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# FAITH AND FREEDOM

THE SHADOW LENGTHENS

EDMUND A. OPITZ

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## FAITH AND FREEDOM

*Faith and Freedom* is a voice of the libertarian—persistently recommending the religious philosophy of limited government inherent in the Declaration of Independence. The chief intent of the libertarian is not pedagogy, but the further discovery and application of the Creator's changeless principles in a changing world.

While speaking against the present-day Goliath, the totalitarian state, we work for no special interest. Freedom under God is in the interest of every man of faith, whether he is in a factory or on a farm, in an office or in the pulpit. If a government or a philosophy does not serve to safeguard his freedom—whether he is in a minority or a majority—then that government or philosophy is his enemy. A Communist, Socialist, Fascist or other authoritarian government is always such an enemy; and a democratic government espousing a paternalistic philosophy straightway becomes such an enemy.

As the journalists of *Spiritual Mobilization*, our editorial policy is based on a profound faith in God, the Author of liberty, and in Jesus Christ, who promoted persuasion in place of coercion as the means for accomplishing positive good.

Our credo is the long-standing credo of *Spiritual Mobilization*: Man, being created free as a child of God, has certain inalienable rights and responsibilities; the state must not be permitted to usurp them; it is the duty of the church to help protect them.

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*If someone is clever enough to live off other people legally, by utilizing the powers of government, few take notice.*

*But gradually others perceive his secret; and as their number increases, so do their needs and desires. Then they nourish the tree of government to make it bear more fruit.*

*The branches of the tree spread and spread, as still more people nurse it so they may taste of its fruit.*

*Most of these people desire only to basket a nice easy living under God's sun. Centering their attention on the growing tree, they fail to notice what looks even bigger (and darker) than the tree when viewed from above: the fact that—*

## THE SHADOW LENGTHENS

EDMUND A. OPITZ

**T**ry an experiment. Take a blank map of the United States and shade in about 3 per cent of the area. This represents the amount of the total national wealth, exclusive of land, owned by government in 1902. Now extend the shadow until it covers 9 per cent of the area; this is the percentage of wealth owned by government in 1922. Shade 13 per cent of the area for 1939, 22 per cent for 1946, and approximately 27 per cent for 1954. It is only a matter of time, if this trend continues, before 100 per cent ownership is achieved by government.

The trend is continuing. Translated, it reads: Some of us with political power will own everything; others of us will be allowed to own nothing.

Taking a sampling of this trend, put a dot on the map for the first federal power production in 1903. Then shade 10.7 per cent of the area to indicate the present proportion of generating capacity in the United States owned by the federal government. With the completion of construction now in progress or scheduled by both government and private utilities for the next two years, the federal government will own 15.4 per cent by the end of 1955.

The corresponding figure for all public ownership of power utilities (federal, state,

and local) is 23.8 per cent. And when the generation of electrical power from atomic energy is economically feasible, the federal government will have a virtual monopoly under present laws. For all practical purposes, the shaded area takes over.

The shading has already extended across almost the entire field of education. In a recent study published by Columbia University, it is stated that "the federal government, in a typical postwar year (1947), spent just about \$500 million of the \$1 billion that it cost the colleges to operate." And if the education picture is extended to include secondary education and all levels of government, the shaded area covers all but about 10 per cent.

In nearly every line of endeavor, there is a repetition of the same story. Government encroaches more and more upon the area of personal relations. We are affected in a variety of ways, no matter what our occupation or station in life. Nearly every healthy youngster now growing up will encounter military service before reaching maturity; and, if he is lucky enough to survive, he will emerge from military service into a society where his life will continue to be politically regulated and controlled to a large extent.

For some, the trend of political intervention spells progress. Others deplore it. Each camp has its own picture of what political action really means, and the pictures are not alike. There is little precise understanding of what

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changes take place in human relationships as a consequence of government intervention; more realistic description is demanded:

The least common denominator of all political action is violence or the threat of violence. Law adds enforcement and penalties to a general rule; men are forbidden to do what they otherwise would do, or they are made to do what they otherwise would not do. All political action is predicated upon government's willingness to use its basic instruments—its armies, police, courts, and jails.

At first thought, it seems extravagant to declare that the introduction of government means the introduction of violence. Our perception is not attuned to sense violence unless it is 100 per cent overt violence. When it is less than 100 per cent, or is covert, we tend to be unaware of it unless the facts are brought home to us by reason.

Yet political action *invariably* carries undertones of violence in whatever it does. That is why, once the nature of political action is understood, the matter of its limitation will occupy a central place in moral philosophy. For violence does not have to erupt before it becomes a concern of the moralist. His business is to detect violence even when it is slight or covert, because *any* violence corrupts human relations.

### A Little Goes a Long Way

A tiny grain of musk will scent a room for years; one part of dye will stain a million parts of water. So it is with violence; a little of it goes a long way toward determining the quality and nature of the situation in which it is present. When violence is present in any quantity, it tends to take over—perceived or not.

Violence undeniably brooded over the Ol' Plantation. Yet the enchanting scenes sketched in scores of ante bellum novels suggest the most idyllic conditions this side of the Green Pastures; the folks of quality sipping their mint juleps, the house servants attired in gorgeous livery, the field hands honestly tired from their day's work and finding rest by lifting their voices in haunting song. Violence on the Ol' Plantation? Those accustomed to this life would be dumbfounded at the suggestion,

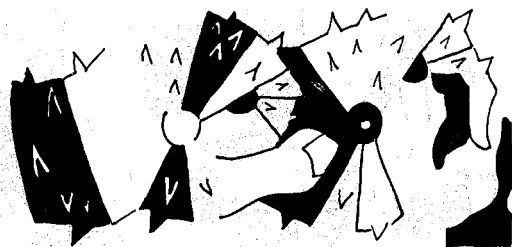
and would deny it vehemently. But we know that every master-slave relationship is instituted and maintained by violence.

