

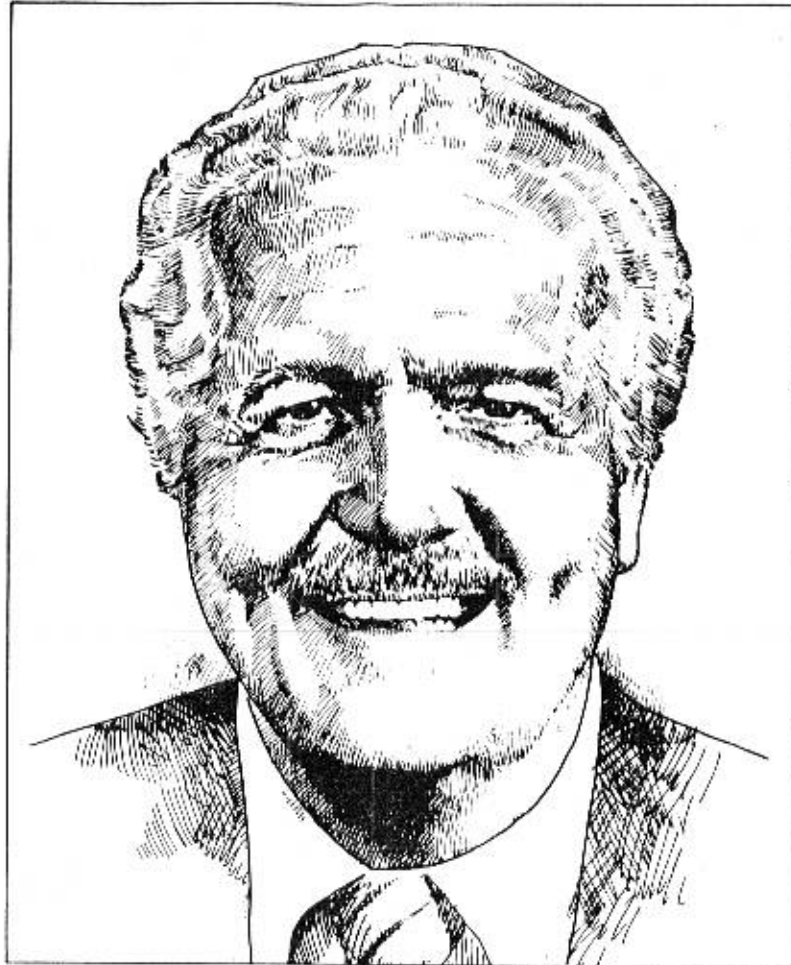
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Robert LeFevre



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Memorial Service for Robert LeFevre

May 23, 1986

Fairhaven Memorial Park (Santa Ana, California)

By Butler Shaffer

(Robert LeFevre died on May 13, 1986 in Flagstaff, Arizona from an apparent heart attack. Bob and Loy LeFevre were returning from the wedding of Carl Watner in South Carolina. The LeFevre's had decided to stop over in Flagstaff before returning to their home in Santa Ana, California.)

I had a difficult time deciding how best to approach my participation in a memorial service for Bob. I did decide, at the outset, that if, by "memorial service," it was intended that we would do or say things that would "memorialize" Bob for posterity, we would be engaged in an act as redundant as carrying coals to Newcastle. In his many books, thousands of newspaper articles, sound tapes and video tapes of many of his talks, and his unique course "The Fundamentals of Liberty," Bob did far more to leave his mark on the intellectual history of the philosophy of freedom than any of us will be able to add to in these services.

I also decided that I didn't care to involve myself in a wake. I would be so out of touch with the happy, smiling, jovial character of Bob LeFevre for us to try to remember him by sitting around consciously trying to make ourselves miserable by his absence. Such an approach would seem to me to be premised on the idea

that death is a tragedy. But since death is an integral part of life, this would suggest that life itself is a tragedy, and Bob would have had no use for that proposition. I am sure that Bob would have joined me in preferring the sentiment, so well expressed by H.L. Mencken, that "death is not the *worst* thing that can happen to you; it is only the *last*." Besides, I recall—as I am sure Lois will—the motto of a local jazz band many of us used to listen to when we lived in Colorado. That motto was that it was "better to be rich and healthy and happy, than to be poor and sick and miserable." I suspect that Bob would have endorsed that theme for our program today.

Bob's philosophy of freedom, and individuality, and peace, and spontaneity, could all be drawn together and looked upon as a philosophy that celebrated *life*, and so I decided that my own words today would be words of *celebration*,...not celebrating Bob's death, but the fact that he *lived*, and that all of us had the chance to know and love him. Other speakers may choose a different course but, as Bob would have said, "that's freedom for you."

