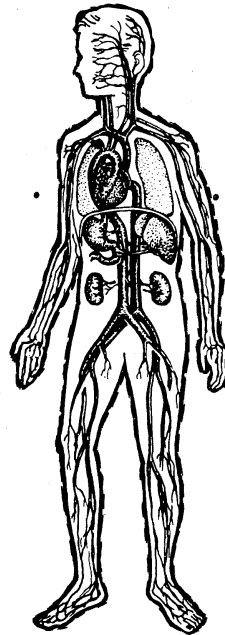




the man who knows what freedom means will find a way to be free



..... *Principles*

## JOURNEY INTO REALITY

When I first became interested in human liberty, I was a conservative. My father's household was rooted in traditional private-enterprise concepts and these I accepted without question. Like most who have been influenced profoundly by the traditions in which they have been nurtured, I assumed that I was fully informed and hence correct in my conclusions.

It wasn't until I had dropped out of college and taken a place in the business world that my traditional view of things met its first serious challenge. I have since learned that while traditional values may contain great merit, if unaccompanied by independent thought they leave one with little in the way of a logical argument to defend a position. A person armed solely with emotional conviction sputters like a wet fuse when asked to explain his views.

The challenge to me came through a series of governmental incursions imposed upon the business community during World War II. I accepted each one as necessary, convinced as I was that in times of emergency, freedom had to be curtailed. But of course, we Americans were firmly assured and reassured, each of these incursions was imposed as a temporary measure to further the war effort. After hostilities ended, the war-emergency powers

would all be repealed and we could resume our traditional ways, we were told.

I had yet to learn that governmental promises were, at best, chimerical and, at worst, carefully calculated maneuvers designed to strengthen some political career.

Convinced that the bureaucracy in Washington was "my" government and doing its best for my own ultimate good, I enlisted and served four years during the period America was an overt belligerent. The war over, I discovered to my astonishment and mounting alarm that not a single political promise would willingly be kept. The government had enlarged by a factor still to be calculated and was now threatening intrusion into virtually every walk of life. This was contrary to tradition and to my youthful beliefs. But I had not thought through the problem. Like many others, I was swept into the McCarthy era, cheering for the Senator from Wisconsin and hoping that the "good men" in government would throw the "commies" out.

To me, the meaning of freedom was clear. America had been founded on the tradition of personal liberty. Government existed to protect and preserve that liberty. But this government in Washington was no longer "mine." It was engaged in advancing into the American economy with daily

## JOURNEY INTO REALITY

(continued)

increases in its taxing and regulatory powers. The problems faced today in 1975, as I see it, were encouraged by the depression of the 1930's, exacerbated by the war, and prolonged by the hot and cold compresses slapped onto the world body politic ever since. Indeed, the problems of 1975 became predictable in 1945. We have yet to face up to them.

The challenge became a personal one. I was not concerned with any future but my own. MY freedom was being eaten up a little at a time. The very people I had trusted to make my freedom safe were in the forefront of those taking it away. I had yet to learn that "communists" could not be rooted out of government. As Frank Chodorov explained it, "government is their native soil." The problem wasn't an alien concept, covertly and clandestinely smuggled into the "land of the free." The problem was government itself, the single instrument upon which all tyrants depend. Machiavelli's *The Prince*, "The Communist Manifesto," and *Mein Kampf* all carefully spell it out.

To finally recognize government as the central foe is a shocking realization to a conservative traditionalist. Two friends helped me to understand. Rose Wilder Lane and F. A. (Baldy) Harper challenged my view of liberty. Insensibly, I had accepted the notion that all we had to do was "get back to the Constitution" and human liberty would be safe. Repeatedly, they challenged my statements; made me re-examine, re-define my position.

What is liberty? How can we regain lost liberty if we don't know what we mean when we use the word? Is liberty an end, or a means to an end? Could it be both? Is the antithesis of liberty, slavery? Or is it, perhaps, tyranny?

