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LYSANDER SPOONER: IRELAND AND PROPRIETARY JUSTICE

Lysander Spooner, relatively unknown until the 1970's, developed the first consistent individualist-anarchist analysis of society in the middle of the 19th Century. Spooner found the state getting in his way wherever he turned. His desire to become a lawyer was thwarted by a statute requiring three years of college, until he successfully mustered enough support for its repeal. Later, when he began a company to compete with the U.S. Postal Department, providing better service for a fraction of the price, the Congress passed the "Spooner Act", outlawing private competition in mail service. This law he was unable to repeal. Spooner eventually found his best weapon against the state to be pamphleteering. He attacked slavery, the validity of the U.S. Constitution for those who had not signed it, laws giving the government the right to make and declare legal tender, and the institution of majority rule. Spooner firmly upheld the view that society is no more than a collection of individuals, and that only individual rights exist. His best known work was "No Treason: A Constitution of No Authority".



LYSANDER SPOONER

By Carl Watner

One of the ideas central to anarchism is the concept of proprietary justice. The proprietary theory of justice is concerned with just one thing: the crucial determination of just versus unjust property titles; that is of property titles of individuals in their own bodies and in the material objects around them. The determination of property titles is highly critical because, in the deepest sense, all property is ultimately private. It must ultimately be controlled or belong to some individual person or group of persons. Since individual survival is impossible without appropriation, the significant question in all social analysis is whether the actual owners, the actual users of property, are legitimate or criminal. The basic purpose of this paper is to present the ideas of proprietary justice as formulated by the 19th Century individualist-anarchist, Lysander Spooner. Spooner's views on proprietary justice will be illustrated by the position he

took on the Irish landlord question in his 1880 pamphlet, *Revolution*, and by examining his critique of government by consent.

"Lysander Spooner has many great distinctions in the history of political thought. For one thing, he was undoubtedly the only constitutional lawyer in history to evolve into an individualist-anarchist; for another, he became steadily and inexorably more radical as he grew older. Of all the host of Lockean natural rights theorists, Lysander Spooner was the only one to push the theory to its logical-and infinitely radical-conclusion: individualist anarchism." There is no need here to go into a detailed examination of Spooner's position on slavery and human self-ownership. He was a radical abolitionist even among the Garrisonians of his day. "That human beings are born with the inalienable quality of freedom underlies all of Spooner's arguments. For him 'it was a self-evident truth that...all men are naturally and rightfully free.' 'A man cannot be a subject of human ownership.' 'A man cannot alienate his right to liberty and to himself, —still less can it be taken from him.' Just by being born, a man is free." (Shively, 1971, I, pp. 34-35) As regards the application of the proprietary theory of justice to property titles of individuals to their own bodies, Spooner was a firm defender of the self-ownership axiom; the absolute right of each and every person to own his own

body, mind, and labors thereof, and to be free of coercive interference with that mind, body, and labors.

As to the material objects that surround a person, and as to the land space which a person occupies, Spooner defended unlimited private land ownership. His proprietary theory of justice, in this case, was built upon the homesteading axiom:

The right of property, in *material* wealth, is acquired, in the first instance, in one of these two ways, viz.: first, by simply taking possession of natural wealth, or the productions of nature; and, secondly, by the artificial production of other wealth.

1. The *natural* wealth of the world belongs to those who first take possession of it . . . There is no limit, fixed by the law of nature, to the amount of property one may acquire by simply taking possession of natural wealth, not already possessed, except the limit fixed by his power or ability to take such possession, without doing violence to the person or property of others. So much natural wealth, remaining unpossessed, as any one can take possession of first, becomes absolutely his property . . .

2. The other mode, in which the right of property is acquired, is by the creation, or production, of wealth, by labor. The wealth created by labor, is the rightful property of the creator, or producer. This proposition is so self-evident as hardly to admit of being made more clear; for if the creator, or producer, of wealth, be not its rightful proprietor, surely no one else can be; and such wealth must perish unused. (Spooner, 1855, pp. 21-25)²

The implication of Spooner's thinking is that once a piece of land justly passes into Mr. A's ownership, he cannot be truly said to own that land unless he can convey or sell that title to Mr. B. To prevent Mr. B from exercising his title simply because he doesn't

choose to use the land himself, but rather rents it out voluntarily to Mr. C, is an invasion of B's freedom of contract and of his right to "use" his justly acquired property in a way that suits him.

Spencer had expressed these ideas in his pamphlet on the Irish land question. It was quite appropriate that Spencer chose Ireland as the topic of his essay because for many centuries Celtic Ireland had no State or anything like it. Ancient Ireland persisted in the libertarian path for roughly a thousand years until its brutal conquest by England in the 17th Century. Private ownership of property played an essential role in the legal and social institutions of ancient Irish society. Irish law developed under the "brehons", who were professional jurists that had no State affiliation or sanction. The English invasions, which began in the 12th Century, commenced the gradual imposition of



English feudal concepts and of English common law upon a culture that found these ideas totally incompatible with their lifestyle. Eventually the property rights of the Irish people were destroyed by the English conquerors. In the eyes of the English, the Irish and the nature of Irish customs, made them rebels to all good government. Ireland, even as late as the 17th and 18th Cen-

turies, remained a tribal society in which there was no clear cut landlord-tenant relationship. When James I confiscated large tracts of Ireland he considered that he was exercising the right of the conqueror by relieving the defeated Irish chieftains of their property. To the peasant, however, who lived on the confiscated land, it was his property (that is, his chieftain had no right to surrender it) and had been since time immemorial.³

As the Irish land system evolved into the 19th Century, the Irish tenant farmers had no rights. The peasant tenant rented his plot of land, often built a stone cottage with his own labor, and tried to scratch a living from the soil. When he fell behind in his rents he was summarily evicted and given no compensation for the improvements he had made because there was no defined contract. Ireland was also cursed with the absentee landlord, which had started with the original grants of land to royal favorites, many of whom had no intention of living in Ireland. The great famine of the late 1840's, caused by the potato blight aggravated the condition of the Irish peasants. Like circumstances (crop failure) repeated themselves in the late 1870's and it was under conditions of eviction and near-starvation that Spencer addressed himself to the Irish land question.

Spencer's pamphlet was titled: REVOLUTION: THE ONLY REMEDY FOR THE OPPRESSED CLASSES OF IRELAND, ENGLAND, AND OTHER PARTS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE. A REPLY TO "DUNRAVEN." His attack was directed against the Earl of Dunraven, who had toured the United States in late 1879, and who characterized himself as the typical English aristocrat. The major thrust of Spencer's pamphlet may be set out in a few paragraphs:

The whole force of your (Dunraven's) letter, as a defense of Irish landlords, rests upon the assumption that they are the real and true owners of the lands they now hold. But this assumption is a false one. These lands, largely or mostly, were originally taken by the sword, and have ever since been held by the sword. Neither the original robbers, nor any subsequent holders, have ever had any other than a robber's title to them. And robbery gives not better title to lands than it does to any other property.

