



THE MERRY WISH from all us little people who dwell at P.O. Box 2353 is that you will find joy and fulfillment in your own freedom and in your own peace. And may that joy be so great that you will put aside all political action, as you would cast from you the memory of a bad dream. A **JOYFUL CHRISTMAS** be yours — and a profit-filled 1977.



UP WITH LIBERTY — DOWN WITH POLITICS

Should it turn out that unusual amounts of fog and mist still cling in folds to our tall buildings, and lie in billowing layers around our airports, the phenomenon may be readily explained. The election is over, and the condensation arising from the droplets exuding from so many fevered brows has mixed with the sighs of relief as the political rutting season ended. The finale to our quadrennial vaporings must affect the weather, even though the voting outcome has affected little else.

Of course the American people have lost. But since the Libertarians have not yet come to full power, there is still hope that some measure of sanity may return as the silly season passes into what we still refer to as history. If we wished to be accurate, we could refer to the trails made at the hustings as the medical records left behind by the patients at an institution for the befuddled.

Now that national politicking is over for the time being, we may again realize that others are still human even if they belong to an opposing political party. Such reasonableness is never encouraged during election time.

I am enormously pleased with the performance of those libertarians who resisted the temptation to play the power game. As for those who wallowed in the welter, let them be welcome as they return to constructive pursuits.

I suppose one of the reasons so many calling themselves libertarians tilted so badly during the 1976 emotional marathons ties back to the cry we heard so often during the sixties: "Freedom in our time!"

Those giving ear to this siren call, and in process giving credence and support, have simply failed to understand the nature of freedom in

sufficient depth. It is as though they felt, and had, indeed, come to believe, that freedom can be won by an election, or possibly by some other titanic struggle. After the winning, they could all stop worrying about freedom. Such is never true.

Freedom is not an end to a great effort, it is the method that must be employed in all efforts. Freedom cannot be automated. It is not achieved, in the sense that a person arrives at a destination. Nor is it possible for some trick, political or otherwise, to provide other people with freedom. No manipulative legerdemain produces freedom for others. Freedom is something that is learned by each person, or it is not learned. It is grasped at last only by those who love it most. Each one must learn it for himself. And the attainment is marked, not by a new political administration but by the high resolve of each individual who decides that from this moment forward he will never willingly or knowingly violate the freedom of another.

As one begins to grasp the nature of his own reality, he begins to see that freedom is self-control, as opposed to externally imposed control supplied by others. The question of your own freedom is a question only you can answer. It follows that you cannot make others free nor can they free you.

It is true, of course, that government has always been the principal enemy of human liberty. But it is not the only enemy. Were government to disappear — a disappearance which must be continually sought — freedom would not appear in its place. The present mental level of the people of this land is such that the sudden passing of the state would inspire most of them to create a new state — or at least new means for using force on

UP WITH LIBERTY

(continued)

others. We have at the moment clear and overpowering evidence that the people of America are fearful of freedom and terrified of free market ideas. And freedom is such a celestial commodity that while others can impede your freedom through imposed controls, none can reward you with it even by taking off the controls.

What is needed is the resolve to control one's self. And what is most in evidence today is the desire of major and minor party sycophants to impose controls upon others which they think appropriate. I have, indeed, listened to endless harangues by people calling themselves libertarian whose primary concern is how they can practice retribution, retaliation, and "justice" upon those who misbehave. They see themselves as self-righteous bearers of the "true light" of liberty. They fancy that without government, they can create "free market" companies which will bring "justice" through forceful retaliation. So long as they are of this mind, they differ from supporters of government control only in degree. They imagine that force and violence which they might administer over others would smell sweet. It would not. But then, we have very few among our teeming millions who have grasped the principles of freedom in depth.

The evil that is in the world today is created by human beings. In each case, the evil consists of the imposition of force by some upon others. Further, it must be grasped that most of the evil that is committed is performed by "good" people and with admirable intentions. This is manifestly true, since it is apparent that nearly all of us are good people and there is so much evil around that it could not have been created in such amounts as exist were it not for the cooperation and participation of a great many.

If all men were naturally evil, then what we think of today as evil would have no such connotation. Even if most men were evil, we would have no such concept. If the majority of human beings were constantly of evil intent and purpose, then the majority of us would be constantly engaged in evil doing. Destruction is easy. While it may take years of painstaking self-discipline to learn to play a violin, excel at sports or chess, or build a building, any evil person can smash a violin without prior instruction. It takes no great skill to cheat in sports or in any other activity. And an imbecile with a stick of dynamite can bring down the Taj Mahal. It may take years to produce a fine painting or a porcelain vase, but a child of two can wreck either in a moment.

The nature of the evil we see about us invariably contains the element of seeking to impose our wills on others. Few of us feel that we need to correct the evil in ourselves. Even if we detect

shoddy motives and mediocre performance in ourselves, we readily see that such falling away from perfection does not justify any inroads against us. It is the inroads against others that are always a necessity and invariably justified. And it is from this unwillingness to mind our own business that evil is manufactured.

From this melancholy motivation government emerges. And it becomes government when it seeks to impose on others, although we may call it the Paragon Protection Company. The character of an act is not determined by its name. An act that violates the boundaries of another is invariably viewed as necessary, profitable, and justified by those who do the violating. It is always wrong.

The fundamental difference between a libertarian and a political activist relates to the direction of his effort. Each person may sincerely desire freedom. However, the libertarian has recognized one important factor in the equation which, despite lip service to the contrary, is never really grasped by the political activist. This is the fact that each human being controls himself. The only control that causes your arm to move, your fingers to flex, or your brain to ideate, is your own control. I may be able to inspire or terrify others. I may be able to influence them for better or for worse. But when it comes to control, there is only one person on earth I can control. Myself. My relationship to me is personal and direct. My relationship to all others, although it might be personal, is and must be indirect. My body responds instantly to my control of it. Were I to attempt to control you, I would have to make the effort by demanding my body to impose controls on your body. I can make no direct demands upon you. All such demands of necessity are indirect.