I first heard the name of Bob LeFevre in 1962. I was, at the time, working in a full-time political position, slowly becoming disillusioned—by the realities of politics—about the nature of the political process. I had always thought that most of what governments did was illegitimate, and that the market system could provide human society with desired services. I had not, however, gotten over the "police-national defense-court system" hangup that characterizes the so-called "limited government" position.

A friend of mine—who had already attended—told me about a "Freedom School" in Colorado, taught by one Robert LeFevre. He loaned me a copy of Bob's book, "This Bread Is Mine," and I became convinced, at once, that I wanted to attend this school. I did so in the summer of 1963; returned for a Freedom School workshop in 1965; and in 1966 I took a full-time teaching position at the school—which had since become known as Rampart College—a position I held until 1968.

To say that Bob LeFevre had a significant influence on my thinking—as well as the rest of my life—would be a gross understatement. He came into my life at a very critical moment in my own psychological and intellectual development. He helped me to discover a fundamental truth that most of us prefer to overlook, namely, that the problems we humans encounter can only be resolved by looking inwardly, at ourselves, rather than pointing the finger at others. Most of us prefer the comforting

thought, so well stated by Mark Twain, that "nothin' so needs reformin' as other people's habits." It is this sentiment that has sent so many well-indoctrinated, well-meaning young men and women out from colleges and universities to undertake careers as professional people-pushers.

By contrast, Bob LeFevre helped many of us learn that notions of freedom and responsibility, freedom and peace, are indistinguishable. He helped us to discover that human freedom is an essential ingredient of human dignity; that a man or woman who is coerced for his or her "own good" is never the beneficiary of selfless humanitarianism, but the victim of egotistical arrogance. He helped us learn that personal responsibility meant something other than obedience to the authority to which we had become so accustomed: it meant, rather being accountable for one's own actions, an accountability that might include—as the Nuremberg defendants learned—acts of intelligent and principled *disobedience*. It is no surprise, then, that in an age in which men and women learn the art of philosophic compromise, and willingly devote their lives to participating in the unprincipled power-grabs of various institutional interests, a man, such as Bob, would advocate *peaceful* human relationships based upon respect for the *autonomy* of others and *responsibility* for one's own actions, would be labeled an "extremist"!

It would be an incomplete remembrance of Bob to focus on his ideas alone. Unlike many exponents of a point of view whose private lives are a contradiction, Bob *lived* his beliefs. He was, in other words, what his beliefs stated, a very genial, kind, pleasant human being to be around. Many people could—and did—quarrel with his views, but it would take a truly hardened man or woman to deny the decency and amiability of the man. He had "integrity," in the traditional sense of that word, meaning that he was an *integrated, whole, consistent* person. He was the best living endorsement of the libertarian philosophy, for how he lived and who he was was so attractive that few could not help but become interested in the nature of a philosophy that could lead a man to become like Bob.

Shakespeare once stated that "all the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players." The older I become, the more I see the truth in this. What, then, can we say of the role Bob played in this epic production we call "life"? We can attach such labels as "teacher," "philosopher," "writer," "newspaper editor," even "free-market arbitrator" to his name, but that would tell us so little. In searching for a proper way of characterizing

Bob's role, I remember how the late Alan Watts used to describe himself as a "philosophic entertainer." I like that phrase, and I think it is particularly apropos for Bob. Mind you, I am not saying just "entertainer," for there are many around who can amuse us in a variety of ways, but without really informing us in any thoughtful way. Nor am I accusing Bob of being the kind of professional "philosopher" who occupies a cell in one of these secular monasteries we call universities, and writes dry academic journal articles for the consumption of other professional philosophers.

No, Bob combined the better qualities of both "entertainer" and "philosopher": a man capable of helping others to explore meaningful ideas, but to do so with a sense of enjoyment, even pleasure. Bob was not the first to share the job description "philosophic entertainer," for one could also include such names as Socrates, Voltaire, Shakespeare, Mark Twain, Albert Jay Nock, Henry David Thoreau, H.L. Mencken, Eric Hoffer, Frank Chodorov, and Tom Paine,...to name but a few. Like his predecessors, Bob had great respect for the minds of *all* people—*not* just those of self-styled intellectuals—and he considered it just as important to help a housewife or store clerk to discover the joy of freedom as it was to try to convince academicians and institutional leaders.