Is liberty my right to knock down anybody who interferes with me? Or is liberty a condition in which coercion is absent? Is liberty a condition which can only exist because some coercive agency (government or private) holds everyone at bay who might violate someone's liberty? Does liberty become possible only when we have a means of imposing on those who have violated liberty, and hence is liberty dependent upon non-libertarian actions?

How important is it? Is it so transcendent a concept that it can launch both war and peace at the same time? Is liberty possible in war? Or is it only possible if peace is maintained? Or, as Rousseau had it, is liberty so important that we should force all men to be free?

I am not too certain just how deeply many current libertarians have devoted themselves to the subject, but I venture to say that among the various shadings of libertarian thought are various interpretations of liberty. Of course, if the word *libertarian* is to have any practical application, it would have to relate to a person who believes in liberty. But what kind of liberty?

I was extremely fortunate when in 1954 I ac-

cepted a position with Harry Hoiles and the Colorado Springs *Gazette Telegraph* as editorial writer. Harry wanted me to write about liberty. And he wanted quite a number of words on the subject every day. Further, he wanted me to make certain that I was always consistent. Consistent with what? Well, consistent with the real, ultimate, final, conclusive meaning of liberty.

I have probably written as many words on this subject as any man alive; and in process I have had a wonderful opportunity to think about the meaning of liberty. For slightly more than ten years I struggled with this word and this concept, and when I resigned from the *Gazette Telegraph* in 1965 I had not yet learned all that is to be learned on the subject. Nor have I since. Liberty became my obsession, my mistress. It was for her that I founded Freedom School and struggled with Rampart College. Liberty became my life.

So I should like to ask some of my young libertarian friends a few questions about freedom and what it means to them. I will be very interested in the answers they provide.


OKAY, you say you favor freedom.

1. Do you believe in peace? Or do you propose to advance the cause of liberty by waging war? Is liberty something that is granted by a conqueror? Or is liberty a condition that is destroyed by war? Are you ashamed of being peaceful?

2. Do you believe in a free society? Under whose management? Do you believe that if libertarians could only get the power, then they could reduce the present amount of government and provide only the correct amount? What is the correct amount? How does your position differ from that expressed by the conservative wing of the Republican Party (the party of Goldwater) as it was set forth in 1964?

3. Do you believe in private enterprise and a free market? Then what will you do if you come across an individual who imposes upon others by dishonesty or force? If you create a private agency capable of arresting, holding, trying, convicting, and punishing another human being, how did you arrive at a position where *you* obtain such a right over another? Did you get that right by majority vote? Or by divine ukase? Or by virtue of having enough force behind you to carry it out? Or maybe your agency had more customers than its competitors? If you do take power over another, in what respect, saving only in degree, will your agency be different from the existing governmental agencies which do the same things? And if we are only talking about degree, are we perhaps talking about limiting government? And if we are talking about limiting government, are we still talking about freedom?

4. Do you believe in freedom? Or do you believe in liberty for yourself while everyone else does as you believe they should?

5. Or do you *really* believe in liberty? 

# LIBERTARIAN LIBATION DAY

## Pre-Centennial



In the early morning hours of April 19, 1775, a band of farmers and small businessmen, some aging and some youthful, gathered at Buckman's Tavern across the road from Lexington green. The American Revolution was about to enter its violent phase.

Buckman, the innkeeper in Lexington, served up a libation to all those nervous stalwarts. The drink was "on the house." What the Minute Men drank was rum flip. Some insist that what Buckman served was a "yard of flannel." Flannel or flip, a draught was served and shortly thereafter this handful of raw guerrillas took on the British regulars with high purpose and poor marksmanship.

Since many are now re-enacting momentous episodes of 1775-1776, a fitting way to celebrate the bicentennial would be to proclaim April 19th as *Libertarian Libation Day*. And to further that objective I hereby include the recipe for both the rum flip and the yard of flannel. (Actually, there are several recipes but I like this one.)

I trust that either the flip or the flannel will wrap you snugly against the cruelty of inflation, recession, stagflation, depression, or whatever new terms the bureaucrats will devise to confuse the issue.