A long black automobile containing four men pulls up and stops in front of a cleaning establishment. A sleek looking gent gets out and goes in. He talks quietly to the proprietor, and the latter is only too happy to agree to a weekly payment of money in order to be protected against the demolition of his shop by bombing. There is no overt violence here. Mobsters do not generally live by the kind of open mob violence that makes headlines; they live by covert violence. But the fact that so little of the mobsters' energy breaks into overt violence does not conceal the truth that violence is the medium by which they live.

The scene in which the proprietor's money changes hands is charged with violence, but the violence is in the upper register of the spectrum beyond the range of our senses—like the ultra-violet rays in sunlight. Just as we have to shift gears in our apparatus of perception to detect ultra-violet rays, just so do we have to augment our senses to detect the violence in an act of robbery when the victim "cooperates." But most of us understand that even genteel robbery involves violence, and not violence in any vague sense.

Neither is the word violence used in any vague sense when it is said that all political action or government intervention is violent. The violence in government is always implicit, only rarely explicit and overt; the mailed fist usually wears a velvet glove. But what is worse, the mailed fist of government seems to be our own reaching hand.

In a country occupied by a foreign power or ruled by a dictatorship, it takes little discernment on the part of the people to know what political action really is. Its violent nature is unabashedly linked to the sword. But in a re-



public, where the personnel of officialdom is drawn from the rank and file of the citizenry, and is chosen by this citizenry to represent it, the true nature of political action is concealed by a thick disguise. The government is ours, and it is given the sanction which each of us is so skillful in inventing to justify any line of conduct he feels inclined to engage in. Our adeptness at rationalization is put into the service of the government.

"We are the government" bespeaks the first form of our rationalization. Even if this statement corresponds to the facts—even if "we" are the government—it still follows that political action has no ethical sanction for conduct that would be ethically wrong when performed by "us" as individuals.

It is generally regarded as wrong for any of us individually to injure any others of us—whether the injury be directed at body, mind, or estate—unless the injury is inflicted in legitimate self-defense. Therefore, if "we" are the government, it is still wrong for us as government to undertake action which injures any persons in any way, except in the interest of protecting law-abiding persons.

### The Choice of Method

Thus, when once it is understood that covert violence attends all political action, one of two propositions must be accepted. We must frankly condone violence whenever anyone is in the mood for it, or else we must condemn any political action which would be a wrong use of violence if we as individuals undertook it.

Unfortunately, powerful pressure groups are in a constant mood to use government to provide better housing, more adequate diet, finer education, greater medical care, increased social security, and so on, naming the entire list of objectives which taken together comprise the Welfare State.

All men of good will want to see all other persons better off economically. So there is little or no debate as to these objectives of the Welfare State. But there is a serious moral question about the *means* employed to realize them; and bear in mind, the nature of the means also patterns the end-results.

The welfare stater or collectivist presses for



the use of political action as the method for attaining his ends. The libertarian, on the other hand, believes that the nature of political action makes it an immoral and impractical means for producing good results. He would rely instead on the release of the creative energies of men and women working cooperatively and competitively, with government acting only to curb predation, such as murder and fraud.

The welfare stater, while he tests *ends* by moral principles, does not apply moral judgments to his *means*. When pressed, he usually admits the covert violence implicit in political action, but he justifies his use of it by claiming that the people he hopes to help are the innocent victims of political action of a previous era. Through a second wrong of violence, he expects to make a right.

He cites the post Civil War era as an example of a previous period of injustice—with freebooters and pirates preying upon the nation. When his attention is called to the fact that the plundering was done with the help of political intervention and was perfectly legal, he replies: "Maybe so, but it was immoral."

But then, try calling his attention to the fact that the principle of plunder of that era—i.e. using political action to give some people an advantage at the expense of others—is the principle of the Welfare State. You may point out to him that, by his own characterization, the principle is immoral. Yet when he finally understands his untenable moral position, he will reply: "Yes, but it's legal."

Challenged still further, the welfare stater takes refuge in the notion that political plunder is today spread more evenly to more people, which gives it a moral advantage over the political intervention of the post Civil War period. Thus his collectivist position comes perilously close to making morality a function

of time and numbers; what was wrong three quarters of a century ago is right now, and what was wrong for a few then is right now for many.

It is possible to argue that there is no such thing as morality; that there is only custom, habit, legislation, and mores. But if there is such a thing as morality, it is the idea that some things are right and ought to be pursued though the heavens fall.

The collectivist or welfare stater cannot have it both ways. He cannot apply moral principles to both ends and means alike, when his means violate the moral norms which most persons recognize as binding upon themselves as individuals. And if he ceases to apply moral principles to his ends, as he has never applied them to his means, he will lose his chief stock in trade—his tedious moralizing about what he is going to do for some people when he commands the resources of other people.

### **Wife Beaters and Mobsters**

Now, most of life in human society is peaceable. No violence is necessary in the myriad relations men ordinarily have with each other, as there is necessary violence in the life of the thief or the mobster or the slaveholder. Occasionally, it is true, violence does occur; a husband beats a wife, a writer libels a man he dislikes, a storekeeper cheats a customer, a teller embezzles, a man is murdered. The peace of society is then broken, violence intrudes into a hitherto nonviolent situation; but such intrusions are exceptional.