But the real magic of Bob's style—and what, I am convinced, proves the propriety of the designation "philosophic entertainer"—was that he could address an audience composed of a mix of corporate executives, academicians, farmers, housewives, college students, dentists, car salesmen, newspaper editors, and druggists, and to do so in a manner that held the attention of them all. He could speak to Ph.D.'s in a way that satisfied their intellectual demands and, in the same words appeal to the minds of men and women who had not even finished high school. He had a heck of a talent, one that most of us enjoyed experiencing, but one that few others can approach. Karl Hess is one who has a similar ability, but far too many advocates of a libertarian philosophy seem intent on addressing only audiences of other professional intellectuals. It is no accident that, at a time when many libertarian organizations are relocating their headquarters to Washington, D.C.—reflecting their views of who it is important to reach—Bob LeFevre insisted on less-pretentious objectives. His was a message addressed exclusively to the minds of *individuals*—whether they be assembled on the side of a mountain in Colorado, or a conference room in Spartansburg, South Carolina. In this regard,

he is one of the very few people deserving of the name "libertarian."

I remember a discussion Bob and I had some six to eight months ago. In hindsight, it seems that Bob must have sensed that he did not have many more months to be with us, for he was bothered that organizations that began as "libertarian" never seemed to last; that they eventually fell into the hands of people with non-libertarian views. Was there a way, he asked, for schools, and newspapers, and magazines, and business firms that had their origins in the libertarian sentiments of their founders, to stay that way? I suggested to Bob that there was *not*, and that there ought *not* to be; that the only way to make something stay as it is is to institutionalize it, and that such an approach would be a denial of freedom. Institutionalizing freedom, I suggested to Bob, is like trying to make a rainbow permanent, or keep our children forever young. Freedom doesn't organize well; it doesn't hold still. Freedom is something alive, spontaneous, in motion; freedom doesn't *march* to the beat of *drummers*—however different in tempo—but *dances* to the often unpredictable tones of *jazz*. Freedom, in other words, is not something to be set in the concrete of articles of faith or corporate charters. It is the strength of *your* ideas, I told him, that they will always be available for others to draw upon in their efforts to *understand* what freedom is about. But it would be a *contradiction* of these ideas to turn them into catechisms. I could not help but think back to this conversation as I thought about what I was to say, not only because I hoped my words had helped Bob to resolve this concern, but because of their relevance to what we do with Bob's ideas, now that he is no longer with us.

Someone once observed that there are, in any generation, men and women among us who are precursors—"scouts", if you will—for the kind of people who are to come later. If this is true, then the presence of Bob LeFevre on this earth for seventy-four years might well presage a more peaceful and free future for mankind. There is no question but that the life he led and the philosophy he espoused represent the future of human society *IF* we are to have a human society. Bob has now taken his place in our history, alongside other men and women who have helped to point the way to a more peaceful and responsible and free future. In a world that continues to honor power-hungry men and women who provoke bloody conflicts, and who preach to us the "*practical*" value of corrupting our own principles, Bob's presence will be madly missed. But it would be to miss the

essence of his ideas to conclude that "the cause of liberty is now up to the rest of us," for as Bob so often reminded us when, in a moment of weakness, we might look beyond ourselves for a standard-bearer, a hero, or some other "leader," the cause of human liberty has *always* been up to each one of us.

We have lost a kind and decent man—and a dear friend—and we will miss him.

Shaffer teaches law at Southwestern University in Los Angeles, California.

LeFevre—A Teacher and A 'Disillusionist'

By Jeff Rigenbach

I was just beginning to get to know Bob LeFevre as an individual when he died on May 13, but I had known him by reputation since around 1970, when a radical bookseller friend of mine in Houston, Texas, handed me a copy of Bob's 1960 book *This Bread is Mine*, with the comment, "I think you might find this interesting." I did.

Not long after that, I moved to Southern California, where I attended a number of Bob's lectures and supper-club talks, read others of his books, and even arranged to spend a couple of hours as a guest in his home—then in the city of Orange. My pretext for the visit was to interview him. I was writing and producing a documentary on the libertarian movement for a Los Angeles based radio network, and the program would hardly have been complete if it hadn't included Bob LeFevre.

Our first meeting, then, was a business meeting. But I could hardly have wished for a more gracious and friendly reception if I had been personally invited for coffee and conversation. Bob took me into what had originally been his home's wine cellar, where he was storing the 10,000-volume library that had been a part of his famous Freedom School (later Rampart College). He treated me not as an intrusive reporter, but as a new and valued acquaintance. He made me feel at home.

Through the visit, through his writings and through his lectures and speeches—especially the latter—he had a profound

influence on my own thinking about political questions. As I reflect on that influence today, three examples cross my mind as particularly illustrative of the kind of tough theoretical question Bob helped me solve.

For several years before I became one of Bob's students, I had flirted with the doctrine of philosophical anarchism. I had seen the inescapable immorality of any institution that forced an individual to surrender his rightful property and obey commands issued by others. I had seen the fraudulence of claiming that a government did these things "by the consent of the governed," unless all who chose not to consent were permitted to go their way unmolested, paying the state no tribute and expecting no services in return.