If this point is grasped, if the distinction between direct control and indirect manipulation is understood, then the individual has no difficulty in seeing that the only device he has by means of which to impose his wishes on others is the use of coercive force. To make certain that you do not violate another's boundaries, and hence perform wrongfully, I must either kill you or incarcerate you. But if I kill you or imprison you, I am violating your boundaries.

It follows, therefore, that although I wish a condition of freedom to exist, I do not create a condition of freedom by imposing on you. Yet, if I do not impose on you, how can I be sure that you will not commit a wrongful act? The fact is, I cannot be sure. The belief in freedom entails risk. I must leave you free so that you could perform a wrongful act if you wished. I must rely on your control of yourself to see that you do not perform a wrongful act. Either that, or I must violate the principles of freedom in order to obtain freedom — clearly, a philosophic contradiction and a logical absurdity.

The difference between a real libertarian and a political activist appears here. The real libertarian will leave you alone, trusting in your wisdom and your conscience to refrain from wrongdoing; knowing that the only control over you is your own. The political activist will not leave you alone. His planning must always be imposed on others. He is convinced that those who disagree cannot be taught. They must be restrained or compelled. Of course his argument is that his actions are for the good of all. He is a compulsive schemer who seeks to remold society in the image he likes best, usually his own. The libertarian, on the contrary, is willing to rely on each person's judgment to design his own affairs as he sees fit and to be patient should the other fall short of the ideal. He is not so grandiose as to suppose that he knows what they should do better than they know it, to the degree that he must impose force.

As it works out, all political activist theories are based on distrust of others. Therefore, all election periods are filled with accusations aimed at awakening distrust and suspicion. Libertarian politicians stir up distrust of Republicans, Democrats, and all others. Republicans stir up distrust of Democrats, Libertarians, and all others. Democrats stir up distrust of Republicans, Libertarians, and all others. Each party sycophant wants you to believe that those who support him are virtuous and all others in all other camps are scoundrels.

The psychological effect of this periodic reliance upon sowing distrust and suspicion throughout society is cumulative. It builds into such animus and hatred that we become unwilling to trust anyone at all. But liberty, a free society, is one in which we trust others to mind their own business. It follows that every political action helps to breed an anti-libertarian result. Every political action is aimed at proving that we can trust no one but the political leaders of the party we happen to favor at the moment. Over the long pull, this is bound to be disastrous. In time, it leads to absolute tyranny and dictatorship. For as suspicion mounts and we are more and more distrustful of everyone, reliance on force seems the only practical expedient. And what we hoped would be a move toward civilization becomes a major reactionary force toward a resurgence of barbarism.

I see no practical means of moving toward a free society, a state of liberty, save by the emergence of self-control and self-discipline. These virtues are taught and not imposed. In the end, education and self-control, precept and example, must be relied upon. And I see no procedure at all that does not entail risk. To be a libertarian, a person must be so devoted to liberty that he is willing to let others be free, too, despite his anxiety that each of them might do something wrong.

As the libertarian thrust intensifies and grows more meaningful, if it does, more and more individuals will withdraw from the political process. Should the point be grasped by any significant number, the effect on any administration, be it Republican, Democratic, or Libertarian, will be the same. We do not need to change the existing form of government into something more reasonable. Government is not reason, it is force. What is required is a waning, a reduction in that force, so that reason can be relied upon once more. This does not mean force under better management. Under any management, it is the use of power by means of which to violate boundaries. Good management of a predatory organization does not assuage predation, it tends to justify it.

The ultimate merit of precept and example as the methods to be followed is this. Our society will advance toward liberty exactly as rapidly as we are ready for it. As each individual grasps these points, he steps aside from the political process. By doing so, he removes his energy from the wrongful practice of trying to control others, either by ballots or by bullets. To that degree, the force of government (any administration) is diminished. From this process there is no backlash. One does not need to worry about a more persuasive politician following later who will sway others back to an earlier position. As the individual grasps the nature of his own identity, his own individuality, and finds himself in support of freedom, he imposes on no one. He simply withdraws and learns to content himself by minding his own affairs.

All government obtains its power from the consent of those who are ruled — even in a dictatorship, but most especially in a democracy. As fewer and fewer consent to be ruled, yet at the same time impose neither threat nor force on others, government is inadvertently less potent. Finally, it ceases to be potent altogether. But that cessation comes at a time when the population, in the main, is prepared for liberty. Were we to obtain the disappearance of government by any other process, the population would not be ready, and the screams of outrage and anguish would quickly create a new government.

There is something else that needs to be said. I have found a number of persons, rightfully calling themselves anarchists, who seek the abolition of government on the grounds that the existence of government makes private ownership of property possible. I'm not speaking of the so-called anarcho-capitalists but of those who follow the classical anarchist tradition. In my judgment, such anarchists are economically illiterate and wrong on this point. While it is true that government has served to reward political favorites with privileged control of property, as in feudal times and in modern fascist states, government has invariably been the

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Lift her up,
tenderly

Bob LeFevre

In more than 20 years of studying and teaching economics, I have usually found that ideas which are little more than common sense have been cloaked in such profundity that the discipline appears to be esoteric, far too difficult for the average adult to fully comprehend. But all economic ideas are basically simple.

LIFT HER UP, TENDERLY is a textbook that contains the element of pure fiction. A man in his fifties is the guardian of a twelve-year-old girl. The situations and dialogue are imaginary. But the laws of economics (common sense) are suggested by the guardian and applied by

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that challenges all the old notions about teaching the subject — and especially the old saw attributed to Carlyle that “economics is a gloomy science.” NOT SO!

the young lady in her efforts to deal with real life situations.