Among primitives, a breach of the peace might result in acts of personal revenge or a blood feud, but a more complex society evolves an immense and complicated body of law to define reciprocal rights and duties in society, and to offer redress to those harmed by the violence of others. The injured wife or the cheated customer has the offending person collared by the constable and locked in jail. This bestirring of the political agency to use violence—via its constabulary—has its moral as well as legal sanctions; the action taken is based squarely on the moral right of the individual to utilize means of defense against an aggressor who threatens his life or property.

In order to redress injury, the political agency intervenes with violence on behalf of the injured person, neutralizing by its action the privately initiated violence. All it does in this rather simple negative intervention, is to use its allotment of violence to cancel out or annul the violence that partially paralyzed and poisoned the hitherto peaceful relationship.

In brief, there is a social use for violence properly applied. The political agency, wielding power for society with society's consent, preserves the peaceful business of society by restraining those who break the peace by initiating violence.

But suppose that when the wife beater sobers up after a night in the cell and pleads to go back to his family, the political agency should reason thusly: "We did so well last night in preventing this man from inflicting further injury on his wife, that it seems irresponsible to limit ourselves to these negative functions. Let's act positively and use the power of government to make this man love his wife. If he declines at first, we'll lock him up until he sees things our way."

The absurdity of such reasoning needs no comment, despite its good intentions. Although government is an appropriate instrument for restraining people, it is not capable of making them love each other, produce more goods, or engage in any creative activity.

### **Violence on the Golf Course**

It is not difficult to see the violence implicit in the characteristic instruments basic to government—armies, police, courts and jails—but it is sometimes difficult to detect the violent features in certain ventures of government which seem peaceful enough on the surface. For example, government builds a golf course, and some people who could not formerly afford golf now enjoy its benefits. Where is the violence? It is not at the level where people play around the course, but at the level where people are forced to surrender part of the fruits of their labor to pay for the construction of the course.

Those who will never use the course are forced to pay for it nonetheless, along with those who will use it. If those who are opposed

to a public golf course refuse to pay whatever the government orders them to pay, the covert violence inherent in all political action will erupt into overt violence against them. They will go to jail or suffer some other penalty. If they resist the government official who is sent to arrest them, they will be further persecuted and prosecuted.

If those who cannot afford to play golf were to take money directly from those who have it, in order to indulge their taste for the game, they would be stigmatized as thieves. The apparatus of government would move against them and deal with them as they deserve. But if these same would-be golfers learn to get the money indirectly, using government as their means of so doing, then the situation is turned inside out. They are handed the benefits of cheap golf. And their victims, if they balk, are treated as criminals!

Public housing seems like another beneficent project of government. Does it not clear slums and give people something they really need? Public housing provides a few people with better housing than they could otherwise afford. But—the price gap between what they can afford and what they get has to be met, and it is met out of the funds of other people. To the extent that those in public housing benefit, those not in public housing lose.

Furthermore, the losers are also forced to pay the costs run up by government in depriving them of what is rightfully theirs for the dubious benefit of those to whom it is given. In the end, economic and political considerations reveal that government intervention is a poor means of getting low cost housing units for those who need them.

### Deliberate Injury

But our stress here is on moral rather than material considerations. Injury is deliberately done to some people, by political action, on the false assumption that there will be a compensating advantage to others. Taking what rightfully belongs to anyone, no matter how much he has, is morally wrong even though the stolen goods be put to good use. That which is immoral when it is illegal, is still immoral even after majority vote has made it lawful.

Similar considerations apply to every plank in the welfare stater's platform. The planks are sold to the public in terms of the objectives, which have every appearance of being desirable. It is only when we turn to the means that we perceive the immorality.

The trend in this country toward greater government intervention in the creative efforts of men, means that the peaceable social bonds that unite men in interpersonal relationships will be replaced gradually by compulsory regulations. To the extent that government encroaches upon the lives of individuals, violence gains control and cripples human affairs.

### A Deadly Disguise

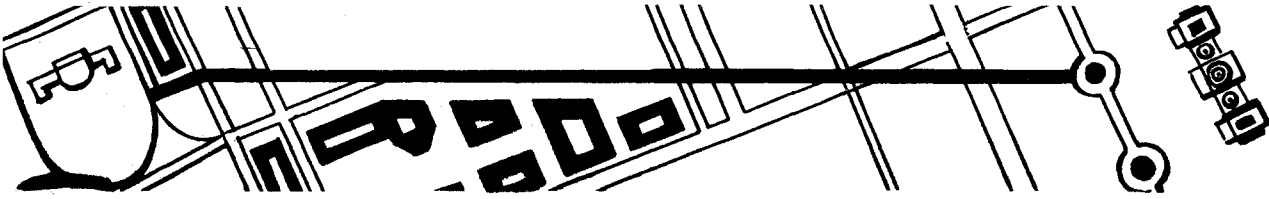
There are few men who openly advocate overt violence, and they are a relatively minor problem. People are put on their guard by belligerent talk and can cope with violent men. The real problem is that men usually advocate violence without knowing that they advocate it, to an audience unaware that violence is being advocated. The problem is complicated by the fact that the kind of violence advocated is not what the average person thinks of when he hears or uses the term.

When violence is covert, legal, and approved by a majority, however, it is more deadly by reason of its disguises. It works stealthily to increase friction in society and to erode and corrupt social bonds.