You can now raise your flagons in a toast to freedom with the assurance that you are sustaining the true American tradition.

Here's to freedom, hot or cold!

### RECIPE FOR *FLIP* OR *YARD OF FLANNEL*

Flips were originally hot drinks concocted in the winter and were warmed by thrusting an iron flip dog or loggerhead into the mug, which produced a pleasant sizzle and burnt taste. Gradually they became cold drinks and the flip dogs that hung by the fireplace were of no use except for poking large logs. A Yard of Flannel is a hot Flip, which, when properly made, looks fleecy. In the eighteenth century, Myles Arnold reported the drink to be a favorite with the riders on the Boston Post route; "and indeed, 'tis said they sometimes wrap themselves warmly with it."

To make a Yard of Flannel: Heat one quart ale in a saucepan. Beat 4 eggs with 4 tablespoons sugar and 1 teaspoon grated nutmeg or ginger. Then add  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup dark rum. Pour into a pitcher. When ale is almost boiling, pour it into another pitcher. To combine the two mixtures, pour hot ale, a little at a time, into egg mixture, stirring briskly to avoid curdling. Then pour the contents of the two pitchers back and forth until the mixture is as smooth as cream.

To make a cold Flip: Dissolve 1 teaspoon confectioners' sugar in a little water in a shaker. Add 1 jigger spirits or two jiggers wine, 1 egg, and two or three lumps of ice. Shake thoroughly and serve with a little grated nutmeg on top.

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"I may not be able to hit anything—but this is ONE shot that's going to make a lot of noise."



**DAVID CARL ARGALL:** "You had best study your analogies closer. The bees hanging on a limb want to move, true, but the clinging of other bees has little to do with it. The bees have been ordered to stay there and, like good slaves, they do so until dead or new orders arrive. Unlike your libertarian ideal, the bee regards the freely flying swarm (freely moving social order) as the artificial condition to be endured only to obtain more stable (statist) conditions, where she can carry out duties assigned to her by others." *You've helped to show that my analogy is even better than I'd supposed. Just as the bees behave, so does man. He clings to each of his fellows, overwhelmed by his own slavery and not daring to break free. He, too, has been given his orders and to the average man, an order from the state is on the level of a divine ukase, or an instinctive urge such as those controlling apis mellifera.*

**CLARK SANN:** "Having recently read your excellent book, *This Bread Is Mine*, I can honestly say you've been a great stimulus to me and I really appreciate it. Keep up the fine work and don't ever stop sending me *LeFevre's Journal*. It's fantastic!"

**KEVIN CULLINANE:** "I like the commentary from us non-subscribers; it's good to be reminded that the ideas of freedom (as you use the word), are spread across the country, and being thought about and discussed. Academy of the Rockies is halfway through its third year and growing well. The principles of autarchy (as you use the word) make a great deal of sense to students of high school age. The atmosphere here and our methods of living and working together all help to illustrate the common sense and feasibility of practicing what you preach, Bob." *Imitation is the most sincere form of praise. My most sincere thanks.*

**TIM BARROW:** "I have to reject the idea of tax exemption as being the natural state of man. It implies someone doing the exempting. And how do they get paid for doing the exempting? By force, of course. More in the nature of man, is it not, that there be no taxes? I find myself very confused because I see no alternative to paying taxes other than tax exemption, which I believe is a cop-out and actually accepting a benefit of the public government." *I'm with you. I don't like tax exemption, either. But I still think it's superior to taxation and I'd like to see the concept of tax exemption accepted universally.*

**RON BALL:** "I want to contribute my 'non-subscription' for something to which I subscribe most enthusiastically — intelligence and individuality!"