But I was perplexed by what seemed a difficult practical problem. How could society get along without certain "bare bones" government services—police, for example? Weren't police needed to prevent crime?

Bob LeFevre first explained to me what seemed painfully obvious a moment after I had grasped it—it is characteristic of great insights that they seem inescapable once one has seen them formulated—namely, that police do not "prevent" crime, despite incessant use of that word by both the police and the members of the news herd who cover their activities. That police don't prevent crime is self-evident, really, from the fact that we still have crime, despite all the centuries of policing we've submitted ourselves to.

The only way a police officer could possibly prevent crime is if he happened to walk or drive by just as a crime was being committed—a burglary, for example. But this seldom occurs. In the overwhelming majority of cases, the police become involved only after a crime has been committed. In almost none of those cases do the police succeed in achieving restitution—the restoration of stolen property to the rightful owner. In most cases, they never even determine the identity of the criminal. And even when they do, the only service they perform is the taking of revenge. Is taking revenge on criminals something society simply can't do without? I don't think so.

Bob also disposed of my more generalized worries about the practicality of a society without government. One evening after a lecture at the now defunct Forum for Philosophical Studies in Los Angeles, a member of the audience asked him, "If there were no government in a society, what would prevent criminals from taking over?"

Bob explained that government doesn't really prevent crime,

for the reasons I've already mentioned. But the questioner persisted. "No," she said. "I mean what would prevent an organized group of criminals, something like the mafia, from collecting protection money from everyone and forcing them to do whatever the criminals said?"

"Oh," Bob exclaimed, "you're talking about government." Suddenly it was all clear to me. The main rationale for government amounted to just this: if we don't put up with government seizing our money and telling us how to live our lives, we run the risk that someone will seize our money and tell us how to live our lives. How preposterous!

Yet people have accepted it as logical and persuasive for thousands of years. Most people still do. Why?

Bob explained that to me too. All of us, he pointed out in a little-known essay on Mary Shelley's early 19th-century science-fiction novel *Frankenstein*, grow up in a family, with parents—people who are wiser and more powerful than we—making our major decisions for us, protecting us from the consequences of our folly, and laying down the rules under which we have to live. People get used to this state of affairs, and miss it when they achieve "maturity" and go out on their own.

This, Bob made me see, is why people like government and are reluctant to recognize its true nature. This is why they will never accept the arguments of libertarians. They do not want freedom. They want security. They want a surrogate parent to replace the ones they were forced to give up long ago.

Most people feel that way, but not all. I am one of those who does want to make his own decisions and take his own risks. And one of the experiences I value most highly is disillusionment—literally, being deprived of my illusions, being made to see the truth for what it is. Bob LeFevre disillusioned me in this sense, which is why I regard him as one of the great teachers of our time.

A writer for *The Orange County Register's* opinion pages, Jeff Rigenbach has worked in broadcasting, producing the *Byline* radio programs. (Article above was reprinted from the *Orange County Register*, June 18, 1986).

GEO-POLITICS: The Role Geography Plays in the Development of Liberty

By Lawrence Samuels

Throughout history there have been societies that have upheld libertarian values of independence and individualism. History books marvel over these "Golden Eras" of civilization, praising their accomplishments and abilities to amass great wealth and freedom. Yet, these same history books often become so preoccupied with the importance of particular wars, deaths of legendary kings and power struggles that they overlook one important aspect. How and why did these wealthy and powerful nations/regions come to accept their unique belief in liberty? One answer may be geography.

GEO-POLITICS

Currently, several scholars have noticed a parallel between certain beliefs of a society and the geography that surrounds them. The term "Geo-politics" was created to define this phenomenon. Basically, geo-politics argues that geography often determines the political makeup and opinions of a particular region. Some of the geographical characteristics that appear to create a different political viewpoint are as follows:

1. islands,
2. swamplands
3. mountains.

Connected with these geographical barriers are other circumstances that help determine the political mindset of a region's people. They are:

1. isolation,
2. climate
3. the Ocean.

ISOLATION

The best example of isolation can be found in mountainous regions. Mountains are a barrier to outside influences, discouraging both foreign invasions and domestic adventurism.

But the mountains do more. They create a phenomenon that could be termed "Evolu-Politics". In other words, this phenomenon could be evolutionary in nature. Charles Darwin, in his 1859 work, *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* noticed that the same animal species varied slightly from island to island in the Galapagos. Using this as an example, it appears that isolated peoples evolve different political viewpoints from the surrounding flat-lands regions. This might seem obvious. However, the question arises, why are these isolated societies often freer?