My hope is that teachers in high school — and even grade school — will make use of this simple approach to economics.

Even more importantly, I hope that in its pages parents will rediscover the exciting and rewarding task of teaching their own children. Love alone is not enough. Physical maintenance, paying the bills, playing together — none of these is enough. Learning the meaning and common sense of living is a life-long challenge for parents and children alike.

This beautifully bound hardcover book (over 200 pages) is first offered to *Journal* readers for the remarkably low price of \$6.95 (plus 75¢ postage/handling). California residents add 42¢ for 6% sales tax. Use the handy attached envelope for your check and order. Write for discount on 10 or more copies.

UP WITH LIBERTY

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major device by means of which the ownership and control of property by private persons is eroded and abolished.

Once the true libertarian position is grasped, a major position is established in favor of private ownership and control of property. The libertarian must be willing to run the risk that others will have more or less property than he has. Without government as a device to call on, only market-place methods for acquiring and keeping property will pertain. This means that customer patronage becomes the controlling force and this, in itself, provides the only true democracy worthy of the name. In a free society, voting occurs constantly in the market place. The customer is king and votes for or against a product or service by buying or refusing to buy. Elections are not periods of time for sowing suspicion and hatred. Elections go on every day, and every hour, with each person expressing his wishes by the practical method of participating as he will or abstaining as he will. Yet his decisions are not binding on others. Freedom remains a constant, and the rewards go to the best producer and not to the best confidence man.

Government, on the other hand, is invariably an instrument of monopoly and special privilege. This is, indeed, why so many people support it. Government behaves like an intoxicated millionaire, willing to throw money around in an irresponsible manner. The difficulty is that the government has no money to throw around except the

money it takes by force from those who earn it. So long as we have a preponderance of persons willing to receive goodies they have not earned and are not entitled to, we will have government.

Thus, in the final analysis, the growth of government, and the reliance upon it, are marked by a diminution and shrinking of individual character. The person of integrity does not want a special favor nor a forcefully obtained monopoly position. All he asks is freedom, and the chance to run his race without interference. He knows that some will do better than he will and some will do worse. As invariably occurs, those lacking most in character are those seeking most from government. And those running for office are almost always those who have lost all belief in human goodness and human integrity and so they seek force, which they fondly believe will be safely administered in their hands.

This nation and the world are experiencing an epidemic far worse than the highly touted swine flu. It is a pandemic featuring the decline of self-respect and individual character, which is being replaced by the proxy of government founded on violence. The inoculation recommended must be self-administered. It is the vaccine of freedom. The inoculation has been effective at that point in the individual's life when he says to himself, "I know I cannot control the actions of others. But I can control my own and from this moment forward, I will so conduct myself that I will never knowingly or willingly violate the rights and freedom of another."



SEMINARS WITH ROBERT LeFEVRE — 1977

January

9-14 Morgantown, West Virginia
16-21 Greenwood, South Carolina
30-Feb. 4 Greenwood, South Carolina

February

13-18 Greenwood, South Carolina
20-25 Greenwood, South Carolina

March

6-11 Northern California
20-25 Greenwood, South Carolina

April

3-8 Greenwood, South Carolina
17-22 Greenwood, South Carolina

May

1-6 Greenwood, South Carolina
8-13 Greenwood, South Carolina

June

12-17 Greenwood, South Carolina
26-July 1 Greenwood, South Carolina

July

10-15 Greenwood, South Carolina
24-29 Greenwood, South Carolina

August

8-12 Wichita, Kansas
14-19 Northern California
28-Sept. 2 Greenwood, South Carolina

September

11-16 Greenwood, South Carolina
18-23 Greenwood, South Carolina

October

2-7 Greenwood, South Carolina
9-14 Greenwood, South Carolina

November

13-18 Greenwood, South Carolina
27-Dec. 2 Greenwood, South Carolina

Sessions fully reserved by sponsor except for August 8-12. For information re Wichita seminar, write to Mrs. Wanda Lee Zuercher, Love Box Co., Box 546, Wichita, Kansas 67201.



JUDITH SLOAN: "The American public has been so indoctrinated that it takes a free thinker to make us aware that we do have alternatives. Your thoughts have opened my mind and it's really fun to think!"

PETER McALPINE: "Why should anyone value freedom as a thing in itself? I must confess that only philosophies based on self-interest as the highest individual value make any sense to me. I can point to the pleasures possible only to the well and living as evidence for the self-interest philosophy. Your philosophy is self-consistent, but so what? Where does your first premise come from? Belief in the supernatural and life after death seems to me the only possible justification for sacrificing self-interest to a concept of 'freedom' or any other version of 'right and wrong.'" *You might try thinking of the kind of life you'd lead if all your freedom were taken from you. The primary self-interest of any rational person is that he be free.*

MARION KINTNER, M.D.: "A happy life, with good will and equanimity, free of arrogance and aggression, is easier for me to achieve when I learn of your ideas. Urges to incinerate vandals or thieves grow like weeds, but medical experience shows that malaise and disease result from bitter or vengeful thoughts. . . . Your observation that non-aggression may not solve all problems, but may more nearly achieve justice than any other means deserves consideration and application by all thoughtful persons."

MARCUS LOGAN: "It was easy to sit and try to find faults — to gain recognition by that action. But I find it ironic that now I champion your views. I use my words, maybe not exactly your meanings, but try to express freedom to people who want to listen. A trend has started and if it's kept

nourished, fueled by many, no one really trying to dominate — because then it would be extinguished — the world still has a choice. I pay tribute to you, and to my employer, Roger Milliken. I don't think either of you really wants the credit, I know you don't want to be the leader — this enlightenment doesn't need one, nor does it want one. No majority, nor minority, should rule — everyone has to understand for themselves. A maturity of thought has to grow. Thank you."