No lapse of time can cure this defect in the original title. Every successive holder not only endorses all the robberies of all his predecessors, but he commits a new one himself by withholding the lands, either from the original and true owners, or from those who, but for those robberies, would have been their legitimate heirs and assigns.

And what is true of the lands in Ireland is equally true of the lands in England. The lands in England, largely or mostly, were originally taken by the sword, and have ever since been held by the sword; and the present holders have no better titles to them than simple, naked robbery has given them . . .

The fact that the direct descendants of the original holders of these lands cannot now be individually traced, and reinstated in the property of their ancestors, cannot screen the present holders from their just liability; since the original robbery of the lands, and the entailing them in the families of the original robbers, have not only deprived the direct descendants of the original holders of their rights, but have also deprived all other persons of their natural

rights to buy these lands. These other persons, therefore, as well as the direct descendants of the original holders, have a wrong to be redressed . . .

The real government of England, the actual ruling power, for more than a thousand years, has been a mere band of robbers; a mere confederacy of villains. And it is nothing else to-day. They have not only plundered and enslaved the great body of the people of England and Ireland, but, as far as possible, the peoples of all other parts of the globe.

The plundered people of England and Ireland need neither emigration, legislation, mitigation, nor modification. They need, and if they do their duty to themselves and to you (Dunraven), they will have, REVOLUTION, RETRIBUTION, RESTITUTION, AND AS FAR AS POSSIBLE, COMPENSATION. (pp. 4-9)

“*Revolution* had the widest circulation of any writing by Spooner because Irish nationalists used it extensively to further their cause. While the issues of economic and political exploitation aroused Spooner, we can be sure he had no sympathy with Irish nationalism itself—that is, with the forming of a powerful nation-state ruled by Irishmen but otherwise modeled on England.” (Shively, 1971, I, p. 6) Even within the individualist-anarchist movement of his own time, which was interested in and highly supportive of ‘the no-rent movement’ and the Irish Land League, Spooner’s pamphlet aroused controversy.

In 1891, four years after Spooner’s death, Benjamin Tucker (publisher of the famous anarchist journal, *LIBERTY*, and close associate of Spooner) took Spooner to task. Spooner’s concepts of proprietary justice were “positively foolish” because they were “fundamentally foolish”,

—because, that is to say, its discussion of the acquisition of the right of property starts with a basic proposition that must be looked upon by all consistent Anarchists as obvious nonsense. I quote this basic proposition. “The natural wealth of the world belongs to those who first take possession of it . . . So much natural wealth, remaining unpossessed, as any one can take possession of first, becomes absolutely his property.” In interpretation of this, Mr. Spooner defines taking possession of a thing, as the bestowing of valuable labor upon it, such, for instance, in the case of land, as cutting down the trees or building a fence around it. What follows from this? Evidently that a man may go to a piece of vacant land and fence it off; that he may then go to a second piece and fence that off; then to a third, and fence that off; then to a fourth, a fifth, a hundredth, a thousandth, fencing them all off; that, unable to fence off himself as many as he wishes, he may hire other men to do the fencing for him; and that then he may stand back and bar all other men from using these lands, or admit them as tenants at such rental as he may choose to exact. (*LIBERTY*, No. 180, p. 4, March 21, 1891)

In these circumstances, Tucker questioned: “What becomes of the Anarchistic doctrine of occupancy and use as the basis and limit of land ownership?”

To further illustrate his differences with Spooner, Tucker related a conversation that he had with Spooner concerning the rightfulness of the Irish resistance to absentee landlords and the no-rent movement:

Mr. Spooner bases his opposition to Irish and English landlords on the *sole* ground that they or their ancestors took their lands *by the sword* from the original holders. This is plainly stated,—so plainly that I took issue with Mr. Spooner on this point when he asked me to read the manuscript (of *REVOLUTION*) before his publications. I then asked him whether if Dunraven or his ancestors had found unoccupied the very lands that he now holds, and had fenced them off, he would have any objection to raise against Dunraven’s title to and leasing of these lands. He declared emphatically that he would not. Whereupon I protested that his pamphlet, powerful as it was within its scope, did not go to the bottom of the land question. (*LIBERTY*, No. 182, p. 6, April 18, 1891)

As we have already seen, Spooner could not support a national government for the Irish, even if it were one free of English interference. This was so because of his proprietary theory of justice. One continuing political theme in Ireland, since the beginning of English domination, was the desire for Ireland to have its own parliament. Many Irish patriots viewed the American rebellion and Revolutionary War against England, as one phase of the constitutional struggle to rid the British empire of the dominion of an English parliament. What many of the American revolutionaries and Irish nationalists did not realize, however, was that to contend that their moral consent was the moral justification for the government ruling over them, was to lay the groundwork for anarchy. To contend that government rests on the consent of the governed is to begin the descent on the slippery slope to anarchism. Political theorists attempted to avoid the anarchistic implications of the natural rights—social contract position by resorting to the doctrine of tacit consent.⁴ “It was the great achievement of the nineteenth century anarchist Lysander Spooner to demolish the tacit consent doctrine, particularly as it applies to the U.S. Constitution. Spooner’s natural right theory, combined with his refusal to recognize the surrender of rights through tacit consent, brings out the radical anarchism latent in the Lockean tradition.” (Smith, 1978, p. 224)

Whether or not it is coincidental, it is certainly interesting to observe that one of the earliest applications of the proprietary theory of justice to government ‘by consent’ was enunciated in *THE CASE OF IRELAND’S BEING BOUND BY ACTS OF PARLIAMENT IN ENGLAND*, STATED by William Molyneux, written in 1698. Molyneux, a friend and correspondent of John Locke, was intent on proving that Ireland was not obligated by acts of Parliament. His argument was based on past English history and Irish precedent, as well as the doctrine of natural rights: “I shall venture to assert, that the Right of being subject ONLY to such Laws, to which Men give their *own* Consent, is so *inherent* in all Mankind, and founded on such *immutable* Laws of Nature and Reason, that ‘tis not to be aliened, or given up by any Body of Men whatever . . . I have no other Notion of *Slavery*; but being bound by a Law, to which I do not consent.” (pp. 113, 169) Accord-

ding to Molyneux,

The obligation of all Laws having the same Foundation, if *One Law* may be imposed *without Consent*, any *Other Law whatever*, may be imposed on us *without our Consent*. This will naturally introduce *Taxing us without our Consent*; and this as necessarily destroys our *Property*. I have no other Notion of *Property*, but a *Power of Disposing my Goods as I please*, and not as another shall Command: Whatever another may *Rightfully* take from me *without my Consent*, I have certainly no *Property* in. To *Tax* me without *Consent*, is little better, if at all, than *downright Robbing me*. I am sure the Great patriots of *Liberty and Property*, the *Free People of England*, cannot think of such a thing but with *Abhorrence*. (p. 170)