The shadow lengthens, political intervention and control increases, men rely more and more on violence to gain their ends. We careen, unwittingly, toward the servile state. This eventuality is not being forced upon us; we are doing it to ourselves, largely in ignorance of what it is we are really doing.

The primary task is one of translation. We need to translate the meaning of political action into plain language and precise terms. There will then be open advocates of violence on the one hand; and on the other, the advocates of love, good will, cooperation and competition. Once confronted by clear-cut alternatives, almost every man will choose in full knowledge of the meaning of his choice. But until he understands what is happening to us and why, the shadow will continue to lengthen.

# ALONG PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE



The Administration's revenue bill, signed by the President on March 31, should be cause for rejoicing. This is the first time in thirty years that the government has made any cut in taxes. Though the charge of favoritism and discrimination was raised in the hearings, and some Democrats pulled the usual political rabbit out of the hat of demagoguery (claiming that the bill favored "the rich"), the fact is that the bill is a reduction in taxes and thus beneficial to the economy as a whole.

Every dollar saved by the citizen from the clutches of government finds its way into the economic stream, either by spending or investing, and thus helps the wheels of production go round. The same dollar in the hands of the government is, in the economic sense, wasted; it is spent on things that the rightful owner of the dollar, the taxpayer, would not buy of his own free choice. Wherefore, regardless of which group of citizens gets immediate relief, a bill cutting taxes is a social benefit.

Some Democrats, trying to offset the political profit to the Republicans from this bill, offered a substitute measure; namely, that the personal income tax exemption be raised from \$600 to \$700. This was a neat trick; whether they succeeded or not was of little importance; if they did, they could boast; if they failed, as was expected, they could still pose as the "friends of the poor."

A few in Washington, on both sides of the aisle, would only acclaim the billion dollar tax-gift bill with reservations. It might turn out to be an "Indian gift." For if the government fails to reduce its budget by the same amount, it will have to borrow the money it spends but does not have, and issue "I.O.U.'s." That would mean inflation—increased prices eating up the benefits from the tax saving. Furthermore, such an increase in the government debt-load would necessitate further taxes in the near future to offset the interest charges.

But whether such an increase in the national debt will follow the tax reductions depends on the budget. That will not come up for final decision until late in the session.

Another interesting bill is one that is now making its way into law with hardly any opposition. It is H.R. 7839, "A bill to aid in the provision and improvement of housing, the elimination and prevention of slums, and the conservation and development of urban communities." With a title like that, the bill could hardly fail to pass. Who could be against these nice things?

But, regardless of the great and good purposes in the title, the bill was assured of passage even before it was written. The real estate lobby, with political tentacles that reach into every city and town in the country, helped to write it; they were good enough to lend "expert counsel" to the drafters, all for free, and were sagacious enough to acquaint the congressmen with the merits of the bill.

Oddly enough, only the labor union leaders raised any objection, and that was because they did not think the bill went far enough in the way of subsidized public housing. They want more.

The general acclaim heard from the real estate boys and their associates, is not due so much to the spending provisions of the bill as to its encouragement of private housing by way of government guarantee of mortgages. The government may guarantee 100 per cent of the amount needed.

About one quarter of the bill's wordage deals with a setup known as the Federal National Mortgage Association. (This, by the way, is a Truman institution; the present bill aims to facilitate its operations.)

Under the bill, FNMA is to be owned by the Secretary of the Treasury, who will put up \$70 million for its stock. The real estate people

and financial institutions who do business with FNMA will be required to invest in it a percentage of their commissions on all transactions, receiving nonvoting debentures in return. When the debentures total the interest of the government in the corporation, the Secretary of the Treasury will transfer his equity to the directors, and the government will pull out.

What this amounts to is the establishment of a giant financial corporation which, if all goes as planned, will someday be owned by private interests. This is a rather peculiar use of the taxpayers' dollars.

However, suppose all does not go as planned. The authors of the bill have disregarded the possibility of a depression, of a great depreciation of the values on which the mortgages rest. In that event, payments on the mortgages will be defaulted, FNMA will acquire a lot of property through foreclosure, and the government will have to reimburse the banks for losses sustained; after all, a guarantee is a guarantee against losses.

The part of the bill dealing with FNMA is a mass of rules and regulations regarding the operation of this quasi-public corporation. But, when you sift all the wordage down, you come to a simple scheme whereby the government will guarantee banks against any losses they may sustain on a mortgage loan.

What objection could the bankers have to this arrangement? The taxpayers will take all the chances, the bankers all the interest.

The landowners who dispose of their holdings to a promoter, at jacked-up prices, must look upon H. R. 7839 as ideal legislation. The building supply and equipment manufacturers certainly can find no fault with it, either.

For the real estate promoter, the legislated arrangement is just what the doctor ordered; for his pains in engineering the "project" he is entitled to the usual 10 per cent commission, which is nothing to sneeze at when you consider that a seven-figure amount might be involved. (In all probability he will never see the "project" through to completion, but, having pocketed his commission, will unload the whole thing on an operating company. Then he will be able to move on to the promotion of

another "project"—all "in the public interest.")

What has all this to do with the "elimination of slums" or the "conservation and development of urban communities"? There may be some connection, but whatever it is, it is only incidental to the main business.