ROY CHILDS: "I have found the last two issues of *LeFevre's Journal* rather disturbing. . . . My major point was that lying was not, in these contexts, a moral issue; when dealing with murderers and cut-throats, one has the right to protect oneself by lying. . . . You also think that lying is not a moral issue, and violates no libertarian principle. To you, the only moral principle is: 'Molest no one for any reason; after that, do as you please.' By 'molest' you mean 'violate the will of a property owner with respect to something that he owns.' In your view, all else is in the realm of ethics, and therefore subjective. This means that you agree with Block." *Wherever contracts or agreements exist in respect to the communication of information, a lie is an immoral act. This is also true when a person is seeking to establish a contract or agreement, as in selling a product or in running for office. In any case, however we intellectualize over it, a lie is not desirable and it most certainly downgrades the concept of liberty when a bright young advocate of freedom recommends lying if only it will help him get what he wants.*

JOHN RALEIGH: "Since I had the unique privilege of being in your Greenwood class less than a year ago, I've made a sincere effort to steer my own life on a consistently non-meddle-

some course away from politics and towards the market place. I've added to that policy the belief that I'll get what I want out of life if I help enough other people get what they want. It's beautiful. It works. Behold! my enclosed contribution is double the last one."

H. FLOYD NOWELL: "In reading your work I constantly find ideas that I've worked with for years without really giving them expression as you have. For years I was in the construction and real estate business. At first, when I had not thought this all through, I used the FHA and VA programs for financing and selling my properties. One day I realized that I had to make it without government help and I stopped using these agencies and never went back. I'm coming more and more to see the value of your ideas." *Congratulations. It's most encouraging to find a man with the skills and ability to stay in business and avoid reliance upon government financing schemes.*

JOHN HUNTER: "Your philosophy leaves those who accept it at the mercy of those who don't! Any 'protection' system can be beaten, by a determined thief. If I cannot forcibly defend my property, and I cannot recover property stolen from me, do I really have 'property rights'?" *It is entirely possible for a person to protect himself and his property by the use of reason, and advance preparation. It is strange that so many find force to be superior to reason and feel vulnerable unless force is relied upon.*

BOB MURPHY: "I greatly enjoyed *The Power of Congress*. In it you say, 'It doesn't matter whether government seeks to enforce real law or not, nature enforces it.' My question: Are the laws against murder and theft true law or legislation? If they are true law, how does nature enforce them? If the laws against murder and theft are legislation, are you saying that we could do without them? that they are 'opinions of some men imposed upon other men by force'?" *Murder and theft are actions that violate the laws of human reality. Passing legislation against them does not stop them. But you can decide that you will neither murder nor steal. When you make that decision, we can stop worrying about you.*

HARRY POLLARD: "I suspect that the things we call rights are completely contractual and that their characteristics of 'equality' and 'unalienability' are the expected results of reasonable contractual decisions. If some-

one breaks the (explicit or implicit) contract with someone else, this other person probably will not again contract with the 'breaker.' Nor will others. But, what if the 'break' is a violent attack on Mrs. LeFevre? If such a reaction is possible, might you not bounce a rock off the rapist's skull? 'No!' says philosopher LeFevre, but 'Yes!' says the engineer. For the scientist deals in absolutes and the engineer deals with reality. Many a scientist's dream has been saved by a tap in the right place by the engineer's hammer. The debate in your *Journal* is between the philosopher and the engineers. And the engineers are right (as was illustrated by Don Fahrenkrug's letter). But, no engineer can work without the little books telling him what the scientist/philosophers have discovered and this is the importance of LeFevre. He is right, too. In fact, he is *absolutely* right. But, someone who knows the 'absolute' is faced with the task of approaching its fruition by a circuitous route. This 'engineer' may proceed towards 'non-violence' by breaking a nose or two. Such a procedure isn't important in the scheme of things — so long as the philosopher's job is well done. But, if LeFevre has failed to provide the philosophy of non-violence, then 'breaking noses' may well become not the engineer's 'tap of the hammer' but his new philosophy!" *I think there is more to rights than the right to contract and the benefits achieved by contract. And LeFevre is duly warned. He must do his work very well indeed to offset the tendency of those who seek a philosophy based on expedience.*

FRAN LAVIN: "I'm paying you now for something about which I've long wondered . . . why a Libertarian Party? Why, indeed? Who needs it — in that manner? Now, why couldn't I figure that out? Possibly because I'm a jeweler, not a philosopher; and I need a philosopher close buy to answer such questions. (Note the Freudian slip: *buy* rather than *by*.) If I had the time, perhaps I could have figured it out. Perhaps. Now that you have my attention, I'll read your *Journal* from cover to cover."

FRED WALKER: "I don't argue with you very often, but really! Most of the people in government are good people! Legal thieves are what they are, paid with the tax gun or/and the printing press, and well aware of it. Certainly human, but in the lowest possible employment. Possibly a peaceful way of reaching government is to cause *all* government employees

to be looked upon with disdain by all thinking men. Loss of 'face' could have a telling effect on those who make possible government as we unfortunately know it. The silent stare when others applaud a local 'dignitary,' the get-off-my-back lapel pins, and thousands of other ways will get across the peaceful message in no uncertain terms. Has it been seriously attempted in any organized way? The beauty of it is that this plan contains no goal other than reducing others' powers. We would not ourselves be seeking office, a program, or 'selling' something. Same concept as 'Don't tread on me,' etc." *I once wrote an article recommending that all politicians be required to wear distinctive headgear at all times, so they could be distinguished from persons having honest jobs. Yet, I would still say that a man must be viewed as a man, despite some of the things he does. The headman who wielded the axe for a royal monarch may have been a good man — only his job was vicious. Men in political office are often good men; but they are, of course, engaged in wrongful and destructive, even vicious actions.*