Despite Molyneux's hopeful closing remark, we have nearly three centuries of government taxation and oppression to prove him wrong in practice. Spooner, writing a century and a half after Molyneux (and so far as we know, unaware of these earlier utterances) used the same powerful logic to formulate the doctrine of anarchistic opposition to government based on proprietary justice. Said Spooner:

It was a principle of the Common Law, as it is of the law of nature, and of common sense, that no man can be taxed without his personal consent . . . Taxation without consent is as plainly robbery, when enforced against one man, as when enforced against millions; . . . Taking a man's money without his consent, is also as much robbery, when it is done by millions of men, acting in concert, and calling themselves a government, as when it is done by a single individual, acting on his own responsibility, and calling himself a highwayman. Neither the numbers engaged in the act, nor the different characters they assume as a cover for the act, alter the nature of the act itself.

If the government can take a man's money without his consent, there is no limit to the additional tyranny it may practice upon him; for, with his money it can hire soldiers to stand over him, keep him in subjection, plunder him at discretion, and kill him if he resists . . . It is therefore a first principle, a very *sine qua non* of political freedom, that a man can be taxed only by his personal consent . . .

Governments have no more right, in nature or reason, to *assume* a man's consent to be protected by them, and to be taxed for that protection, when he has given no actual consent, than a fire or marine insurance company have to assume a man's consent to be protected by them, and to pay the premium, when his actual consent has never been given. To take a man's property without his consent is robbery; and to assume his consent, where no actual consent is given, makes the taking none the less robbery. If it did, the highwayman has the same right to assume a man's consent to part with his purse, that any other man, or body of men, can have. And his assumption would afford as much moral justification for his robbery as does a like assumption, on the part of the government, for taking a man's property without his consent. The government's pretence of protecting him, as an equivalent for the taxation, affords no justification. (Spooner, 1852, pp. 222-223)

Spooner's analysis of government and taxation points up that it is impossible to define taxation in a way which makes it different from robbery. Taxation is theft, despite government rhetoric. Simply put, a man cannot be presumed to have parted with his property without first having given his express, personal agreement. Spooner further developed these ideas in a series of

three post-Civil War pamphlets, titled, NO TREASON. According to Spooner, governments and nations, if they can be said to rightfully exist at all, can exist only by consent, and this means: "*the separate, individual consent of every man who is required to contribute, either by taxation or personal service, to the support of the government . . .* Either the separate, individual consent of every man, *who is required to aid, in any way, in supporting the government*, is necessary, or the consent of no one is necessary." (NO TREASON. NO. I, pp. 10-11) In NO TREASON. NO. II, Spooner argued that "Either 'taxation without consent is robbery,' or it is not. If it is *not*, then any number of men, who choose, may at any time associate; call themselves a government; assume absolute authority over all weaker than themselves; plunder them at will; can kill them if they resist. If, on the other hand, 'taxation without consent is robbery,' it necessarily follows that every man who has not consented to be taxed, has the same natural right to defend his property against a taxgatherer, that he has to defend it against a highwayman." (p. 13)

In his final pamphlet of this series, NO TREASON. No. VI, THE CONSTITUTION OF NO AUTHORITY., Spooner broke new ground by thoroughly demolishing the theory of tacit consent. Spooner argued that merely living in a certain geographic place in control of government, or voting in government elections, in no way implied one's consent to the government of that territory. Elections mean nothing; for Spooner showed that a majority of people never vote, and of those who do, the actual numbers supporting the elected candidates are so small (as a percentage of the population) as to be ludicrous. "Elections are secret; therefore, you cannot call representatives legal agents, since they do not know specifically whom they do represent." They claim to represent those that voted for them, those that voted against them, and those that never voted at all; clearly a violation of every legal principle of agency and every proviso against conflict of interest. "On the question of the Constitution itself, no vote ever had been taken, and as a legal contract the Constitution has no validity." (Shively, 1971, 3) According to Spooner:

the Constitution was never signed, nor agreed to, by anybody, as a contract, and therefore never bound anybody, and is now binding upon nobody; and is, moreover, such a one as no people can ever hereafter be expected to consent to, except as they may be forced to do so at the point of the bayonet, . . . (p. 59)

The proprietary theory of justice highlights the anarchist opposition to government. All States and governments, wherever and whenever they exist have two characteristics to which anarchism objects. First, governments presume to establish a monopoly of defense services (police, courts, army, etc.) over a certain

geographic area. Land owners who rightfully own the land in that given geographic area have no choice except to patronize the government defense services. Entrepreneurs and businessmen, who wish to provide competing defense services, are prohibited from using their property in such a fashion. Secondly, all governments support themselves by compulsory levies; by taxation. Taxation is the equivalent of robbery because a just property owner is being deprived of his goods or money against his will. If he resists, he is either threatened or imprisoned and his goods seized and confiscated. The fact that the government is offering goods and services in exchange for its tax revenues is of no consequence to the property owner who does not want the proffered service or is indifferent to it. Even if government were voluntarily financed, the forcible control of certain geographic areas would be a violation of the proprietary justice strictures. Justice in land ownership and the ownership of material objects in the world can only be legitimate if they can ultimately be traced back to the self-ownership and homesteading axioms. Governments violate the rights of the self-owner when it conscripts his services, in the form of personal labor, and when it seizes the material wealth he has created or produced. It violates the right of the homesteader or his heirs or successors to the land which they first homesteaded. Governments necessarily deny legitimate owners the rightful use of their labor and materially owned objects.

In his pamphlet on NATURAL LAW, OR THE SCIENCE OF JUSTICE: A TREATISES ON NATURAL LAW, NATURAL JUSTICE, NATURAL RIGHTS, NATURAL LIBERTY, AND NATURAL SOCIETY: SHOWING THAT ALL LEGISLATION WHATSOEVER IS AN ABSURDITY, A USURPATION, AND A CRIME, written in 1882, Spooner summarized the proprietary theory of justice by referring to it as the "science of mine and thine." It is the science of peace, "it is the science which alone can tell us on what conditions mankind can live in peace with each other." According to Spooner these conditions are:

first, that each man shall do towards every other, all that justice requires him to do; as, for example, that he shall pay his debts, that he shall return borrowed or stolen property to its owner, and that he shall make reparation for any injury he may have done to the person or property of another.