A member of the House committee that discussed and passed the bill authorizing an increase in postal rates told this reporter that the vote on it was a desperation vote. The committee were not satisfied that any bill they might pass would be equitable, or that it would even do what it was supposed to do; that is, raise enough from postage to wipe out the annual deficit of the Post Office Department. So, they threw together a number of clauses and put the whole thing up to the House. It was, as sometimes emerges from committees, a "passing the buck" bill. Maybe from the debate on the floor something more satisfactory will come.

The only pressure group that favored the bill was the Post Office Department—and not too enthusiastically, since it wanted more. Interested parties that appeared before the committee were all *against* increasing postal rates, and had good arguments in support of their position. The congressmen were fidgety, because in an election year an increase in postal rates is not wise.

There was a historic fact that hung over the committee during the hearings; namely, that every hitherto authorized increase in rates failed to reduce the deficit of the Department. On the basis of this experience, committee members felt certain that no bill they might concoct would remedy the fact that the Post Office is a money-losing proposition. Several members privately admitted that the only solution was the unpolitical one of selling the Post Office business to private interests.

The general public, which for the most part uses first class mail, was not represented at the hearings. According to the Department's figures, that class of mail yields an annual profit. Therefore, first class postage will be increased by one-third; the three-cent stamp will cost four cents if the bill is made law.

# THE TEEN-AGER VOTE

*Down through the centuries the recognized age of maturity has revolved about the figure 21—so that today a young man under that age generally may not make a contract, inherit property, transact his own business, serve on a jury, marry, or so on.*

*But in our time one state, Georgia, has reduced the age for voting to 18. And there is now a movement to lower the age to 18 throughout the nation. Would this be a rash step, or has it been well considered?*

*Thus far there has been no general consensus on the issue, and seemingly no sound approach to it. So let's try asking ourselves how closely the proposal for a lower electoral age would appear to be tied in with the modern movement toward a more and more paternalistic form of government.*

## HELMUT SCHOECK

The trend to maximize the vote, where will it end? In his State of the Union message, President Eisenhower urged Congress to propose to the states a constitutional amendment permitting teen-agers to vote when they reach the age of 18.

As of now, it does not look as if he will get his way during the current session of Congress. But we can be sure the proposed amendment will be plugged for again. A poll conducted by *The New York Times* in January showed 29 out of 48 governors in favor of enfranchising 18-year-olds, only 7 opposed, 12 undecided. In the United States Senate *The Times* poll found 45 senators were for the lowering of the voting age, 30 senators were undecided, only 11 were opposed (the rest were not reached).

What is behind this movement for increasing—once again—the voting segment of the population? I think it is a symptom of the general “progressive tendency” of our time. “Progress” has been equated with any numerical increase.

For instance, it is no longer the absolute buying power of money that certain economists and labor union leaders are interested in, but the mere number of dollars in the wage. Likewise some educators think the nation is doomed if not all persons have a chance to go through at least 8 grades of elementary school

plus 4 grades of high school and 2 grades of college. In the same vein it is the absolute number of votes, not the reasoning ability of the man at the ballot box, that is declared of utmost importance. To my knowledge about the only cases where social progress is not equated with added numbers is with regard to number of working hours and output per worker.

This urge to maximize everything (full and fullest employment, ever more people pushed into compulsory federal social security) indicates a lack of measure. Yet even a supposedly conservative and economy-minded administration seems to think it cannot hold the popular sympathy unless it goes along by maximizing something. Probably this is one of the basic problems of our time.

### Why Lower the Voting Age?

What are the arguments for the 18-year-old vote? (1) The doctrine that “those who are old enough to fight are old enough to vote” is just silly. “Those who are old enough to fight” do not tell the Pentagon how to run a war; still they could, indirectly, by swinging an election. I cannot imagine that lowering the voting age was the idea of the military men. And what about the 18-year-old girls? If they are made old enough to vote, will they also carry a gun? I hope not. And what about the 14-year-old youth who might have to man civil defense machinery during a future atomic war?

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In the end such logic could force us to enfranchise anyone down to the age of eight or six. A letter to the editors of *Newsweek* summed it up neatly: "... if the ability to *fight* rather than the ability to *reason* is to be the mark of eligibility for voting, it should follow then, that those who are too old to fight must, necessarily, be too old to vote."

(2) Some people seem to favor a lowering of the voting age in order to "cancel" the conservative weight of the ever greater segment of the population over sixty or so. On this issue, however, political scientists are divided. Some do think the aged are prone to support en bloc the most conservative of platforms. Others express concern that demagoguery promising to "out-Townsend the Townsends" is apt to catch the votes of the aged and disrupt our economy.

In any event, if we start to "balance" the voting segments of the population against conservatism, in the interest of that evasive thing called "the common good," or for the sake of "social justice," I am sure we will end up with giving the parents of eight children four times as many votes as the parents of, say, two children.

### Speeded Maturity

(3) Another argument is the amazing opinion that nowadays youngsters mature three years earlier than in former times. Governor Allan Shivers of Texas is quoted in *The New York Times* as saying: "The 18-year-old person of today is as mature as the 21-year-old was when that age limit was set." In the first place, I am curious as to how anyone could prove that assumption. What do we know about the maturity of people in the last century or earlier? In fields where we can know definitely, our educators and psychologists have come to conclusions which flatly contradict Governor Shivers' optimism.

(4) The following argument sounds very much like the "learning by doing" doctrine of our progressive educators: Governor G. Mennen Williams of Michigan has been trying to get the Michigan legislature to consider lowering the voting age to 18 ever since 1950. He endorsed the President's proposed amendment

enthusiastically and stated: "I believe our young people would acquire better habits of citizenship if they were permitted to vote at an earlier age." Well, some people drew the conclusion from the Kinsey reports that we might have better marriages if our kids started mating at 13.