CARL WATNER: " 'Caravan Into Conflict' was interesting; especially your emphasis on Walter Block's defense of lying. Thought you might like to see how I incorporated that idea into a proprietary theory of justice. Quoting Block: 'Now it may not be *nice* (or in the opinion of some — moral) to lie, it may not be *admirable*. The person we give the wrong time to may get into all sorts of difficulties because he believes us. That's tough. But society is not justified in using force against the liar. For the liar has not first initiated force himself. He is not acting contrary to libertarian principles. We must, of course, distinguish lying from fraud. . . . If you have a contractual relationship to tell someone the correct time when he asks, and you lie to him, you are guilty of fraud. . . . you are not giving him the service for which he has paid you. . . . If a beggar on the street asks you for the correct time, you have a right to ignore him and remain silent, and you have the right to make him a voluntary gift of something he has not asked for, namely the wrong time. . . . Anyone who asks you a question is logically in the position of a beggar. He is asking you for something. You don't owe him the truth unless he's paid you for giving it.' I enjoy reading your *Journal*." *"Society" isn't justified in doing anything. "Society" doesn't do anything. It's just a collective noun. Only*

individuals act. I see the difference between a lie that violates a contract and one that does not. A lie is obviously not desirable. It is reprehensible primarily because of what it reveals of the liar's character. Clearly, no one is required to believe what another tells him.

EDWARD UNDERWOOD: "Today, thinking is done for people by presumptuous educators and communicators who know human minds are vulnerable to repetitive suggestion and use it to our disadvantage. True libertarians would do well to turn their attention to the source of mental subversion, the public school system, whose graduates not only staff all fields of human activity but also comprise a society which has been led to believe its betterment depends upon collective rather than individual integrity. It should not be too difficult to convince people in general that the whole can never be better than its individual parts and that people must improve by having a school system with that purpose."

PHILLIP LUCE: "You've apparently been 'read out' of the 'movement' somewhat in the manner that someone named Tuccile read me out in his book dealing with Rand. . . . I've never understood who ordained anyone to lead or banish anyone else. . . . Part of the problem might be summed up by Hobbes, 'For they see their own wit at hand, and other men's at a distance.' This may be especially true of economists, as in the case of Prof. Rothbard, who somehow manages to endorse Adam Smith while playing footsie with syndicalists. No doubt some of our friends in the 'movement' would gladly stand you against the wall for your pacifism and myself for daring to deal with the State. I can't consider myself a libertarian and then a member of a political party, theoretically speaking, because the two are natural opposites (it's like living in a State of Anarchy). Secondly, I can't support the party on purely pragmatic grounds."

WALTER OAKES: "I was astonished by your doubts of the Libertarian Party as a vehicle to liberty. Don't you remember? If it succeeds and after it has accomplished all its good works, it will simply 'wither away,' as promised by Marx — amply demonstrated by the white bones of the Communist Party, the Socialist Parties, Democrats, etc. It's well to remember, however, that 'he who turns the other cheek will probably not be able to sit down at all.' " *A "withering away" of the Liber-*
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tarian Party, so-called, may indeed result in a withering away of those who may have too closely aligned themselves to party politics instead of to liberty.

F. J. McMAHON: "Your *Journal* is alive with new thoughts. I like your comments to the various letters. It seems sometimes that what you're saying is, if we want to live in a society that is heaven-like, then we people have to be heavenly beings. There's no other way, because as we are now, we would wreck heaven in a matter of moments, so I have to keep trying."

SPENCER MACCALLUM: "If this is less than I sent last time, it doesn't reflect any lessening of interest. I couldn't afford to send you what your *Journal* is worth."

ROBERT REYNOLDS: "I don't entirely agree with you, but your cogent presentation is at once delightful and makes for splendid pondering."

MARC MOFFITT: "Your *Journal* has followed me through five jobs and four residences without so much as a thank you. Since it's my favorite piece of mail, guaranteed to contain at least one enlightening or inspirational idea each issue, I guess it's time to pay back at least a small part of the debt I owe you. I wish I could send more but I'm a cab driver (non-subsidized company, I'm happy to say). Two people have influenced my thinking more than any other: Ayn Rand revolutionized it and you refined it — and continue to. Please send your *Journal* to my father."

PHILIP O'CONNELL: "We've just returned from Ireland, where centuries of coercion from outsiders has created a most unusual history and people. All of Ireland is at peace except for the six counties in the North. Here the constant theme of those in power is that if you give equality and freedom to the Catholic minority, you'll be destroyed. Violence is used by a small minority to gain these rights and freedom, and violence is used to retaliate. Men of good will abound on both sides but fail to come to an effective agreement because they have not the faith that if they trust each other and remove the restrictions and the British Army, all will be well. From what I saw on both sides of the border, this lack of faith is ridiculous. Once equality and freedom is restored, the 'troubles' as they call them will go away and all of Great Britain will be at peace. Here, Bob, is truly fruitful ground for the principles you so courageously defend." *Thank you, Phil. The Irish im-*

broglio is no more than a power struggle — an election, if you please — using bullets instead of ballots with the same end in view: a single faction which is to monopolize power.

SARTELL PRENTICE, JR.: "A libertarian politician is indeed a contradiction in terms — as is 'political science.'"

JEAN SKINNER: "I find little time for correspondence, but always find time to read and enjoy the *Journal*."

MICHAEL USHIJIMA: "Although I appreciated your 'Caravan into Conflict,' I felt that on one or two occasions you uncharacteristically allowed your emotions to influence your rhetoric. I've come to expect a higher standard of writing from you over the years. Nonetheless, I strongly agree with most of your positions and as you well know, generally support your position much more so than that of the 'pragmatists' of the 'Libertarian Party.' I especially agree with your objection to majority rule, an attitude which you crystalized in my mind over ten years ago. I'd be interested in contacting grads in my Freedom School class to see how their present thoughts have developed." *Perhaps my emotions influenced my rhetoric. If so, I trust they did not impair my logic. If Mike's classmates care to respond, the Journal will forward letters to him.*

MARGUERITE SNARE: "The magic age (?) 65 finally caught up with me and my superiors have put me out to pasture. However, after attempting to teach in that marvelous \$1.6 million school building with its open classrooms, I'm more than happy to retire. There are those who would probably say that I'm not progressive, and they may be right. But is there anything wrong with privacy in a schoolroom? In my opinion, private schools are the answer to many of our serious problems."