The second condition is, that each man shall abstain from doing to another, anything which justice forbids him to do: as, for example, that he shall abstain from committing theft, robbery, arson, murder, or any other crime against the person or property of another . . .

Through all time, so far as history informs us, wherever mankind have attempted to live in peace with each other, both the natural instincts, and the collective wisdom of the human race have acknowledged and prescribed, as an indispensable condition, obedience to this one only universal obligation; viz., *that each should live honestly towards every other.*

The ancient maxim makes the sum of a man's legal duty to his fellow men to be simply this: "*To live honestly, to hurt no one, to give to every one his due.*"

This entire maxim is really expressed in the single words, *to live honestly*; since to live honestly is to hurt no one, and give to every one his due. (pp. 5-6)

Based on his concept of natural law and proprietary justice, Spooner also demonstrated in this pamphlet that if there is no such thing as natural justice, then governments have no business to exist at all. Spooner argued for anarchism and the abolition of government in the following ways. First, if we admit the existence of natural law and an objective reality, there is no reason for government to monopolize the administration of justice or defense services. Because the principles of justice are grounded in objective, natural laws, they fall within the province of human knowledge and are knowable by all who choose to study and reason them out. Just as we do not require a government to dictate what is right or wrong in steel making, so we do not require a government to dictate what is right or wrong in the realm of justice. If it is possible to verify objectively that one legal procedure is valid, whereas another is not, then it does not matter who employs the procedure in question. We should look to reason and fact; not to government.⁵

Secondly, if we deny the existence of natural law and objective reality, then we certainly do not require such an institution as government. What purpose could it then serve? If there is no such thing as objective truth to differ about, then "there is no moral standard, and never can be any moral standard by which any controversy whatever, between two or more human beings, can be settled in a manner to be obligatory upon either;" and the human race must be inevitably at war; "forever striving to plunder, enslave, and murder each other; with no instrumentalities but fraud and force to end the conflict." If there be no such thing as justice, then there can be no such acts as crimes.

The proprietary theory of justice furnishes the basis for a moral rationalism—a moral theory that insists that institutions, such as government, are subject to moral scrutiny regardless of their long tradition and that individuals are subject to moral scrutiny regardless of their "official" governmental offices. It provides for the rational dignity of the individual human being and provides a justification for human existence independent of the need for any social consensus. By permitting the individual to stand alone, outside the social or political bodies of mankind, it provides the only basis on which the individual may rightfully criticize in both word and deed every other individual and existent social institution.

Thus concludes our survey of Lysander Spooner's thought as it relates to the proprietary theory of justice. Hopefully this essay has contributed to understanding the logic and significance of his theories within the context of anarchist thought and history.

Carl Watner, a contributing editor of "The Voluntaryist", lives in Baltimore, Maryland. A founding member of the Voluntaryists organization, along with George Smith and Wendy McElroy, Carl has written extensively for several libertarian journals. He can be reached at Box 5836, Baltimore, MD, 21208.

FOOTNOTES:

¹I am indebted to Murray Rothbard for many of the introductory ideas in this essay. Particularly see his introduction to NATURAL LAW in the September 1974 LIBERTARIAN FORUM.

²Spooner adds the following footnote to his explanation: "Some persons object to this principle, for the reason that, as they say, a single individual might, in this way, take possession of a whole continent, if he happened to be the first discoverer; and might hold it against all the rest of the human race. But this objection arises wholly from an erroneous view of what it is, to *take possession* of anything. To simply stand upon a continent, and *declare* one's self the possessor of it, is not to take possession of it. One would, in that way, take possession only of what his body actually covered. To take possession of more than this, he must bestow some valuable labor upon it, such, for example, as cutting down the trees, breaking up the soil, building a hut or a house upon it, or a fence around it. In these cases, he holds the land in order to hold the labor which he has put into it, or upon it. And the land is his, so long as the labor he has expended upon it remains in a condition to be valuable for the uses for which it was expended; because it is not to be supposed that a man has abandoned the fruits of his labor so long as they remain in a state to be practically useful to him." (p. 22)

³I am especially indebted to Peden, Davies, and Marlow for the general comments I make about Ireland.

⁴Josiah Tucker in 1781 was probably the first to point out the anarchistic implications of Molyneux, Locke, and the American rebels, I am indebted to George H. Smith for pointing this out to me.

⁵Roy Childs and George H. Smith originally developed these ideas, largely building on Spooner's foundation.

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MORAL LAW

by Robert LeFevre

Is there a moral law?

Do such things as moral principles exist?

For centuries scholars and philosophers have tended to conclude that morality is a derivative of custom, and nothing more. Since customs vary from tribe to tribe, clime to clime, and nation to nation, it has seemed impossible to establish a single criterion of "good" or "bad" which would be world-wide in application and acceptance.

What is "good" in one location at a given period may be viewed as neutral or possibly even "bad" at the same time in some other location. Further, ideas of the "good" do not remain constant even in a single location. Although concepts as to what is moral and what is immoral tend to have long lives because they are absorbed by each new generation and become the ethos and the mores of each distinct grouping, there are gradual developments which bring shadings of interpretation and even sharp alteration in direction.

In short, the realm of morals has appeared to be subjective. "Good" and "bad" are matters of opinion. And while we all have opinions about how people "ought to" behave, no central objective evidence has been accepted so as to assure unanimity of view.

Perhaps Mark Twain summed it up when he declared, "Nothing needs reform so much as other people's morals."

It is the purpose of this writing to establish that a moral law does exist. That means that I intend to show by the use of scientific methodology; by employing reason and logic, that an objective position can be found which could be universally accepted and cannot honestly be denied by anyone willing to employ the same tools.

Unfortunately, in entering this area of discussion, the landscape is difficult to discern because it has been fogged in by various religious and theological arguments. I seek neither to refute nor confirm any religious or theological view. That is grist for some other mill. Atheist, Deist Theist, Agnostic or Polytheist should be comfortable, for I propose to examine the moral issue

in an entirely secular and laic fashion. I am looking for something that exists in the nature of things as they are which, if properly examined, will establish that there is in such existing phenomena a discernible rule of logic telling human beings what they "ought to" do; or more precisely, telling them what they "ought **not**" do. I am looking for a natural law.

A natural law can be discovered whenever a limited number of known factors are put together in a specific way so that the reaction from that placement produces constant and consistent reaction in a predictable manner. All natural laws are discovered; human beings do not create them. The discovery is confirmed when known factors (A-B-C) are put together under specific conditions (X) and a predictable outcome (Y) always ensues.