The main reason why isolated areas are relatively free is the population centers are small. Furthermore, mountain communities are spread far apart from each other and communication is difficult. These people often view nature with more respect than distant kings.

This type of rugged terrain fosters a tribal society. Under the tribal society, leadership of strength and character become paramount. Similar to the American Indians, tribal leaders are leaders, not rulers. They did not have the political or economic clout to coerce members of the tribe for any length of time. The tribe is simply too small, the wilderness is too large, and rivals are too numerous. Since the tribe's food reserve is usually limited, due to a hunting/gathering lifestyle, a bureaucracy or legal system is unable to support itself. This makes large standing armies impossible to control or fund.

If the isolated region is claimed by powerful ruling families from afar, isolation still allows citizens a fair share of

independence because the distant government is likely neglectful or inefficient. This neglect or ineffectiveness, usually *de facto* in nature, often brings about increased local autonomy.

In a non-tribal isolated region, the local ruler, either independent or a puppet, is very limited in authority. Due to the region's smallness, his tax revenues are small, his army weak and his power precarious. He cannot simply stop a rebellion by turning the militia upon the people. The militia would likely refuse to fire weapons at possible neighbors, friends and relatives. This situation gives citizens greater freedom of conscience and movement.

However, an isolated, mountainous region usually never becomes a far-reaching trade center because it is landlocked. The ability to easily trade with other regions is vital to increase wealth. Various regions have become wealthy due to trade, and have allowed a modest share of individual liberty. But these regions have not become known as defenders of liberty. The Renaissance city-states in Italy were world trading centers, situated next to the ocean, but were not known as centers of liberty. The small municipalities of Italian city-states allowed relatively free movement of ideas, but that was due to the trade with distant trade centers and the smallness of their municipalities. However, there are examples of societies that had mountain barriers and ocean trade. The most important one is the Greek civilization.

THE GREEK CIVILIZATION

It seems that no matter what the idea is, the Greeks 2,000 years earlier had discovered it. Sometimes it seems that modern Western man only re-defines what the Greeks had already discovered.

There are many similarities between the Greek Golden Era and the Renaissance. Politically, both were made up of small municipalities—the city-state. They were trading centers of wealth and business. They promoted the arts and sought knowledge. Yet, the Renaissance was built upon the knowledge of the Greeks. The Greeks were the originators. They were the inventors. And the Greeks had something more. They had geography on their side.

Greece is a land of steep, almost impassable mountains, situated on a peninsula in a mild climate called "Mediterranean." Coming from a cold climate to the North, the Greeks

settled into the valleys near the sea. They found a relatively under-populated land and developed into many city-states. Separated by the mountains, the city-states were able to develop independently. Their governments were small, with a mixture of representative and democratic practices. They traded by sea with the other city-states. In the early years, it was the mountains that prevented one city-state from overrunning the other city-states. If it were not for the particular geography of Greece, centralization under one government would have occurred long before Alexander the Great came to power. And if this had happened in the early stage of the Greek civilization, it is doubtful the Greeks would have been remembered for much. It is important to note that the Greek Golden Era ended soon after Greece was united under one rulership.

Still, the Greeks, although separated by mountains, could have been authoritarian and tyrannical like the Spartans. Another factor comes into play. And that is climate.

METER-POLITICS

The climate may be the most fundamental reason for the geo-politics of a region. It appears that tolerable weather, not too cold or too hot, has a direct link to the amount of toleration accepted by a society. Basically, it is toleration that determines how free a society will be. It is toleration of other people's beliefs, customs and lifestyles that makes a region truly free. I refer to this phenomenon as "Meter-Politics," meaning that meteorology—the climate—often determines the politics of a region.

Some of the most productive regions—Italy, France and California—are Mediterranean and the inhabitants have a laid-back lifestyle. However, another country—England—is not Mediterranean, yet its climate is cool and mild. England's geographical location puts it in a direct path with the Gulf of Mexico warm water current. Without this warm water current, England would be as cold as Russia. It is very possible that the warm sea water lends itself to the English well-known cool and collected temperament. The same cannot be said of people living in hotter climates of Africa or South America where society is volatile and the people are referred to as "hot-blooded."

THE OCEAN & TRADE

It is the ocean that is mainly responsible for the mild Mediter-

ranean climate. And it is this same large body of water that gives higher civilizations another advantage. That advantage is the free flow of knowledge.

Oceans permit foreign vessels and ideas to circulate in seaports. Knowledge, ideas and wealth are traded, examined or discarded, depending on their merits. The mere fact of trading, setting values and prices, naturally offers people choices. People have to decide what to buy or sell. This mechanism surely lends itself to the political process. In other words, if people can choose a product, then why not their leader? Seems simple enough. And this is probably how an understanding of liberty came about during early years of civilization.