**JOHN BUCKLEY:** "Politically, I am not a libertarian of your breed. I believe that the best of libertarianism and traditionalism go hand in hand in conservative political philosophy. I do believe in freedom; but I believe even more so that freedom is a trial, a test of the human condition. Free-will and conscience are man's ties to transcendent God. In my studies I've come across a quotation which I convey as my gift to you — from Plato's *The Last Days of Socrates* in the 'Apology': 'The true champion of justice, if he intends to survive even for a short time, must necessarily confine himself to private life and leave politics alone.'" *Put me down as a champion of justice — and my own personal survival is important to me.*

**JAMES FOREMAN:** "I get into discussions about the 300-500 year economic cycle where the government parasite overtakes and destroys its hosting economy. I wish I could find an article on that subject similar to your 'Illegality, Immorality, and Violence of

All Political Action.' Another article of interest would be one telling how the government is responsible for the poor economic conditions and how an economy unhampered by government wouldn't experience these problems. Is there no place on earth where men, or businesses, can go to escape the outrageous taxes and regulations found in 'developed' (so-called) countries? I've often wondered about Australia." *For information about Australia, contact Stanley Yankus (address available from this office). But keep in mind that Australia has a government, too. A lot of government. Thanks for your excellent suggestions relating to possible articles.*

**JOEL COLLIER:** "Freedom — the seeking of it and the joy of talking about its future puts much zest and happiness in life."

**DAVE MYERS:** "I 'gulped' when I read in your *Journal*, 'Unfortunately, it often results in the willingness of the so-called libertarian to practice coercion upon others in order to prevent others from coercing him.' I really don't understand this. It seems to me that this is submission to force without a struggle. Is this what you are advocating?" *The entire purpose of government is to restrain those who might impose upon others by force. To try to get along without government while at the same time continuing the practice, is a little like objecting to bank robbery while seeking to figure out how to rob banks when you think they need robbing.*

**DALE GREEN:** "Our cultural heritage has loaded the word 'government' with awe and respect, as the highest achievement of mankind. But that is pure mythology. In my discussion group I asked, 'Should there be a social institution that could empower me to compel you to accept any or all of my opinions with which you disagree?' My wording avoids the impersonal 'they' and 'others.' Instead of 'the government' or 'they' compelling 'others,' it is ME compelling YOU. Then I asked, 'Do you believe there is any other person or persons better qualified than I am to compel you to accept their opinions with which you disagree? Do you favor the institution if you hold the power, but oppose it if I have the power? Do you approve of the institution in principle? If so, why do you oppose it in practice?' Every law that has ever been passed was intended, by its promoters, to compel you to accept their opinions. I expected disagreement, but everyone seemed to agree." *Good for you. An ex-*

cellent method to engender thinking.

**GEORGE MASTERSON:** "I hope the enclosed will bring me the *Journal* until I'm satisfied I comprehend the philosophy of LeFevre's libertarianism. It may not take too long. ??? Thanks."

**P. K. SLOCUM:** "Enjoyed your fascinating biographical sketch. Really now, according to current opinion on child psychology you should have NEVER made it. Broken home, physical handicap, a loner, non-groupie in school, food fetishes, need I say more? Keep the presses rolling, I'll be waiting for the next quarterly." *No one ever really "makes it." Each failure is followed by new opportunity; each success by new challenge.*

**GEORGE HAYNIE:** "Thanks for the encouragement in your Christmas *Journal*. I was getting a little 'down in the mouth' because of the frustration of not being able to do enough for the libertarian cause, but you shook me out of it. Life was meant to be enjoyed, and there is a lot of satisfaction in feeling that you are just a little more enlightened than the average sheep in the valley."

**ROGER COOLEY:** "Keep *LeFevre's Journal* coming. Although currently unemployed, I consider my donation to be eminently worthwhile and I look forward to receipt of the *Journal* every three months. Don't know a struggling consumer products company that needs a libertarian marketing director, do you? I'm available!" *Let's hope a consumer product company in search of a marketing director takes note of your letter. Thanks.*

**C. R. GANGNATH:** "I'd like to call your attention to 'Mathematical Games,' in the October *Scientific American*. The part on 'The Voting Paradox' demonstrates '... a perfect democratic voting system is in principle impossible,' and then goes on to show how politicians use this paradox to push through unpopular ideas, etc." *Thanks. I'd have missed that.*