When A-B-C are joined under specific conditions but Y manifests only 70% of the time, then we have not made the discovery of a principle, rather we have discovered a probability. One can have respect for a probability but one is compelled (by reality) to accept a principle. All true principles are manifestations of nature or, if you prefer, manifestations of the nature of reality. In short, things react according to what they are. When we learn what they are, then we can predict how they will react.

Bear in mind that all knowledge, whether it leads to probability or principle is found IN CONTEXT. The conditions under which known factors are examined are at least as important as any of the factors themselves. Thus, we might say that the nature of wood is such that it can be used readily as a fuel. IN CONTEXT, of course. Some wood, if submerged in water over an extensive time becomes "water-logged" and under ordinary conditions will not burn. So the principle that wood can predictably be used as a fuel is modified by nature and the condition of the wood at the time. Burning anything requires oxygen. Put flammable wood into all the appropriate contextual factors but remove the oxygen and wood will not burn. Again, predictability is modified this time by the possible omission of a contextual factor.

Thus, in a sense, all human knowledge contains a possible flaw. With our limited human comprehension we do not know all the contextual factors that might exist in the universe. With a limited time span in which to learn and with virtually no awareness whatever of what MIGHT BE existing in remote portions of a universe impossible for us to sense, anything we presently know could be modified by something we might discover later.

To illustrate, I have heard many students argue that Newton's "law of gravity" was DISPROVED by Einstein's theories. The fact is that Einstein did not dispute Newton's findings. Newton's findings still stand in CONTEXT. Einstein enlarged the context to introduce factors not yet considered. Thanks to Newton and the

predictability of the "law of gravity" (in context) we still have an aviation industry, a building industry and many other industries which function in the context of our daily lives at the present time. These industries exist because the law of gravity works precisely as Newton said it did. The law of gravity has not been repealed.

Returning to the question of morality, it is significant that nature, qua nature, provides we humans with no visible evidence of cause and effect respecting our own view of the "good" and the "bad."

The overarching view of religion has probably served to influence thinking and research in this area. What savants and scholars have sought to find was something in nature which would react to man's "immoral" (unacceptable) behavior.

Here is a man who spends his life, cheating, stealing and robbing others. Is there something in nature which decrees that sooner or later he will suffer for these negative and unwanted actions? Studies indicate that there is no natural retaliation. While it may be true that some thieves will suffer; it is equally true that some will not. The miscreant has to protect himself from his outraged neighbors who know of his excesses, but the rain and the sun treat him the same way they treat others. All the laws of nature behave toward the thief exactly as they behave toward his victims.

Throughout nature it is the fit who survive. The big fish eats the little fish, if the big fish is capable. There is zero indication that nature frowns upon the big fish. Nature seems to ask only one question: "**Can** you survive?" It does not ask: "**Should** you survive?"

While some have argued that misdeeds will be punished in some other life if not in this one, the very growth and dominance of governments furnishes evidence that most people don't believe it. Few believe that justice, which has misfired during life, will somehow hit the mark after death. The man of faith believes that justice will come at the hands of God. But those who lack that faith, sue. They want justice here and now because they aren't certain any will be forthcoming later on.

In view of these findings, which are common to us all, how can one postulate the existence of a "law" of moral behavior? Nature does not punish evil doers and appears neutral only to effective survivors. Nature has no time for ineptitude.

In considering the context in which moral questions are discussed, I propose to introduce a contextual factor that has been omitted up until now. Since we have grown accustomed to discovering principles only in respect to TANGIBLE phenomena,

our approach to morality has been along that line.

But morality does NOT relate to anything tangible and cannot be found in a world consisting of tangible things. Morality is a CONCEPT about how we would like other people to behave. Therefore, morality is an idea. This means that it is a derivative of the mind and, hence, is subjective.

Heretofore we have deduced all principles from the behavior of objective phenomena. Now, we must seek to find a principle in an arena wherein it has long been accepted that objective findings are impossible to deduce.

The contextual factor, which has been overlooked, relates to a particular way of looking at man qua man. Insensibly most scholars have treated the genus homo as something apart from nature. Man is viewed as having an impact (usually negative) upon the "natural" world. Few have taken the time to learn that man is neither contra-natural nor anti-natural. Man is as much a part of nature as anything else in the universe. Man is simply a species of living creatures made up of the stuff which is found in the universe and incapable of ever leaving the universe (so far as is known). Man's impact upon nature, while impressive and profound, is no more hostile to nature than any other part of nature acting within a natural universe.

If we begin to recognize man as co-existent and part of the natural order, we will have to accept that the brains with which mankind is endowed are also part of the natural order. This means that the "mind-set" human beings acquire as a result of experience and learning is the natural product of the natural brains of natural beings.

Man is probably more a creature of this world, this solar system, and this galaxy within the universe than he cares to believe.

Looking at our particular species as part of nature opens the door to the possibility that predictability may exist within the mental arena when we are dealing only with concepts and everything of which we speak is subjective.

Since human brains are natural, and the mind-set of any given individual is a result of this accumulation of data, attitude and desire, as well as his reaction to the nature of the universe and the stuff of which the universe is made, it would follow that instead of seeking for objective cause and effect amid tangible phenomena, we should seek predictability, within context, or within the conceptual arena.

That means that if we can create the conditions of a mental experiment, we can discover if a single viewpoint emerges. If we can observe a mental reaction to a particular set of circumstances under controlled conditions (in context) and in consequence find that WITHOUT EXCEPTION every human mind will

take this position, then we have found a principle where it has been thought that none could be found. Predictability in the world of ideas should be as acceptable as predictability in the world of tangible things (IN CONTEXT).

Since we are discussing only one thing, moral law, I will largely omit discussion here of the nature of man and the nature of human property, both of which examinations would be germane at this juncture. I am omitting them by presuming that the reader has a working knowledge of his own nature and of the role property plays in his own life.

I must, however, make reference to one point. In the long struggle man has made as he has emerged from a primordial, prehistoric beginning, it is only those persons who own property who have been concerned about the behavior of others in a moral sense. Before property ideas were developed humans lived in small groups as hunters and foragers. In the ensuing hand-to-mouth economy, owning property had virtually no meaning. The single item of transcendent value was food, always in short supply. When food was found it was probably eaten at once.

