must realize that in most instances the successful firms, large or small, are operating on their own funds, which they have obtained by voluntary methods, including sales and co-investment. But this is not true with government. For while we can readily admit that some persons say they are happy to pay their taxes, there is a growing army of those who honestly state that they would prefer not to be taxed, or at least not to be taxed in so many ways for so very many things.

What the nation has, then, is two sources of capital. And capital is necessary. We have a system, badly abused and grossly distorted, called private enterprise. In it there are millions of stockholders and millions of owners of many businesses, some tiny and some vast. But they all compete for the customer's dollar. And the danger of one of them emerging to eclipse all others (unless it has government help) is so remote as properly to be dismissed.

But on the other hand we have a gigantic, coercive set of pompous and self-adulating men, backed by armed might, who own and control more of everything than any single private firm or any conceivable combination of private firms.

It is certainly time for the professors of economics in our various colleges and universities to bring out this fact and to stop encouraging their students to turn to government to prevent monopoly.

Robert LeFevre

Contributions to Rampart College are deductible for income tax purposes. The larger our total income, the more effective we can be in confronting the rising tide of state-dependency.

TWO IN '72

Two COMPREHENSIVE COURSES will be offered in 1972: the dates, June 25 – July 7, and August 20 – September 1. The place: Carmel Valley, California, at the delightful Carmel Valley Inn. Scholarship announcements will be forthcoming. Plan now to share this unique experience with your family: getting it all together, all together.

PERSON-TO-PERSON DIRECTORY (open for your personal listing when space permits)

Barry S. Perlman, 3 Decatur St., Indian Orchard, Mass. 01051 (phone 413: 543-2285) wants to communicate with other libertarians in the New England area "for the purpose of deeper exploration of our own idealism."

Charles W. Amlin, 1032 Marbo Terrace, Vista, Calif. 92083, is seeking contact with pro-liberty thinkers in his vicinity.

Vic Wasicki, 2415 Bristow, St. Louis, Mo. 63114, says, "Price control is people control; complete control is communism." Anyone care to respond to this conversation opener?

Charles Meier, Box 35, Linn, Mo. 65051 (314: 894-3603) is interested in person-to-person communication.

So is Carl Ripoli, 2919 N. Pine Grove, Chicago 60614 (312: 477-3905).

Devon Showley, Cypress Collegiate Libertarian Alliance, and wife Marlene want to be listed: 9200 Valley View, Cypress, Calif. 90630.

Jay Amrod (organizer, Radical Libertarian Workshop) wants to hear from other libertarians: 1217 Mississippi, St. Louis, Mo. 63104 (314: 421-1890).

FASCINATING VIGNETTE

Robert LeFevre discusses the plight of the ancient Incas under a government which exercised greater power over its people than any other government of which there is a trace today. "When government considers itself and its laws in the nature of divine decrees, regiments its people, and then by means of taxation preys upon the property of those people, where can they go for protection?" Don't miss "The Red Incas," one of six cassette presentations in the new PAST IS PROLOGUE series (15 min.). Reverse side is "Aunt Jemima and Private Defense." Order now for December delivery. Price, \$4.95

GETTING A LIBERTARIAN WORD IN

Evan Soulé reports from New Orleans: "On a popular call-in show, four businessmen said they thought radio, TV, and the press should 'give' free time for candidates for governor to express their views. After asking the 'free enterprise' businessmen who was going to pay for this free advertisement, and receiving no reply, I talked (15 minutes) on the history of the vote-gathering, sanction-pulling manipulations of bureaucrats to gain more supporters. The moderator broke the ensuing silence by admitting, 'Yes, though we may have new leaders, the same bureaccracy does seem to stay entrenched. Perhaps the idea of voting needs to be questioned.'" Says Soulé, "One giant leap for the N.O. libertarian movement, one small step for mankind!"

INTELLIGENT DARING

Kevin Cullinane (1967 Rampart grad) announces plans for launching a one-year academy in the Idaho Rockies dedicated to "intelligent daring," to provide an opportunity for youngsters to develop genuine self-confidence and self-esteem in the efficacy of both mind and body.

The Academy of the Rockies will limit enrollment to 19 students a year. Cullinane, academic director, and Dan L. Larsen, outdoor leadership, report: "Students will live and study here for only one year and then return to their previous schools feeling ten feet tall, we hope, in terms of awakened self-awareness of the tremendous potential of the confident human spirit. The academy (non-military) will afford them the physical exhilaration of climbing a mountain for its own sake, and a better understanding of the similar joy of personal achievement experienced by great men of history and literature.

"The year's curriculum (basically tenth grade, but with individual exceptions) includes: logic, history, classics, plane geometry, science, navigation, mountain climbing, flying, wilderness and winter survival, cross-country skiing, shortwave radio. Instead of studying European culture, we will study the individual and his wonderful potential when he comes to understand and work within the natural laws of human action and freedom. The history we will offer will be the history of human progress...with emphasis upon trade, exploration, experimentation, invention, and discovery....Creative writing will be aimed at writing for the market place."

Proceeding on the belief that there is a market demand for such an educational experience for boys (and hardy girls), Cullinane designates April as advance registration deadline for the tuition of \$3,600; later registration, \$3,800 tuition. Write to Kevin Cullinane, The Academy of the Rockies, Bonners Ferry, Idaho 83805.