J. T. SLAUGHTER: "Spooner's NO TREASON has given me an added regard for your *Journal*. The one area where you have not yet convinced me is that of self-defense. Man is not omniscient, and despite all efforts to make his life secure, he may find himself in extremis. In this situation, and with a great deal of regret, I believe he has the right to kill in order to defend himself." *This belief keeps government around. But if man is not omniscient (and I agree), a government made up of men is no better.*

KERRY THORNLEY: "I read and pass along every issue. Of all the things I've learned, I've come to appreciate none of them more than the teaching

that retribution is a barbaric and totally useless practice. It's so obvious once you think about it, and yet so few ever seem to dwell on it. That was the central message of Jesus and that 2,000 years have elapsed without its having taken hold in social affairs is to me one of the tragic ironies of history. I can't imagine what sort of person I'd be today without that simple, valuable insight which you passed on to me in 1964, and I want you to know I'm still spreading the word about it."

JOHN BRISCOE: "I just finished destroying my 'right to vote' ballots. It is at once both a humorous yet sad philosophical state of affairs when the typical voter believes legislators and laws are only to control the 'other guy.' 'For whom the bell tolls' . . ."

DAVID CARL ARGALL: "An analogy: I'm held up by two thieves, Rep and Dem, with one gun, government, between. . . They are clumsy, dropping the gun from time to time and scrambling for it with the winner robbing both me and his fellow crook. Let's say I make a grab for the loose gun (engage in political action) and get it. We both agree I should not then rob the crooks. . . However, I can throw the gun down the sewer. Rep and Dem might still be able to rob me, but their ability to do so is greatly decreased and I can expect to keep a good deal more. How have I violated their rights? Neither Rep nor Dem made any claim of ownership of the gun. In fact they insist they don't own it, that it belongs to a vague being called the 'public' who decides who gets the gun when it is dropped, that whoever gets the gun has a 'mandate' from the owner. Nor am I imposing my will on anyone. They are free to do as they please. They have the same rights as always. They certainly didn't lose the right to rob me; they never had such a right. Thus, political action can be a morally acceptable way toward a libertarian society. One can debate the most efficient method(s), but there is no inherent reason to reject political action such as the Libertarian Party." *When a gun is fired, the target receives the bullet and all others escape harm. When government is employed, not only is the target injured, but all others in the nation are drained of their resources. While most analogies are colorful and sometimes helpful, rarely do they coincide with the prototype model at all points. No one, however well-intentioned, can employ the "gun" of government without inflicting injury upon the people in general. Government is far worse than*

any gun ever devised. Nor am I comforted by the suggestion that the well-intentioned politician can throw the gun into the sewer — a suggestion based on the theory that there's only one gun, and another can't be produced. The assumption is wrong. So long as the people in general want a government, we will have one. If, by force or legerdemain (and it would take one or the other at this juncture), the government we have were discarded, we'd have a new one within a week. This is why it does no good at all to participate politically. It accomplishes absolutely nothing in the long run. Participation in government will continue until the misery caused by such participation becomes so abusive that a change in belief, attitude, or philosophy occurs at a depth which will make possible the abandonment of government. The only practical steps to be taken at this time entail an examination of the philosophy of liberty in depth and support of those ideas which are bound to culminate in abandonment of the state. This cannot be done quickly. But it will never be done at all unless each of us, acting by himself, does all he can outside the political arena.

ROY COTTRELL: "I say a kind of prayer whenever I receive your *Journal*: that you will continue speaking and that nothing — nothing will silence your voice. It only matters to free men who understand and appreciate. Who knows how large a number are this remnant in our land?"

RONALD TRAVIS: "When I struggle with your discussions on dealing with the use of force, in truth I am struggling to be inconsistent. I seek to uphold contradictions; to both have and eat my cake. I have worked through these disagreements to where I now concur with your viewpoint, and I thoroughly enjoy the consequent harmony I've since experienced. In your Fall '76 *Journal*, I was more disturbed than with any previous one. "The human mind is finite and cannot envision perfection . . . And if the world is perfect, then there is no point toward which any of us can strive. We are already in Paradise.' Certainly, Bob, the human mind is finite. It's neither omniscient nor omnipotent, and it cannot be all and do all. But 'perfection' in this context is a moral abstraction of high order, and subsumes other abstractions." *My difficulty with discussions respecting perfection arises from my inability to define it. If something is "perfect," then it cannot advance to a higher state. Or so it seems to me. There*

would be no striving, nothing to accomplish. In order to strive, one must discern principles (not perfection) which arise out of the nature of things as they are. By using these principles one can strive to "better" one's position. If one's position is perfect, it cannot be improved upon.

JOHN GOODYEAR: "A friend gave me copies of your spring and summer issues. It's a real long shot, but I believe you have the right idea and I am determined to be free, and to practice the libertarian philosophy."

LEWIS CULVER: "What could be more delightful than a letter from Bob LeFevre whether it is 'form,' 'quarterly,' or whatnot? . . . I'm happy to be acquainted with a man who feels so strongly about the pointlessness of the notion of retributive justice."

JOHN EGOLF: "When I first got interested in libertarian thought, I had many erroneous ideas on 20th century history. Thanks to your counsel, I was spurred to read the works of Barnes, Beard, Tansill, etc. These authors helped me to understand revisionist history and to note the state's utter disregard for the rights of its citizens when it is expedient, whether that state is a democracy or dictatorship."