As the species developed its intellectual powers and began to devise tools and to learn that some land is more advantageous than other land, etc., obtaining and keeping control of its land, its water supply and its food sources became factors of primary concern. The a-moral view of the hunter and forager (you can eat anything you can grab) was gradually replaced by a taboo. **It is wrong to eat (take) something that someone else has grabbed ahead of you but hasn't yet gotten all the good out of it that he wants.**

Thus, the beginning of concern about how OTHER PEOPLE BEHAVE, emerged from the wishes of property owners, not from the wishes of those who did not own. This condition maintains today. Those who have little or nothing have no difficulty in rationalizing theft as a beneficial act if, as a result of theft, they have not become (even momentarily) haves.

But a fascinating change in attitude occurs abruptly in the minds of any persons who benefit from theft. When they see themselves as a "have" in a given area, they are highly incensed if a suggestion is made that anyone has a moral prerogative to steal from them. Few are more hostile to theft than those who have just benefitted from it, and fear a reaction. They don't mind stealing from others. The "others" can always manage. But they are outraged if the sticky fingers of kleptomania reach into their own pockets.

What can readily be seen is that it is natural for human beings to seek to protect whatever belongs to them. Whether it is their life or their fortune, whatever is owned is precious.

What must be underscored is this: The emergence of man from a primitive life described by Hobbes as "ugly, brutish and short" is the result of man's yearning to be safe and unmolested in what he owns. If societal relations can exist in a group of humans who own properties in varying amounts, but who, despite greed and envy refrain from stealing from each other, then a moral society would exist.

The function of this paper, however, has nothing to do with the various methods which have been tried in an effort to eliminate or at least to minimize theft. Rather, the attempt is being made to show that the moral "law" alluded to can be discerned by scientific methods and by the use of logic and reason. Before seeking to offer a single set of opinions to anyone about anything it would surely be desirable to show that whatever conclusions are being offered are in harmony with reality (within our present range of knowledge) and comply with the criteria of careful and precise thought.

However, we can make an interim summary. Moral ideas are related to ideas respecting the ownership of property. My personal view has it that the owners of property, who are invariably the beneficiaries of any effective system against theft, are the originators of moral concepts. But I do not KNOW that in any scientific way. Based on what I do know, it seems most likely. However, there can be no question that a relationship between ownership and moral ideas exists as an historic fact, even if other unconfirmed factors exist.

Let us return to the central theme.

Every item of property as well as every person, exist within its own exterior limits. This is to say that every property and every person has a discernible physical boundary. If the boundary is not readily discernible (as with parcels of land, odors, sounds, broadcast frequencies, ideas, etc.) human language is such that it can be used to locate and fix such boundaries.

We may, in view of this fact, recognize that each human being owns (and controls) himself (his own person) and that all other properties he owns and/or controls in whole or in part, will be treated by that person as extensions of himself. Regardless of the amount or kind of property involved, every human being will predictably object to a trespass of any of his physical boundaries if such trespass occurs without his consent. Stated another way, no human being will approve of his own victimization. The victimization can be against his person or against something he owns, as in theft, arson, embezzlement, etc., but the **victim** will PREDICTABLY disapprove.

Various notions as to what property is and how it is to be owned or possessed exist in various places in the world. But these variables do not effect the outcome. To the degree that

variables do not effect the outcome. To the degree that an individual accepts the ownership of himself by himself; to the degree that he believes that he is the owner of something beyond his own person; to that degree he will resent the violation of his property boundary.

To be precise, the predictable reaction of every human intelligence could be phrased as a rejection of the assumption of power over his own decision-making faculty and ability, by some other specimen of his own kind.

It might be true, and with children frequently is true, that interference with their own decision-making ability by their parents might be beneficial even to the point of saving lives. This doesn't really matter to the child. He resents the intrusion. He prefers to make his own decisions. A violation of his will in this regard may induce all manner of violent reaction until he manages to gain some degree of control.

Because of this, I am not seeking to predict what a given individual will DO as a result of a boundary violation. This may well depend upon his ability to restrain himself in the face of provocation. What can be predicted is that the individual whose boundaries are trespassed will resent it, regardless of what he does as a consequence.

It is also important to stress that this discovery of predictability does not attempt to claim that all human beings resent each and every property violation. That is decidedly not the case. In many instances human beings will be eager for a property boundary violation to occur and will clamor for it. Bear in mind that the finding of which I speak arises **ONLY IN CONTEXT**. The very individual who will cry loudly for intervention across his neighbor's boundaries, will resent and disapprove of similar intervention if his own boundaries are involved.

No human being wishes to be victimized. If and when victimization occurs, it is logical and reasonable to assume (regardless of how he may react) that he disapproved.

It is my belief that all discussions respecting "crime" arose over this question of boundary violation. In pre-history we discovered that men were already engaged in nefarious behavior which involved property trespasses against whole groups of persons or against single individuals.

Ideas of "good" and "bad" behavior are tied to these events. A "good" person committed no act of aggression against his neighbor's boundaries. A "bad" person did. Therefore, it was easy to discern that from the standpoint of any potential victim, moral (desirable) behavior would consist of non-trespass. This appears to hold true whether we are speaking of inter-personal or international relationships.

The ambivalence of human behavior is crystal clear. Those who view themselves as the victors and the profit-makers have no

moral problem with violating the boundaries of others. An extensive rationale exists: "They are rich and we are poor, so we must destroy the rich." "They deserve theft because they are thieves, too." "They might hurt us so let us hurt them first." "They are different from us and we don't understand them." "They are poor and want what we have so we must protect ourselves from the poor." Etc., etc.

But those who have been victimized by aggressors and anticipate that it could happen again, are far less certain of the merit of theft. Rather, they at last begin to make an appeal on moral grounds. Unhappily they often make objections to "this particular" boundary violation but reserve the privilege of approving of other violations. A solid opposition to boundary violation on principle is more effective than piece-meal objection or that some particular type of weapon is horrible or "inhumane" or "uncalled for."

But the persons favoring bellicosity refer to moral arguments as "cowardly" or "helpful to our enemy" (when they decide which boundary is target for today's aggression).

The result is in the nature of a stalemate with efforts to locate a moral law almost abandoned.

I personally believe that the moral position, derived logically and employing the scientific method (limited factors—controlled conditions—predictable results) is mandatory. To show that I must take one more step.

True morality cannot be discerned merely by virtue of a universal mind-set based on predictability. It could provide us with a unanimity of what people found desirable, but it must do more than that.

A moral position must be consonant **IN FACT** with the real nature of our species. And the fact is that antipathy against property boundary violation must be based on what is objectively in harmony with the real world; not merely subjectively desirable.

So, let me state that man is capable of experiencing both pain and pleasure. From this it is a small step to recognize that pain which is **INFLICTED** by one person upon another is universally unwelcome. Even the masochist, who appears to enjoy certain types of pain does not welcome it when it is imposed upon him. Inflicted pain is therefore contrary to the real nature of man and counter-productive to his best interests.