**HAROLD GRAHAM:** "If it is within your realm and desire to influence your fellowmen who, like me, have not been exposed to previous expressions of your ideas on applying libertarian ways and means in their own lives, would not a different approach in the editing and distribution of the *Journal* reach a more fertile acreage in which the seeds of your cause can be impregnated? Sure, the *Journal* provides you with the means to 'blow off steam' freely, but who is it helping and what is it helping?" *If you read the comments from others, it appears the *Journal* is*

*at least marginally effective. Additionally, I keep up a full schedule of teaching and writing chores.*

**PHILIP O'CONNELL:** "All who love freedom would do well to study the history (unbiased) of the Christian Church. Basically, we owe to Christians the freedoms we have enjoyed in this country and in the West. I could, today, completely divest myself of all Christian ties and there would be no coercion. However, just the simple refusal to apply for a Social Security number has faced me every year for 22 years with the threat of coercion from the State. You, Bob, know what happened when I refused to pay the S.S. tax. The moral cesspools we have for jails are in some ways worse than those experienced by Solzhenitsyn. Forced idleness is worse than forced labor. Nevertheless, by putting into practice the principles of private property, free exchange, self-control, no coercion, as preached by you and Leonard Read, the results have been astounding. With our small family business we have achieved complete economic independence while raising nine healthy children, educating them all in private schools. Three are now completely on their own; our youngest, seven. It really works — in spite of confiscatory taxes, coercive government, bureaucratic controls and harassment. They are like ravenous wolves waiting to devour all that has been accomplished by free men." *I see no reason to decry Christianity although organized theological thought in the form of any church does cause me qualms. I still believe that a basic freedom is the individual's right to have any religion he wishes; or none at all.*

**GEORGE WARREN:** "Many thanks for your fine efforts. They help me in my thinking."

**DAVID McLAUGHLIN:** "Your letters are a most welcome addition to my life. The thought in them is much too important to be stopped through lack of support."

**RICHARD COLLIER:** "The educational enlightenment I received at the Rampart College campus in Colorado has stayed with me. It is extremely interesting to compare events as they occur to the 'freedom philosophy.' A clearer perspective and recognition of truths is a most welcome thing to have."

**EVAN COTTRELL:** "I try to express the libertarian view whenever I get a chance. Don't know of anyone that I've converted, but hopefully have planted some seeds of thought. Keep

up the good work. I enjoy reading anything you publish." *I've never converted anyone to anything, either. Just call me Bob Freedomseed.*

**GEORGE G. SHORT:** "Thanks for the picture of Loy in the winter *Journal*. I can still hear her beautiful voice at the 'graduation party.' What a warm feeling it is to recall the idyllic Rampart setting and the truly beautiful people who were associated with you — and the food, that delectable food! All of this in addition to the pile-driver blows I received in class! The impact has become more meaningful through the years."

**DEBBY ROSBOROUGH:** "Your philosophy and writings are positive and hopeful — and that is rare and encouraging in these negative days. Best wishes for a great 1975."

**WARD MADISON, JR.:** "Your *Journal* brings flavor and reinforcement to ideas that seem destined to be challenged by almost all those around me. At first, this challenge seemed unfair and provoked my wrath as well as my frustration. But now, with your help and example, the provocation has changed to a stimulus for more precise thinking, more careful research, and more patience and tolerance."

**DANIEL OST:** "The need to preserve existing freedom as well as to regain lost freedom has probably never been greater. My brother and I believe that the free market, not self-seeking bicentennial bureaucrats, is the best place to spread the message we've developed to celebrate the coming bicentennial."