Perhaps the best example of a rising mercantile nation occurred in Europe during the 16th century in a remarkable region that became the first modern mercantile/seafaring nation in the modern world—the Netherlands.

THE NETHERLANDS (THE SWAMPLAND)

The development of the Netherlands is rather strange because the land was considered to be unuseable and unwanted swampland. Along the Northern European coast, the Netherlands was not only swampland, but it was inundated by the ocean during high tides. Yet, settlers, desiring to own their own land, began to enter the swampland and build small mounds of earth above the high water mark. As the centuries passed, the little one-hump mounds enlarged and connected with other mounds, developing into large farms and villages. The villages enlarged into cities. Trade flourished and the Netherland's economic activity surpassed all other nations. They built the first modern merchant fleet, comprised of more vessels than all the other countries of the world combined.

The Dutch were free, their land small in comparison to most nations and were extremely prosperous. This was a time of mass starvation and hunger across Europe. Anyone who had three good meals a week was considered to be very lucky. The Dutch did not have this problem. There was so much food in the Netherlands that the Dutch were commonly referred to as "butter-balls" because many were overweight.

For various reasons, the authorities on the mainland overlooked the Netherlands' wealth and autonomous behavior. The Dutch were allowed to be left alone. This condition permitted the inhabitants to do what they wanted. Natural-

ly, they wanted to better themselves. And one way to do this is to make money in commercial ventures.

Isolated, living in a cool, but mild climate region, the Dutch had more than a thriving free market. They had liberty of almost unheard of proportion. Some of the top intellectuals of the 16th and 17th centuries fled to the Netherlands to escape political and religious persecution. While Spain was burning or banning Jews, the Netherlands allowed them to worship peacefully. Money could be loaned with interest and nobody batted an eye. People could speak their conscience without fear. Books could be printed with little or no censorship. Science and knowledge were prized and studied. Tolerance was tolerated. The Hapsburgs applied minimal controls until ownership of the Netherlands changed hands.

In 1555 Phillip of Spain inherited the Netherlands from Charles V. Since the Dutch were independent by nature and Protestant by religion, anything could spark a rebellion. And it did in 1568. Holland and Zeeland revolted and other provinces joined in. By 1570, the Netherlands became independent after defeating Spain in battle, which was no small task. To develop a republican form of government, the Netherlands had to pay a high price. For over 100 years, the independent provinces of the Netherlands fought war after war to remain independent. At one time Spain, France and England combined forces to overrun the Netherlands. They failed.

ENGLAND (THE ISLAND)

The development of England's ideals of liberty hinged on the geographical structure as an island. Island status gave the English a big advantage. It gave them security from foreign invaders and a means to trade products to other nations. But it was the isolation from mainland Europe that weakened the power of the English king. Without a strong threat of foreign invasion, the king found it almost impossible to build a large standing army. In fact, it was not until the 1640's that the first truly standing army was created in England under Lord Oliver Cromwell's command. Cromwell had defeated the king—who was later beheaded—and ruled England like a king.

Before Cromwell, the king of England was forbidden from organizing a standing army. This occurred mainly because local war-lords feared centralization. The local kingdoms often had a much larger "body-guard" army than the king. The only way the English king could construct some type of military

force was by putting his men on warships. England's navy could have armed soldiers (marines), but they had to be based on ships.

Without fears of impending foreign invasions, England's kings could not consolidate their control. In other words, England was decentralized like the Netherlands, Switzerland and the American colonies. This is the main reason why the king was forced to sign the Magna Carta in 1215. The king had no choice. His army was too small to fight the combined forces of the local war-lords.

By the time the king began to consolidate his power, he had a parliament nipping at his heels. It was the Magna Carta that had, some 70 years later, brought about Parliament and the radical limitations on the king. And it was these limitations that forced the king to govern by law instead of his will.

For centuries, Parliament and the monarchs fought each other. This took up so much time that the English had to fend for themselves. This situation of neglect led to *de facto* liberty. The Industrial Revolution was a direct result of this neglect. If the monarch had not been preoccupied with fighting Parliament, the Industrial Revolution might never have occurred. The reason is clear. The Industrial Revolution was putting power in the hands of inventors/businessmen instead of the traditional powerbrokers—the land-rich aristocrats. By the time the aristocrats discovered their power waning, they could do very little.

Furthermore, the English distrusted their government. The reason for this distrust came about after England was invaded by William the Conqueror, a Norman in 1066. Actually, William the Conqueror was invited by many of the local English war-lords to get rid of King Harold, who was hastily crowned after King Edward the Confessor's death. Ever since, England was often ruled by foreign kings who could not even speak the native English tongue. This gave the English a sense of suspicion and outright disobedience. Government was considered something foreign. This view was so common that smugglers in England were often viewed as heroes.