But is a property boundary violation such that it brings pain? Granting that damage inflicted physically on the body of a person induces pain, but is damage inflicted upon something that person owns always painful?

Bear in mind that the principle I have sought to set forth makes no such claim. It is not the damage (theft, arson, vandalism, etc.) that might be inflicted upon the property which would be the definitive factor; but rather the violation of the will of the property

owner, in respect to something he owns. The violation of a person's will to control what is his is universally painful.

I have already conceded that in cases where children are involved, parental intervention across boundaries may prove beneficial and even necessary to the child's survival. But this is only a temporary condition. Were parental intervention to continue beyond a very early date, the child would be over-protected to his ultimate detriment. Crossing the boundary of a child, when absolutely essential, should be viewed as a form of punishment and used sparingly; only for the purposes of instruction. In terms of man qua man, violating the boundaries of others, even if you are smarter, bigger, richer and more experienced than your victim, is counter-productive to his ultimate development as well as your own.

Intervention in the lives and properties of others AGAINST THEIR WILLS, FOR THEIR OWN GOOD, tends to make them dependent upon you, a double counter-productive consequence.

What is truly important to grasp is that in speaking of morality, I have not meant to imply that nature or nature's God deplores bad conduct and reacts to punish the offender. The apparent indifference of Nature is compensated for by the enormous concern of owners within our own species.

Let me summarize the moral law as the evidence shows: "Violating the boundary of person or property of any human being against the wishes of that person is a wrongful act and counter productive to the general well-being of human-kind."

Any violation of the moral law consists of an error in judgment. Every crime that occurs, every boundary violation (there is no such thing as a real crime that does not entail a boundary violation) is a mistake in judgment on the part of some human being.

Mankind, being human, will make mistakes in judgment. Some errors are more serious than others, but in the end were we clever enough and well enough informed, it is conceivable that we could create a moral society in which no one ever violated the boundary of another. It is conceivable. That is to say, it is a concept I can visualize in my mind.

For it actually to come about as an objective reality the development of the human mind would have to be so complete at an early date that even children would "listen to reason" and intervention across their boundaries would never be necessary or desirable.

I trust you will pardon my skepticism. Given the nature of our species AS IT PRESENTLY EXISTS (in context) I profoundly doubt the creation of such a **society**.

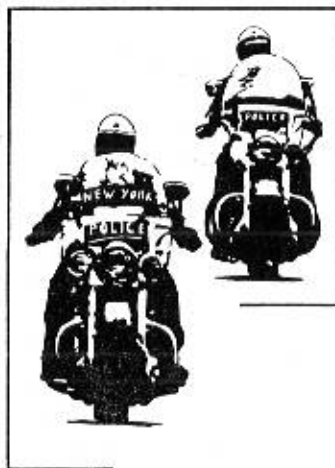
Despite this doubt, I am profoundly excited about moral law as I have stated it. I have found it not only possible but relatively easy to live my life according to that moral law. I haven't done it

perfectly. But I have managed to up-grade my performance. And if I can make that claim even in the face of those who have known me for many years, then it would certainly be possible for anyone else to follow the same set of tenets and, in consequence, have the satisfaction I have reaped by so doing.

Founder of the Freedom School (later renamed Rampart College) in Colorado, Robert LeFevre writes a weekly newspaper column for the Freedom Newspaper, Inc. (The Register). LeFevre has authored over half-a-dozen books.

THE CASE FOR PRIVITIZING PROTECTIVE SERVICES

by James Gallagher



"Very few crimes are committed in the presence of police."

Robert LeFevre
1978

THE FUNCTIONS OF PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Human beings in organized societies have naturally specialized in the function of self-defense. So that individuals may go about their affairs without having to commit large amounts of effort and resources to protection of their life, limb and property from predators (human and non-human), we arrange for trusted agencies to act in our behalf when we become subject to aggression. Unfortunately, the agencies charged with the defense duties have all too often turned out to be the tyrants of history. So it is (and always has been) with police agencies of the state.

PUBLIC PROTECTION SERVICE—THE PROBLEM

Very few of us are satisfied with the services received from our various police departments. Coupled with apparent impotence when faced with criminals, police systematically harass innocent citizens for driving faster than some arbitrary speed, using substances classed as "illegal," selling the same substances, selling and buying sexual or sex-related services, gambling, or providing a vast array of products and services without government permission. Further, we are presented with enormous expenditures and taxes for these same harassments.

The citizen feels impotent because there seems to be no alternative available. Why must this be? Police departments are rewarded where their greatest successes are. The easiest "successes" available to police are those areas where they encounter the least resistance and skill. The "speeder" is easy prey to an armed officer with \$40,000 worth of equipment. The difficulty in arresting the prostitute or the pot-smoking worker is minimal and police departments allocate large amounts of resources and personnel to the area where they can show "results."

The adult-service-providing bookstore proprietor is "easily" hounded from pillar to post because he must operate visibly. Meanwhile, the true crime rate, that is, crimes against property and violence, soars and the poor suffer the most. This has come to be regarded as "highway justice."

The most persuasive influence on our society by the police comes at the hands of these modern-day "highwaymen." It is changing the way the people regard their "protectors." The barrage of TV propaganda (CHIPS, THE ROOKIES, etc.) is a conscious attempt to neutralize the natural resentments people feel. Children in public schools are taught to accept these injustices as "necessary" to public order. Students of history will recognize these tactics from accounts of life in Nazi Germany in the Thirties.

PRIVATE PROTECTION SERVICE—A SOLUTION

The missing element in acquiring satisfactory protection services seems to be the absence of the free market. If the user could choose from whom to buy, the seller of these services would be forced to satisfy their customers or perish. Are there not private security agencies on the market? Yes; however, they do not have the advantage of a coercive tax base from which to control the market. They are also prohibited from those activities which do not constitute protection from crimes against persons or their property. Quite correctly, all should be prohibited from such activities.

CASE HISTORY—MANAGUA, NICARAGUA

The "Guardia Nacional" of Nicaragua was the State-run police agency in the Central American country of Nicaragua. This agency was well armed and was also the army. The army was loyal to the dictator of Nicaragua, General Anastasio Somoza (1979). It was composed mostly of uneducated and poorly paid peasants and corrupt officers who augmented their small salaries with graft and special privileges. Protection of property and person was given only to the influential few.

In poor and lower-middle-class neighborhoods the residents

formed local committees to provide for their own protective services. Guards were stationed every two blocks in each direction, and the guard salaries were paid by those residents within one block of the guard's station. The guard carried a flashlight, a whistle, a night stick, and if he could afford it, a handgun.