### The Political Motivation

But why did the present administration propose this amendment? Can we assume any political logic in the proposal? Or was it just a fine sentiment disregarding the involved risk of political suicide? Judging from the knowledge of political behavior available, the enfranchisement of the 18-year-old is hardly the best way to keep conservatives in power. History might come to call it the GOP-suicide amendment. At this point I do not discuss whether party suicides are desirable. My aim is simply to show that the voting-age proposal is inconsistent with the hopes of the party in power. Possibly the idea of the amendment was smuggled into the White House as a kind of Trojan horse by ill-wishers.

Nobody could guess the political motives of the proposal from the curiously mixed response President Eisenhower's suggestion evoked. Members of both major parties rose to the support of his suggestion. And other Democrats and Republicans declared their nonsupport.

Although the liberal Democrats are bound to benefit from the amendment, it was Mr. H. S. Truman who made the most acid remark about it. He told reporters the voting age should be moved up to 24 rather than down. Governor Dewey also was opposed to the President's idea.

*The New York Times* editorialized it quite aptly as: "... a project which would weight the electorate with minors ... who ... , in times of stress, if not in this country then in others, have proved themselves the easiest victims of demagogues propounding easy solutions through direct action leading to tyranny." *The New York Times* called attention to the fact that the "greatest factor that enabled Lenin, Mussolini, Hitler and Mao Tse-tung to ride to power was their success in capturing

... the youth of their countries. . . .”

How, then, did this idea get into the message from the White House? Reading the news during the last eight or nine months has given a few clues. The first time I noticed a serious hint of such an idea was on July 20, 1953 in *Newsweek*. On page 19 it said “Watch a move by the National Education Association to lower the voting age to 18.” Well, is the NEA likely to do anything which might prolong the rule of a conservative administration? I doubt it.

Next, on August 24 *Newsweek* reported: “Vice-President Nixon is quietly promoting a constitutional amendment to give 18-year-olds the vote.” Yet although the V.P. is thought to speak for the young, it is most unlikely that his political hopes coincide with those of the NEA strategists. The latter’s position is, I think, more closely expressed by an ardent liberal and Democratic politician, Philadelphia’s Mayor, Joseph S. Clark Jr. Mr. Clark wrote in *The Atlantic Monthly* (July 1953) in the following vein:

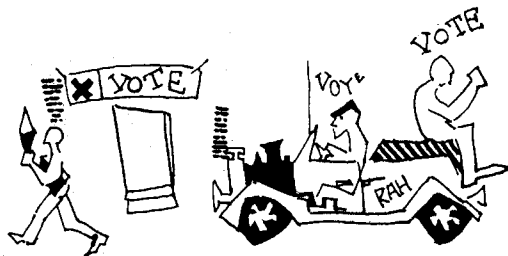
Fortunately, free compulsory education works for the liberals. . . . Big business has not yet taken over American education. Adlai Stevenson has more supporters among the schoolteachers and college professors than Tom Dewey. It is significant that what used to be called ‘history’ is now ‘social studies.’ Spiritually and economically, youth is conditioned to respond to a liberal program of orderly policing of our society by government, subject to the popular will [who’s that? the liberals?], in the interests of social justice.

Did the idea of giving the vote to such “conditioned” guinea pigs, trained by those liberal teachers, arise independently at two politically diametrically opposed places at the same time, or were shrewd intermediaries active in selling the V.P. on an idea which they knew was to aid the left-wing forces in this country?

### The Significance of the Proposal

In any event, it might be useful to look at the short-run as well as the long-run consequences of changing the voting age to 18.

Since the age of the voter doesn’t show up on his ballot we might, though, have little knowl-



edge about the relationship between age and political decision—were it not for the last fateful elections in Italy in 1953. Due to a peculiar election law, the Italian has to reach the age of 24 before he can vote for candidates for the Senate, but 21 is age enough to vote for deputies. Thus, when the last election in Italy packed the Chamber of Deputies with left-wing elements (making Italy as unstable as France), while the Senate remained moderate in political temperament, it was obvious for whom the voters of ages 21 to 24 had fallen.

Needless to say, American youth is not the same as the Italian. But there is one similarity in the fact that in Italy many more young people continue school beyond the age of 17 than can reasonably hope to find employment in jobs for which they are trained. Their problem could be “solved” (by conscription) if a socialistic or communistic government were to be installed to turn the whole country into a gigantic bureaucracy with experts for running each citizen’s life (“orderly policing”). It is this aspect which Joseph S. Clark Jr. probably had in mind when he wrote that, in the schools, American youth is not only spiritually but also economically conditioned to respond to radical programs.

Between the ages of 18 and 21, several millions of Americans go to college, and their number is increasing. Thus, they constitute a major part of the total vote which could be ordered into the battle of ballots by, let’s say, the instructors of “social studies”—to help decide an election.

Ordinarily, the task of such instructors would be to tell their students not to forget their duty to vote, but otherwise instructors are supposed to strictly avoid influencing their students’ voting. If “academic freedom” is extant, political propaganda cannot be carried

on in the classroom. It is exactly on such propaganda, nevertheless, that liberals (according to evidence and Mr. Clark) have set their hopes. There is good reason to believe that many college-age voters would get explicit or implicit instructions on how to vote for "progress."