**FREEDOM  
THEN... NOW  
FOREVER**

Dan and Clate Ost

**JUSTIN BRADBURN, JR.:** "You published my request to use the Pine Tree on my stationery. T-H-A-N-K-S. I did. I especially liked the article on 'The Beautiful Bluffs of Colorado.' It could have been entitled 'One Man's Struggle for What He Believed.'" *The Pine Tree on your stationery looks great, Brad, I'm delighted you're using it.*





# DATA ARE FOR COMPUTERS.....

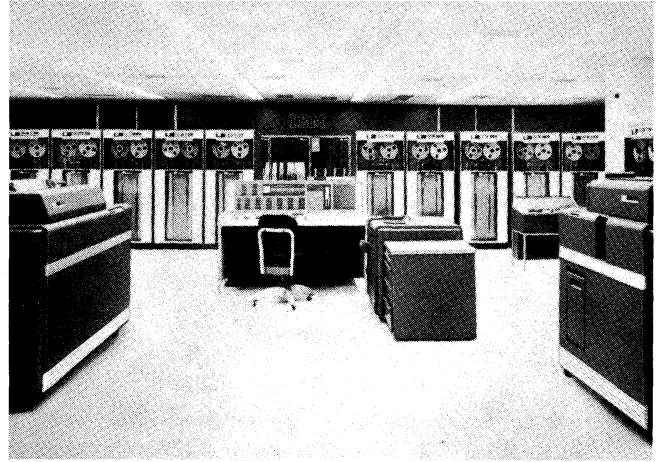
When I first began work at the *Gazette Telegraph*, my employer intended making me into a competent newspaperman in every respect. It didn't take long for both of us to realize that this was not to be. I was not a good reporter.

My difficulty was that I took little interest in what people *said* because *I could see through what they said to what they really meant*. I had learned that most people seek to create desirable impressions through communications. They usually don't recite things exactly as they are; they carefully choose their words so that their listeners will form the impression that is sought. I had long since become acutely aware of this tendency, having learned, in fact, to practice the same arts myself.

I particularly recall a meeting I was assigned to cover. One of the speakers at this public hearing concerning new regulations for the dairy industry was clearly in favor of the regulations. However, in everything he said, he avoided making that statement. There was no question as to where his affections lay and I reported that he had revealed his position. Understandably, he objected. He had avoided declaring his support and he was furious when a brash novice in the news field published what he had *not* revealed by direct statement. I was right in my conclusion, of course, as his subsequent actions proved. He had revealed himself to me. But that is not what reporting is about and I was told so, in no uncertain terms. I should have quoted what he *said*. The publisher had me on the carpet for that one and for others of similar genre. But I couldn't correct myself. I saw through the thin veil of pretense and wrote what I saw.

It is a good thing for the newsreading public that there are hundreds of reporters who do a fine, honest job in reporting exactly what others say. Most reporters tell it the way it occurs. They state the facts. Or at least they try. But even an accurate newsman can be raked over the coals when he reports exactly what others do say. Seeing in print what one has said verbally often results in an "I was misquoted!" reaction. Each of us knows what impression he hopes to create. So we strive to blank out, by our choice of words, all impressions contrary to the one sought. This process is very revealing. The politician who believes he has concealed his basic motivation may, in fact, have trumpeted it.

Alas, the lot of the reporter can be an unhappy one. If he cuts through the verbal images and reveals meaning, he can be charged with failing to quote accurately. If he prints exactly what was said, the speaker may have inadvertently revealed more than he intended yet may not realize it until he sees his own words in print. The reporter is blamed in either case. Many reporters today protect themselves by taping what is said and holding onto the tape. Persons like myself, who wish to



plunge deeply into the most hidden and obscure meanings, simply should not be reporters.

Of course, all reporters are human and must write from their own point of view. They emphasize, often insensibly, what to them seems significant and in process they de-emphasize other things. When I became editor of the paper, I insisted on hiring someone else to deal directly with reporters so that my own views could not have impact upon their stories. A reporter has to be free to tell it like it is, to the best of his ability. But the editorial page was mine and I could print my views there. Let others report the facts. My job would be to get behind the facts, to understand and apply them, and to interpret them. But only on the one page.

This brings me to an extremely important point, one that is going to be difficult to communicate. A part of this nation's present malaise is directly traceable to popular reliance upon facts!