At prescribed intervals these guards would signal their counterparts two blocks away to show all was well. In the event of an intrusion, the guards would rouse the residents or run the intruder(s) off, whichever seemed prudent. The crime rate was very low in that area. The price/performance ratio was unmatched by anything that could be provided by the government-operated protective services.

CASE HISTORY—PARADISE ISLAND, BAHAMAS

The intrusion of the State on the private lives of its citizens is yet minimal in the Bahamas, although it is getting worse. There are, as yet, no taxes on income aside from a social security tax amounting to a maximum of \$10 per month. Government funding is mostly provided by custom duties.

The police force is primarily a group of attractively-dressed policemen who direct traffic and pose for tourists' photographs. All serious protective service are provided by private companies. Paradise Island is a complex of hotels and resort facilities including a high-income casino. All police-related activities are provided by Security Services, Ltd.

ONE OF THE BEST RECORDS

The guards are mostly semi-retired men and women of high moral caliber on Paradise Island, who earn not only a supplement to their retirement incomes, but supplement their sense of self-worth as well. Their equipment includes inexpensive Rambler Hornets, and weapons are carried only for armored and high risk services.

The resources of this company are limited to 60 or 70 guards, a few vehicles, three or four administrative people and a guard captain. These resources are sufficient to serve 25 to 30 companies as well as Paradise Island Ltd. Since they have taken responsibility for the protective service for the island, they have had one of the best records in the world for low incidence of theft, rape and assault in a tourist area. They enjoy the flexibility of providing varying levels of service according to the value placed by the customer on security in a given area.

By way of contrast, theft and assault are becoming a major problem on the main island of New Providence, which also depends heavily on tourism.

GOVERNMENT PROTECTION?

Combining a market like protection with the authoritarian mechanism of politics has the same results as mixing oil with water. The mixture leads to abuse and corruption because the public police agency enjoys a monopoly for protective service in a certain geographical area. Apparently, government refuses to allow free competition in protective services because few citizens would voluntarily purchase the type of protection the government presently offers.

A good example of abuse by government policing agencies appeared in an Associated Press news story which reported that "all 15 police officers in Robbins, Illinois were fired amid charges of armed robbery, burglary and car theft" (March 7, 1978). The news story further reported that this was not the first time the police of this Chicago suburb of 9,600 have been accused of shakedowns, thefts and assaults against citizens. Associated Press reported that, "The entire force was suspended in 1970 after two people were shot to death by police."

The village trustees voted 3-1 to fire the police force. Douglas Polsky, attorney for the village, said that, "Evidence was not inventoried, bond money and narcotics have disappeared, there have been a large number of brutality complaints, and police have been accused of armed robbery, burglary and car theft." Polsky said police have neglected to respond to calls and have failed to testify in court.

"Our jail had to be closed because it was not meeting the minimum standards, the men are not well trained, there have been fights between police and between police and citizens," Polsky added.

"No files are maintained, a gun shop in the village has declared itself off-limit to our police and four of our policemen don't even have driver's licenses."

As remarkable as it may seem, other communities have similar problems. They are perhaps not as extreme as the Robbins' incident, but it does give cause to consider alternative means to improve protective services for every citizen.

A FREE MARKET ALTERNATIVE

What can be done?

It can be seen that the quality of services a protective agency will provide will depend on whether the user has the option to secure another agency in the event that the present supplier is in some way unsatisfactory. Users of public service are required to pay for the service whether they use them or not. A step in the direction of more satisfactory protective services might be to

place services provided by the local government on a completely self-supporting basis in competition with privately provided services. This way the user could contract for whatever level of services he or she required.

Ultimately, it is apparent that the government-provided services will lose adherents because of their innate inability to compete on an equal basis with companies committed to making a profit, or other voluntary organizations such as co-ops and neighborhood self-protection associations.

Jim Gallagher, a computer systems analyst and former Libertarian Party State Assembly candidate, lived in Nicaragua for four years. He now lives in Southern California.

OTHER PROJECTS

Rampart Institute Looks to the Future!

Rampart Institute has yearly projects that not only help to educate individuals in liberty, but help to exchange the free flow of information. It is vital that various supporters of individual liberty meet and exchange ideas at seminars, conferences and in publications. But still more, it is important that supporters of liberty work with each other to understand what is needed to create an environment free of coercion. This concept is a sort of "Free Trade of Ideas" is the main catalyst behind many of Rampart Institute's projects.

Free-Market Yellow Pages — Co-sponsored by Rampart Institute (RI) and the Agora Association of Businesses, this 20 page booklet has over 170 listings of businesses and educational organizations. Cost: \$1.50 each or 2/\$2.50, 4/\$4.00.

Future of Freedom Conference — Co-sponsored by various local groups and the FOF Conf. Committee with RI, this conference is scheduled for Oct. 21-23 at California State University, Long Beach. The 11th in a series of conferences held since 1969, the Future of Freedom Conference '83 will feature a tribute banquet to Prof. Murray Rothbard. Other speakers include: Barbara Branden, Robert LeFevre, Prof. John Hospers, Robert Poole, Butler Shaffer and others.

FREELAND II Conference — Sponsored by FREELAND and RI, this conference series discusses floating islands, space settlements and other ideas in search for new lands of liberty. Scheduled for spring of 1984.

LeFevre Seminars — Around every two months, Robert LeFevre gives a 3-evening seminar (2 1/2 hours each evening) on various subjects. Usually, the course is limited to 15 participants. Write for details.

Libertarianism vs. Elective Politics Seminar — On May 7, 1983, co-sponsored by the Voluntarists and RI, a one-day seminar was conducted to discuss whether libertarianism and elective politics are compatible. George Smith and Wendy McElroy, both members of RI's Board of Directors, argued against compatibility; Less Antman and Jeff Hummel, both members of the Libertarian Party, argued for compatibility. Hopefully, this will be an annual event. Some of the papers presented at this seminar will be published in *Rampart Individualist*.

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Like the immortal bird Phoenix, Rampart Institute arose from the ashes of a long deceased organization that once held the respect and admiration in the movement for individual liberty. Opening its doors in 1956, Rampart College, originally located in the Rampart Range of the Colorado Mountains, became defunct in early 1975. Ever since its demise, a tremendous gap in the studies of liberty and free market economics has been apparent. In 1981 Rampart Institute was born to fill this void.

CATALOG OF MATERIALS

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New Rampart and Rampart Individualist

New Rampart is published 6 times a year is a newsletter of current events and commentary. *Rampart Individualist*, bi-annual, is a journal of libertarian thought.

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