LEGAL PLUNDER

The Colorado Springs Gazette Telegraph (a Freedom Newspaper) frequently runs this filler on the editorial page: "But how is this legal plunder to be identified? Quite simply. See if the law takes from some persons what belongs to them, and gives it to other persons to whom it does not belong. See if the law benefits one citizen at the expense of another by doing what the citizen himself cannot do without committing a crime." -- Frederic Bastiat, The Law, 1850

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1971 has been the most productive year in the 15-year history of Rampart College. Your continued financial support is vital to bringing the libertarian philosophy to serious minded students on campuses across the country. Contributions received prior to December 31 will be deductible from your 1971 income tax.

What Is a Libertarian?

BY OSCAR W. COOLEY
Assoc. Prof. of Economics, Ohio
Northern Univ.

Among the newly resurrected words is "libertarian." So-and-so is a libertarian, we are told. What kind of animal is this?

For the word, libertarian, we are indebted to the vocabulary of philosophy. It means a person who believes in free will as opposed to necessity. The idea is that man is free — has liberty—to make his own decisions. Not everything is decreed by fate.



Today the term is being used more particularly to mean a laissez faire economist, one who believes firmly that men best solve the problem of making the most out of nature-decreed scarcity through individual freedom, not socialism. Simply put, a libertarian stands for liberty—liberty of the person to order his life in his own way, not have it ordered for him by others.

A libertarian does not believe in political action. He may assent to having a highly limited government, but he sees it as only a makeshift, a temporary expedient to keep men out of one another's hair.

Curiously, Karl Marx, too, saw the state as temporary. Is the libertarian then a Marxist? Far from it. Although Marx foresaw the "withering away of the state," his system called for establishing a vastly augmented, indeed a totalitarian, state, called a "dictatorship of the proletariat." But it would be only temporary, while men are learning to live peacefully and happily without a state. (How men would learn to exercise freedom while they were enslaved by a dictatorship, he did not explain).

At least one exponent of the libertarian philosophy, Professor Murray Rothbard, thinks we would do better to give up all

political government as a sad mistake and to function solely through voluntary institutions.

A modern libertarian is not a revolutionary. He would not destroy the government because he knows that such a tactic invariably results in setting up another, usually more despotic than the first. He is evolutionary.

Rampart College, Santa Ana, California, is a center of libertarian thought. The president of that institution, Robert LeFevre, defines a libertarian as "a person who sees a man as an individual, having merit in himself, who does not exist to please society; who does not exist so that he can hurt other people but who is not society's sacrificial victim in any way . . .

"Libertarianism," in LeFevre's view, is simply a belief in man as a free being capable of making his own decisions and acting reasonably and responsibly in living his life. Man does not require some overlord making his decisions for him . . . Of course, the concept today is that you have to have some kind of central power agency to hold people in check, but in point of fact such agencies don't hold people in check, and they are themselves creators of much of the discord, wars, and violence that we have, and the whole idea that man requires an overlord government is obsolete."

"Getting rid of government," says LeFevre, "is not an end in itself—the problem is the philosophical one: can you, in the process of removing the state, at the same time introduce sufficient other ways of getting things done so that there is no real desire for another government? . . ."

Rampart College is doing yeoman work in spreading the idea, especially among young people that the individual is not helpless, that he can and does raise himself by his own bootstraps whether he has boots or not, and that a myriad of techniques of voluntary association with his fellows is open to him.

Government is a rickety one-hoss shay. There's no point in destroying it; let each rider just get out of the shay, quit using it, leave it to decay.

Another well-spring of libertarianism is the Foundation for Economic Education, Irvington, New York, founded and directed by Leonard E. Read. For 25 years it has expounded the libertarian viewpoint in publications and seminars. Its monthly magazine, "The Freeman," is edited by Dr. Paul Poirot.

The Foundation, like Rampart College, emphasizes that a true libertarian labors first and foremost on himself, studying freedom in all its aspects, learning to be self-dependent and individually creative. Although the Irvington school believes there is definitely a role for the political state, they are highly critical of wellnigh everything done by our present one. This is because they see the free man, cooperating with his fellows to the extent that he desires, as vastly superior to political man, using the taxing and law-making power to force people to act in specific ways.

America teems with good people who have abiding faith that our great social problems can only be resolved by "the government." They are typified by the Philadelphia superintendent of schools who recently averred the great city school systems of the nation are falling apart for lack of funds and must be reconstructed by — y o u g u e s s e d it—Washington.

From training the Headstart toddlers to purifying the polluted oceans, from supporting the farmers prices to rebuilding the cities, from bailing the colleges to curbing inflation, the Government is supposed to be equal to every task. And from the President down to the pages in the Senate, the government's functionaries enthusiastically embrace every new assignment.

The libertarians do not belong to the faith-in-government league. Stubbornly they draw their demand and supply curves

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contribution to
better under-
standing of the
term "libertarian"
was published in
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Gazette Telegraph
and has also ap-
peared in other
daily newspapers.
It is reproduced
here with per-
mission from
Professor Cooley.

and point out that here is where we are, but here—much further along—is where we could be if we would free the market.

Are they "conservatives"—living in the age of McKinley? No. They are radicals, always seeking the roots. They are not for returning to the past but for going forward in a freer society than this country has ever seen.

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