To quote from Clark's article again, the college students would be influenced to vote for "utilizing the full force of government for the advancement of social, political and economic justice at the municipal, state, national and international levels." What that kind of justice would mean I have tried to show in a previous article. [*Faith and Freedom*, November 1953.]

Just another document to indicate the bias of instructions the college students might receive in regard to using their new voting privilege. Professor Leopold Kohr of Rutgers University had a letter published in *The New York Times* on October 26, 1952, in which he made the following amazing statement:

The institution of academic freedom . . . has sense only if it implies a greater freedom than that normally enjoyed by citizens. Above all, it entails the freedom of disloyalty whenever political loyalty comes in conflict with loyalty to the only master a scholar recognizes: the truth as he sees it.

The trouble is simply the disquieting observation that to not a few scholars the "truth" is indistinguishable from Marxist passions. And what is "truth" if it comes to decide a national election? I have little doubt that "truth" and "progress" would dictate voting out of office any believers in personal liberty.

What makes the difference between a voter of 18 to 21 years of age and one who has reached his 21st birthday? First of all, men or women at 21 will be a bit more likely to vote according to some additional criterion, not just in accordance with the textbook they are

required to read in "social studies." Furthermore, we know that the political radicalism and "social passion" of young people is often motivated by their hatred of a domineering parent, or in the case of broken homes and orphans and the like, motivated by the general hatred of the older generation which—so they feel—has let the poor youngsters down. I know many case histories where this connection between political bias and home life during the teens is evident.

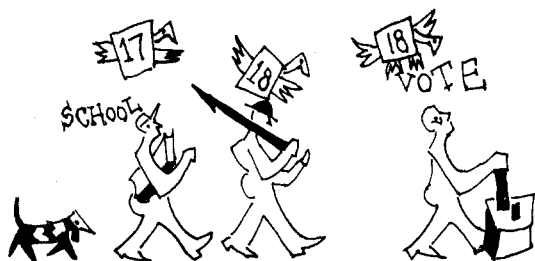
With each added year of life, though, a greater portion of young Americans marry, or begin to go steady in contemplation of marriage. We also know that the hatred and contempt of the parental generation is often neutralized when these young people are faced with founding their own family.

As a whole, the period from 18 to 21 is full of tensions and frustrations, and is in rapid flux. To enfranchise just this very group can only increase the uncertainties of political life. The politician will not only have to adjust his wisdom to the wishes of farmers, veterans and labor union leaders, but also to the whims of a group which is not exactly the incarnation of stability and reason.

### Impact on the Future

Due to the "baby boom" which started in this country around 1941, the election year of 1960 will see an unusually large number of people who would be enfranchised by the amendment to lower the voting age. For the rest of the century, population statisticians assume that the age group of 18 to 21 will remain a very strong one. If the diagnosis which Joseph S. Clark Jr. made about the educational system is correct, then, the lower voting age would mean a permanent prop to radicalism in this country.

Finally, the unmarried young person is bound to have a strong age-group solidarity feeling. The approximately 15 million voters between the ages of 18 to 21 who will be around by 1960, could serve to garnish Congress with representatives who have barely met the legal age for that office. Surely this, too, would make for "progress" the direction of which is dubious.



## EDITORIAL COMMENT

**U**st the other day I talked with the sole survivor of an airplane that blew up in flight, with nine Air Corps men aboard. He spoke of how accurate things must be in engineering, these days of supersonic speed and rocket ships.

The growing importance of accuracy and precision in the modern world was also impressed upon me the previous week when I served as consultant, with a surgeon and a general diagnostician and a psychiatrist, in a very critical case of postoperative illness and complications. Meticulous care was given to the minutest detail as the charts were reviewed, interns interviewed and nurses questioned for any particular—however scant—that might help save the life hanging in balance.

It took a critical friend, however, to reawaken me to the growing importance of exactness and accuracy within the clerical profession. This friend, who views our church's weekly television program, recently wrote to me asking: "What are your proofs? I have come to discount preachers. It is not that they are dishonest but they are inaccurate. They exaggerate. They give distorting emphases. . . . They are fuzzy thinkers as indicated by the number that have been caught up by Front organizations." That letter gave me quite a jolt, even though its writer seemed a little too severe in having singled out ministers from other intellectual groups.

But if the task of saving our freedom must finally be accomplished at the spiritual level, as part and parcel of our more comprehensive assignment of saving souls by spreading Gospel truth, then we ministers shall succeed only as our effectiveness is bolstered by painstaking and judicious thinking and acting.

Unfortunately, a few among us have been enamored of a standard short of Gospel truth—with the result that falsehoods have been spread by antigodly organizations using clergymen's names.

I have therefore felt all the more deeply the need for scrupulous care when we ministers undertake the support of secular organizations or go to speak on social and political matters.

This need for care was brought home to me with full force as Dr. J. B. Matthews gave of his time to speak at our church just the other month. He stated that his widely disputed article dealing with communism in the clergy had been monstrously misinterpreted. Yet who could have written about clergymen with a more careful choice of words than a former clergyman, particularly one who believes it is the very lack of adequate caution that has rendered ministers easy prey to the wiles of Communist organizations?

Doubtless much of the misinterpreting of Dr. Matthews' article was done intentionally by forces which make a practice of getting pro-Communists off the hook and anti-Communists onto it. But these subversive forces work so smoothly that Dr. Matthews was even compelled to withdraw from a job designed specifically to combat subversion. It would be shallow to underestimate these forces. Not even extreme care may be enough to overcome the powers of Communist deception unless our thinking is buttressed by adequate knowledge of pertinent facts.