DORIS GORDON: "Nobody has any responsibility to vote. The responsibility that everyone does have is to exercise control over his or her own life, not anyone else's. Voting gives politicians the power to take away that control. Governments don't solve problems, they create them. Voting improves nothing except politicians' egos and pocketbooks. We don't need the illusion of political reforms. What we do need is to eliminate politics from our lives as soon as possible. Voting allows us to choose the lesser of two evils. Since the lesser of two evils is still evil, refusing to vote is a responsible choice that is our right and duty to make."

KEN GRAY: "Libertarians, at least those of your persuasion, do have a consistent, moral philosophy although it may be incomplete. Your position is good but to me it's only the beginning, a first, necessary step. Your analysis of our problems is keen but where are the answers? How do we go about changing the consciousness of statist thinkers, i.e., the majority of this planet's population? To that I have not heard one workable, effective answer during the ten years I've kept track of the libertarian movement. Nobody seems to know. And yet I refuse to accept that our societal problems are insoluble. I've heard your talk on communi-

cating and I feel that something more is needed. I don't mean more philosophy, but rather a method, a technology, a real physical and psychological process that can transform people if they are open to it. Please comment and keep those *Journals* coming." *I agree. In a later issue I'll try to come forward with an idea or two in this area.*

DALE GREEN: "Government is a social institution for *legalizing* the use of *initiated* force in human relationships."

GUY RIGGS: "Four years ago I was circulating a petition to get on the ballot as a Libertarian candidate for state assemblyman. One man gave me a hard yet strangely goodnatured look and said, 'Look, fellow, anyone seeking political office is either crazy or crooked. Please don't waste my time.' Then he said, 'Hey, nothing personal . . . You're telling people you're not going to do a thing for them; just prevent things from being done to them. Mr. Riggs, people want politicians to do all sorts of things for them. The only thing people want politicians to prevent is the payment of the bill.' I'll have to admit this guy struck home . . . but politicians are no more crazy or crooked than you want them to be. Bob, in your summer issue you say: 'It is not violence per se that we can prevent. But we can prevent *self-righteous* violence. And that is the burden of all political action that is related to government. It endows men with the belief that violence *under certain conditions* is righteous.' Those are profound words. I'm going to remember them for two reasons (1) I don't believe I've been so endowed by my political action and (2) I will now (damn you!) have to keep proving it to myself. Well, I'll just keep in mind what I said four years ago when I first burst upon the political scene: 'Let's look for another way of solving your problem than at the point of a gun.' Maybe I'll be the first man in history that power doesn't corrupt!" *I understand that Mr. Riggs can be congratulated. He was recently defeated — thus attesting to his honesty and unwillingness to out-promise his opponent.*

CHARLES McFADDEN: "For balance, and a different viewpoint, I enjoy reading *LeFevre's Journal*. Your priceless publication and half hour of light reading is well worth my enclosed donation."

JEAN LOWRY: "I've read your *Journal* for some time now. At first as a skeptic, and then with the realization that you in fact have the correct attitude."



THE "CONSPIRACY" OF BUSINESSMEN

So many keep talking about business corruption and conspiracy that it might be useful to look at an alleged example of conspiracy by businessmen.

Once upon a time many years ago, Southern California had a major means of mass transportation referred to nostalgically as the Big Red Cars. Widely spaced communities were linked by the Pacific Electric Railway and these hurtling, swaying, clanking, uncomfortable monsters were painted like fire engines, contained wooden benches, smelled of disinfectant, and operated electrically. Then, they were detested; in absentia, they are loved.

Baxter Ward, a local politician, is now trying to enhance his career by claiming that the Big Red Cars disappeared as a result of a conspiracy. According to Ward, a major automotive company, a tire and rubber company, and a gasoline company created a holding company, purchased the Pacific Electric, operated it a few years, and then quietly shut it down.

The allegation has it that the three firms deliberately did what was terrible for the people of the Southern California region, and it was done solely to enhance the profits of the firms involved.

In an effort to deal with reports of this kind, and they are numerous, it is essential that the simple and fundamental principles of economics be kept in mind.

First, I'm going to suppose that the facts are as Baxter Ward reports them. I have not checked the record. I am accepting the validity of his charge, presuming that the three firms did as they are reported to have done; that their purpose was profit, and that their move was a successful one. I'm not accepting the allegation that this was the worst thing that could have occurred in the transportation business in Southern California.

At the moment, Southern California does not have a successful governmentally owned and managed mass transportation system. What it has is a love affair with the automobile. Baxter Ward and others are seeking to put in some means of rapid transit that the public will accept. The evidence, which is constantly and repeatedly developed, is that the public in Southern California wants no part of the solution that Ward and Company offer. What Ward and Company do not seem to realize is that Southern California has what is by far the most successful means of mass transportation ever developed. It is the privately owned and independently operated motor vehicle. This is a difficult system to understand if one is a politician. It means that the individual can go when and where he pleases, and he doesn't have to rely

on bus or train schedules. With this amazingly efficient system, close to ten million people live where they choose, work where they choose, and employ an abundance and variety of recreational opportunities probably unsurpassed in the world within easy driving distance.

If one is a politician, he wants people to go when and where the politician wishes and by a means the politician approves. The public in Los Angeles environs doesn't favor this collectivized system. But it's always difficult for a politician to understand how anything can work if a bureaucrat isn't running it.

Now, let us go to that early day when the "conspirators" allegedly got together to pull off their little scheme. The first thing that we see is that government wasn't involved. At least we make that assumption, although Ward says nothing about it. If the government were involved, it means that Ward's position is discredited. His contention is that evil men in the free market were able to pull off the deal and that if government had had anything to say about it, it wouldn't have happened. This is the only inference possible from the repeated assertions by the politicians that if government had been planning the affair, they would have had the "good" of Angelenos in mind rather than their own profits.