Obviously, the above sentence, if taken out of context, is devastatingly misleading. It seems to imply that a non-fact, or a falsehood, is more valuable than fact or truth. And that is not what I mean nor intend to imply. Clearly, facts must and do rule. But while facts may be impartial, it is the choosing and presentation of facts which is never impartial. Thus, a cataloguing of facts may be of only marginal usefulness. Knowledge consists of facts that are understood and placed in perspective.

I have referred elsewhere to "my father's household" and shown in some small way his influence on my thinking while I was a small lad. My father's influence over the household ceased when I was eleven. Nonetheless, his influence over me was lasting and profound. The principal feature of my father's character was his absolute devotion to facts. He had graduated from college after only three years and with a B.S. degree. He was a mathematical wizard with a fantastic memory. He knew the name of every botanical or zoological species and could recite that name in English, Latin, or German. He could give you the habitat and the peculiarities of every animal, bird, fish, insect,

# ..... SIGNIFICANCE IS FOR MEN

plant, or geological specimen. These recitations were incessant and occurred with or without a request. Being with him was like holding hands with a talking encyclopedia.

But for all this storehouse of data my father was lacking in many ways: ways that at first alienated and then angered me, his only son. My father was not wise. He remembered a fantastic number of things; but his vast treasure trove of information was irrelevant to how he lived and what he did. It took me many years to forgive him for his shortcomings and to hope that he would forgive me for mine.

My mother had been compelled to drop out of school while yet in the grades. She had accumulated very little in the way of data. But the few things she did know, she marshaled in a practical way that was sweet and loving. My mother had the wisdom; my father had the facts. My father won the arguments; my mother was usually right. And so I learned that of the two, wisdom is superior. It is better to know a few things and to interpret them correctly, to make them relevant, and to weave them into a meaningful, useful tapestry of life, than to parade an accumulation of data which serves principally to satisfy the ego of the person making the display.

Had my parents managed to get along with each other, I would have had an ideal background. As events unfolded, I became increasingly sceptical of those who had the facts but were unable to relate them to practical, harmonious procedures.

And this is what I mean in respect to the current disease from which our society, indeed, all of Western Civilization, appears to suffer. We have the facts! Indeed, thanks to our reliance upon mathematics and the physical sciences, there has been such an explosion of knowable data that it is impossible for a single mind to absorb it all. Technologically, we are encyclopedic!

But when it comes to wisdom, it is my firm belief that we have retrogressed. There were sages in most prior cultures who were far wiser than any I know of today. Oh, they didn't have the facts we have at our fingertips. But they had wisdom. We may know how to split an atom. But we aren't quite certain why we should or if we should split it. And if we do split it, what do we do with the resulting energy? A wise man would know. A technician knows how, but not why nor if.

The result of this multiplication of data against a background from which wisdom is being subtracted (or at least is not being added in discernible amounts) leaves our culture bewildered and confused.

When I finally launched an educational endeavor, one of the first phenomena observed was that trained educators who became aware of my efforts were astonished at my methods. I was asked repeatedly to explain why I taught the way I did.

But this I could not do. Having had no formal

training as an educator, I didn't know the meaning of educational technique. I just did what came naturally to me. But the effect was overwhelming. What I taught was accepted by an overwhelming number of those who studied with me.

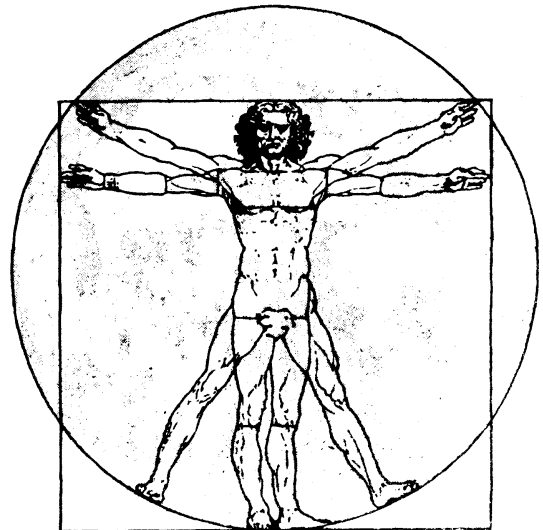
I didn't have an awesome array of factual data on which to draw. I did know some things. But the merit of my courses, then and now, appears to lie in the manner in which I put the facts together to create an understandable and meaningful whole.