England has many geographical advantages. If England had been land-locked, away from the ocean, she would be as cold and backwards as Russia. There would be little trade, communication or tolerance.

However, there are examples of nations that are cold and land-locked, but retain a high regard for individual liberty. One such country is Switzerland.

SWITZERLAND (MOUNTAINS)

Switzerland is a land-locked mountainous country. Although the country is not all mountains, it has been in the forefront of independence and liberty.

In the 13th Century, the Hapsburgs assumed power in the Switzerland region. Their rule was harsh. However, various conflicts between factions resulted in the freeing of several cities. The cities thrived in the free environment. Soon the three forested cantons of Uri, Schyz and Nidwalden united and formed an eternal alliance in 1291, demanding independence. The Hapsburgs' army invaded to restore their control. They were easily routed by the Swiss.

After winning independence, more and more cities and cantons from Italy, France and Austria joined the Swiss Confederation, often leading to war. Usually, the Swiss were victorious. They fought mainly defensive wars to assist adjacent regions in their desire to be free. When the Swiss finally did war on the offensive, invading Italy, they lost. Since then, the Swiss have tried to remain neutral.

Switzerland is a loose confederation of local governments. Each canton region has separate interests and governments, uniting mainly for defense. In this way, Switzerland is decentralized which could explain why they have remained free for centuries.

The Swiss are more than champions of liberty; they are leaders in peace. The Swiss have no formal standing army, but its citizens are well-armed. Adolf Hitler was advised by his own staff in World War II not to attack Switzerland because the German Army might lose a million men. Instead, the German Army attacked France, which had a larger standing army than Germany itself. However, in France, the people did not have the liberty to own guns and believed that their army would defend them.

The inhabitants of Switzerland were isolated and therefore developed their own political views. But why a political view favoring liberty? Isolation does not always lead to liberty. Moderate temperatures do not always produce a free-nation. There is something else. And I call it "Geo-psychology."

GEO-PSYCHOLOGY

It is psychology of the individual that determines the politics

of a region. "Geo-psychology" means that the psychology of a region is determined mainly by geography. Philosophy and politics play second fiddle to psychology. The lifestyles of the individual and how he relates to nature and himself, economically and mentally, often determine the philosophical/political mindset of a region. One reason that an isolated region often develops a healthy attitude towards liberty is because the inhabitants must deal with nature on a practical level. The Swiss in the mountains, the Americans in the wilderness and the Dutch in the swamplands were neglected for long periods of time by their government. This forced the populace to conquer nature on their own. They had to discover the laws of nature or succumb to hunger, hostile animals and harsh weather. They had to build their own farms, roads and towns, generally with their own hands and money. In short order, these people became psychologically independent. They did not need government. They were self-reliant. They did not need some far-off bureaucracy telling them what to do. They knew what to do. They had been doing it for a long time. They were following a natural course of action. And in doing so, they had become rugged individualists.

As rugged individualists, they saw government as a parasite, something to be scorned and perhaps discarded at some future opportunity. And yet, as rugged individualists many were intolerant of others and were willing to use their local, decentralized governments to ban, prohibit or prevent certain liberties. They were individualistic, but not necessarily tolerant and non-aggressive ("Libertarian Man").

THE AMERICA (WILDERNESS)

The psychology of the individualist can best be seen in the United States of America. In North America immigrants came to a harsh wilderness. They were forced by circumstances to rely on their own abilities. What made it most difficult was that in North America there was no existing society to plunder. The native American Indians were in a tribal stage and had no great reserves of food, no permanent buildings, or no farmlands. There was no existing structure to conquer and consume. This meant that the settlers had to start a new country from scratch.

Another obstacle was the distance from Europe. English authorities could not control the operations of the American

colonies. And since the early colonies were financial disasters, the English government did not want to become too involved in the venture. It was this situation that forced the immigrants to rely on their own resources. England was unwilling to assist her own colonies. In other words, the American colonies were almost as isolated as if they lived in mountainous terrain.

Life in the early American colonies was bleak. In some colonies, over half of the colonists died in one year. It took individual character and strength to keep from starving. The immigrants had no other choice. They had to look to themselves. They had to build a new society based on individual productivity. No one else was going to do it for them. They had to take the initiative.

Take the initiative they did. Without restrictions from Europe, without feudalism and a tax system, the colonies prospered beyond all expectation. British soldiers, in letters back home, would remark glowingly about the wealth they had seen in America. These letters spoke about the abundance of livestock, food and land, writing that it was almost beyond belief.