The next thing we must see is that the three firms were able to get a considerable sum of money together in order to make the purchase. How was that possible? There is only one answer. They were operating successful businesses. Why were they successful? Because the public was already expressing a preference for motor cars over and beyond all other expressed preferences for transportation. In other words, the businessmen involved were already in a profit position and thus had accumulated risk capital they wished to expend to improve their position.

They did what they did because they were figuring out not what was "good" for the people of Los Angeles, but what the people wanted. It is the business of business to satisfy their customers' desires, not to sit in judgment over them.

Why did Pacific Electric agree to sell out? The reason is clear. They were losing money. How could they be losing money? Only because the public disliked the noisy, clanking monsters and wanted the freedom that comes when they could individually set their own schedules. Additionally, there is no way that rails can be laid to within a block of all residences. Although a Big Red Car could take you to your station, you were left with the necessity of hiking a mile or so, or of having an



Employees of Shortstop participating in a LeFevre seminar at Silverado Lodge, Napa, California, April 18-23, 1976. John Roscoe, president of Shortstop, attempted to lease billboard space prior to the election, intending to publicize the slogan: "DON'T VOTE, IT ONLY ENCOURAGES THEM." The billboard firm rejected the ad. Roscoe got considerable media recognition, despite this setback, by making and distributing buttons carrying the same message.

additional means of transportation geared to the schedule of the trains. The public was beginning to realize that if it had other means of transporting a passenger to a station, one could continue the trip and avoid the electric cars altogether.

Indeed, the charitableness of the three firms now comes into view. Without their intervention, it seems quite likely that the owners of Pacific Electric, whoever they may have been, faced bankruptcy. The timely financial intervention of the three firms saved them from disaster. Further, the three firms didn't immediately shut down the rail operation. Indeed, as all admit, they continued to run it. And knowing the tendency of all businessmen to seek a profit, can one doubt for a moment that the men making this colossal investment tried to operate it at a profit? You know they did. Actually, they now had two major methods of helping people to move around. Had the public evinced a continuing interest in the big red machines, the firms would have continued to operate them so they could turn a profit from both directions.

But the firms were correct in their basic assumption. The public did not want the Pacific Electric. It did want its own vehicles. And providing highways is a part of any program entailing automobiles. Getting the rights-of-way involves possible unpleasantness. But the rights-of-way containing rails and clanking, uncomfortable monstrosities were made available with no difficulty.

So the transition was completed. Where trains ran every hour or half-hour, automobiles whizzed by every few seconds. The incredible jam that would have stymied the rail system or prevented development of the region flowed smoothly into the better system.

But now we have armies and armies of bureaucrats. And they want us to hate businessmen for

the "conspiracy." So the bureaucracy is conspiring to take away our automobiles so we will be forced to ride some collectivized contrivance. The people are still favoring the mode of transportation they like best, the private automobile. They are objecting to the price of gasoline, but most realize that if the government would stop spending for war, we'd have all the gasoline and oil we need to take care of civilian demands. And at reasonable prices.

But it is quite possible that some people would like a monorail or some other fast and inexpensive means of getting to and from. So I have a suggestion for Mr. Ward and his bureaucratic cohorts. If they will just back off and give public assurance that they will positively not interfere, I can almost guarantee another business-type conspiracy. Some of the giant conglomerates, with their own money, will put in a monorail system or some other kind of mass transportation that will serve.

Of course, there will have to be some assurance that the government won't regulate and tax them to death. Businessmen serve the public by finding out what the public wants and then supplying it. So if a mass means of transportation can be made to work out, the private sector will try to supply it.

What if it's a mistake? Then better to let the businessmen lose their own funds in an attempt to make profits than to saddle all the rest of us with debt and stupidity.

What if it's not a mistake? Then why not let the people who risk their funds make some profits out of our voluntary patronage?

In short, if it really is true that the public is ready for mass transportation of a centralized kind, why not let another business conspiracy solve the problem? It's a lot better than a political conspiracy. And that's what we're faced with now.

So much for the business conspiracy theory.



"I don't know of a single congressman who would tell you that he represents all the people in his district." *Rep. Wm. L. Springer, Ill.*

"A legislator has an obligation to attempt to represent all the people in his district." *Rep. Frank E. Evans, Colo.*

"A district representative has an inalienable responsibility to represent all citizens living within the district in which he was elected." *Rep. Bill Alexander, Ark.*

"I do not know of any congressman who designates himself as anyone's agent." *Rep. Wilbur D. Mills, Ark.*

"While the title of congressman implies that he represent the views of his constituency, anybody knows one cannot represent two opposite views at the same time." *Rep. Albert H. Quie, Minn.*

"Once elected, an individual does, in fact, represent all the people of his district." *Rep. Don H. Clausen, Calif.*

"A man holding public office can *not* be viewed only as an agent of others." *Sen. James L. Buckley, New York*

"The fact that some in his district do not agree with everything the member of Congress does, does not alter the fact that he is the representative of all the residents of his district." *Rep. Lionel Van Deerlin, Calif.*

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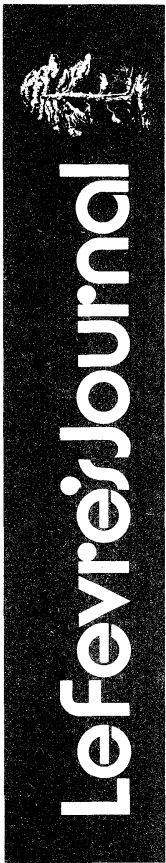
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Box 2353, Orange, California 92669

LeFevre's Journal is published every quarter, approximately, in Orange, California. It is not for sale, but is supplied to those who are dedicated to human liberty when those so dedicated make it possible.

- Publisher Bob LeFevre
- Editor Ruth Dazey
- Printing and Distributing Bruce Galey
- Typesetting Jack Lemieux
- Artwork Sandy Hogan

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