To those accustomed to other methods, my peculiar approach to education has often been disconcerting, and sometimes embarrassing, both to students and to me. At first, I would sometimes cite various books I had read in an effort to buttress my position. But I found that there were two principal drawbacks to referring a student to some presumed "authority." Either the student accepted the position of the authority because the position was authoritative (and this is null if one is seeking to truly understand) or, as was often the case, what I had read into or gotten out of the "authority" I cited proved to be something other than what the student would get out of it. Hence, I would be accused of being "wrong."

Let me recite an experience in one of my Freedom School classes. I sought to show some exceptionally bright young men and women the irresponsibility of men who obtain power. My purpose was to recite a limited number of facts so that a major philosophic lesson could be grasped. The lesson was: "All power tends to corrupt; absolute power corrupts absolutely." The accuracy of this quotation from Lord Acton has been demonstrated in every age and clime.

To drive the point home, I recited some of the actions taken by early British monarchs who amassed power and then used it irrespective of the innocent people who were hurt by it. I dwelt momentarily upon the exploits of Oliver Cromwell, a

*(please turn the page)*



**DATA/COMPUTERS • SIGNIFICANCE/MAN***(continued)*

one-time brewmaker who, discontented with the froth on his creations, sought a more heady mixture such as ferments in all political cauldrons. I am something of a ham actor and I embroidered my story by describing the swords and other battle gear of the day, omitting the fact that gunpowder was also in use at the time of Cromwell's exploits. I then went on to explain that the "do nothing" Stuart line, interrupted by Cromwell and then restored, finally "ran out" a second time.

One of the young men in class jumped to his feet in great agitation. "I refuse to remain in this class!" he roared. "I don't want to be lied to. LeFevre is lying! He knows full well that Cromwell's men used muskets and he knows that the Stuarts didn't 'run out,' they were driven out!"

After that outburst, the young man boycotted the balance of the session, backed up by a few others who took their cue from him. From this incident and others perhaps less dramatic, a report circulated among professors and educators that the material I offered wasn't reliable.

In a sense, this was true. It was no more reliable than my report of the meeting in Colorado Springs wherein I revealed the intentions of a man who did not want his position known. I had not quoted him accurately, but I had revealed what he *meant*.

Clearly, this is a weakness on my part. If I were seeking some form of public acclaim or some type of political office, I could not afford the luxury of disregarding the minutiae in order to grapple with the significant. And in this day and age what appears as

inaccuracy in data is particularly distracting, since so many cling to the trivial and miss the vast, all-encompassing *raison d'etre*. To be significant in an age of vast insignificance is to be suspected of heresy by those who cannot detect the difference.

With the passing of time, however, I have learned to chuckle appreciatively over these criticisms. As it turns out, my view of Cromwellian times is as correct as any other. There is a school of thought which argues that the line of the Stuarts really did "run out"; and, of course, what is often taken as undisputed fact turns out to be nothing but those particular items some historians have chosen to dwell upon. Through much repetition these items are finally adjudged to be factual, as well they may be. But an entirely separate line of reporting can be equally factual. The important things we could learn from history are rarely learned while we quarrel over whether Louis XIV wore a powdered wig or avoided powder because it made him sneeze.

I have taught enough and lived long enough to obtain sufficient wisdom to know that I am not wise. But I have the joy of knowing that many of the younger and even many of the older people who have been in my sessions have gone on to gain a far better grasp of reality than they had before, with a philosophy at least as viable as my own.

Today, it is not more data that is required, it is mastery and comprehension of at least a portion of what we know. The world pleads for wisdom. Hopefully, the composite of all educational efforts will in time produce a race of wise men rather than a gaggle of clever tinkers who can do anything but don't know why they do or if they should.




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