The American colonists had built more than a productive and free region. They had built a strong psychological character of self-sufficiency, self-reliance and independence. The colonists were psychologically different from Europeans. Therefore, they took a different view towards England's attempts to play a stronger role in governing America. It was at this point that Europeans discovered how different Americans were. To the European it was beyond belief that these prosperous colonists would revolt over minor controls and taxes. To the American, England's new policy was threatening their way of life. A revolt had to occur at some point in time.

It is easy to see why. The English government had neglected the colonies for over 150 years. Then, all of a sudden, the English government, during King George III administration, wanted to share the colonies' wealth in an effort to pay for the French and Indian War. England was only acting like any other government. It wanted more taxes and tried pulling in on the reins.

The colonists saw England's position differently. They were accustomed to governing themselves. In this sense, the American Revolution was not a revolution. The people were already independently-minded. The break—a psychological break—with England had occurred a century earlier. And so

when England began to show its muscles, the colonists took to the streets as had the Swiss and the Dutch centuries before them. And with the same results.

Although the American colonists were freedom-oriented, they were not necessarily tolerant of each other. American history is full of such examples. Many colonies had laws that forbid the worship of certain religions. Those caught were punished and persecuted. These attitudes were wide-spread in the American colonies and persisted up to and beyond the American Revolution.

Apparently, it took time for the immigrants to discard their Old World beliefs. It took time for the new wilderness environment to create a new psychological mindset. What may have hindered the geo-psychology was the climate of North America. Except for a small strip along the coast, the American wilderness was inhospitable. Northern climates were cold and Southern climates hot.

CALIFORNIA

This can be seen today. Although America is a semi-free country, there are regions that appear more freedom oriented. One such region is California.

With a mild temperature all year long, California has the largest libertarian/decentralist population in the United States and in the world. The highest concentration of registered Libertarian Party members live in a community on the ocean in Southern California—Huntington Beach. One of the largest gay communities in the world—another very tolerant group—lives along the coast in San Francisco.

However, the California climate does change radically the further inland one travels. Not far from the coastline the climate is often very hot in the summer and very cold in the winter. It also appears that a more conservative population live in these areas (i.e. Fresno, Riverside, etc.)

The climate situation is similar along the Eastern Seaboard of the United States. The Eastern Seaboard has milder weather than the interior. What is interesting to note is that people on the Western and Eastern coastlines appear to be better educated, wealthier and more tolerant than people from the Southern States or the Mid-Western States ("Middle America"). Inhabitants in Kansas, for instance, appear to be intolerant to new ideas, less educated and poorer. The weather pattern of these states are very cold in the winter and rather

hot in the summer. Intolerant weather, intolerant people. And they are far from any free-flowing body of water.

CHANGE IN THE WIND

The attitudes of "Middle America" are changing. For instance, the Southern States are less "red-neck," less prejudiced, less intolerant of minorities and different nationalities. This phenomenon might be due to technology. As new industries moved into the South and Southwest, they brought air-conditioning with them. Understanding that people work better in a mild, temperate office, all the major industries installed equipment to create an artificial environment. Air conditioning and heating systems keep huge skyscrapers and malls at an even, pleasant temperature. The human body apparently reacts favorably to these temperatures, and more work is accomplished in an orderly, rational manner.

CONCLUSION

Geographical barriers, oceans and climate often created bastions of liberty. It is superficial however, unless there is a general psychological mindset that has a negative reaction against centralization and authority in general. Without this mindset of individualism and confederation, these conditions will not have the desired effect.

However, with the onset of artificial environments, a new element comes into play. If it were true that mild temperatures in a controlled environment encourages rational thought and actions, then geography loses its importance. At this point, one does not need geographical barriers—mountains, swamplands, islands and wilderness—to create isolation, or an ocean to create mild climate. But with an artificial environment, a city-mall can become somewhat isolated by its architectural/economical features and may foster an environment conducive to liberty.

All of this might have another effect. If isolation and mild climate have an effect of rational thought and action, then a psychological mindset might naturally gravitate towards allowing people to do what they please, providing no aggression or fraud is involved. In other words, a philosophy of liberty may not be necessary. People may naturally allow others the liberties of economic and lifestyle choices.

The study of geography in its relationship to liberty is impor-

tant because of what the future may bring. The reasons are clear. Earth is entering the beginning stage of space exploration and migration. Enterprises and ventures larger than earth itself may one day dot the heavens. These planetary/space cities will require artificial environments and will be located in distant parts of the galaxy. Both of these conditions will have a lasting effect, especially the feeling of separation from the mother world. It is only natural that these colonies will seek autonomy, like the American colonies, or they will simply break relations. In whatever case, they will likely seek a society that is freer than earth has ever experienced. Hopefully, that is not too far in the future.

Lawrence Samuels is the president of Rampart Institute.

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