Indeed, in the question and discussion period which followed Dr. Matthews' address, one minister called attention to this very need of facts. He asked: Is it fair to hold up to public view the names of clergymen who have at one time or another unwittingly joined Communist Front organizations? It was his opinion that we could not in fairness do so until we have also become engaged in helping the clergy *avoid* being duped by the deceptions and misrepresentations of the Fronts.

This minister pointed out that those who condemn also have the duty to inform, and that thus far there has been nowhere for a clergyman to go for *up-to-date* information on Communist organizations, schemes and propaganda ventures—to the end of separating truths from lies.

Afterward, I sent this minister a letter suggesting the sources of information I use. But I feel sure you readers may also have helpful sources or methods for avoiding Communist Front pitfalls. I should like very much to invite you to tell me about them.

DR. JAMES W. FIFIELD, JR.

# THE FREEDOM STORY

**D**o you sometimes find it difficult to help others apply Christian truths, in thinking through the problems confronting them? Many have written us that "The Freedom Story" is useful in this connection. It is a radio program with a message of "faith in freedom under God."

The program's purpose is to stimulate people to consider specific issues of our times in the light of basic spiritual truths—and to approach everyday problems from a moral, ethical viewpoint.

Problems concerning all of us are dramatically presented in story form, with their moral and practical solutions applied on a broad scale.

## For Instance, What About . . .

### Government Controls?

Three school children were the principal characters of a recent "Freedom Story" script. They discovered, in their school lives, the point at which authority becomes excessive and then disrupts what it is supposed to protect.

### Progressive Income Tax?

The incentive-killing effects of the progressive income tax were illustrated in a program about a naturally industrious boy. He became lazy when his hard work brought him no more reward than his indolent brother was receiving.

### Brain-Washed G.I.'s?

What would you do if your son was a Korean P.O.W. who refused to come home? One "Freedom Story" dramatized the thoughtful struggle of a mother writing the letter she hoped would bring her boy to God's light of reason. Another script focused on the thousands who remained loyal despite torture.

This moving radio series is produced by Myron McNamara, a skilled radio craftsman, and features top Hollywood talent. It has received six consecutive awards from Freedoms Foundation, given in recognition of "outstanding achievement in bringing about a better understanding of the American way of life."

The program's high listener-appeal is evidenced by the fact that it is broadcast over such stations as WKRC in Cincinnati, KVDU in Denver, KMPC in Los Angeles, WEAN in Providence, KHQ in Spokane, WJBO in Baton Rouge. It is carried as a public service feature on over 500 stations from coast to coast, and in Alaska and Hawaii. It is sponsored on more than 60 additional stations by leading business concerns.

When you dial "The Freedom Story" during these next few weeks, you will hear the programs which are synopsized below:

### *Old Mike*, week of April 26—

"If somebody has to go, he's one man we can do without." Thus is judgment passed on a man who for years has been considered a blight on the community. His tragic death brings to light the true motives for his misunderstood activities. His fellow citizens then realize that no one knows enough about another person to judge him, and that in God's plans all men are important.

### *The Indispensable Man*, week of May 3—

"What do you do when you feel your job is too big for you?" asks a young minister. He sees that his crushing overload of work is caused by a bottleneck of his own creation. In undertaking duties of which others are fully capable, he discovers he has made himself ineffective. More important, he learns that to deprive others of their responsibilities is to violate their freedom.

### *The Critics*, week of May 10—

"Oh well, it's for a good cause." Such are the words of justification frequently given when someone's conduct is criticized. But when a neighborhood crisis involves a teen-age boy and girl, well-meaning friends discover that no matter how great the trouble—using the wrong means to surmount it will cause even greater distress.

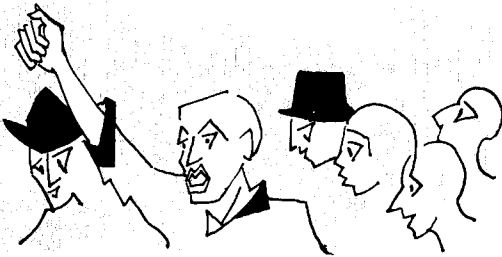
*If "The Freedom Story" is not listed in your local radio guide, drop us a card and let us send you the names and dial numbers of stations broadcasting this vital program in your area.*

## BRUCE KNIGHT

*Would it be desirable to have Americans brought into agreement on how to build a better society? Might there be some middle ground to which partisan political factions could be directed? Are the issues separating the factions so fundamental that they cannot be worked out?*

*To clear up some of the confusions which he believes are responsible for ideological partisanship, the author attempts an analysis of American objectives—freedom and justice—even as they touch upon a poor widowed landlady, a rich skilled laborer, a stenographer, and a big wheat grower.*

# FREEDOM AND FACTIONS



History has illustrated too well, and the last two decades of American history at least well enough, that the foremost victim of partisan attitudes toward freedom is freedom itself. Nowadays our two most articulate factions are, to use their milder terms of mutual recrimination, the “reactionaries” and the “statists.” As one who has been enrolled in the former group by members of the latter, and vice versa, I seek to disclose a few of the more serious errors that contribute to the temperature respecting a particularly heated issue: the relations between economic freedom and public aid to the poor.

Two basic facts concerning poverty should be stated at the outset. First, the world as a whole is poor. In our own country, by far the wealthiest on earth, the richest tenth of all families even includes the families of typical college professors, who thus resemble the richest men in the poorhouse. In other words, there is so little income to distribute that poverty must be relieved mainly by increasing society’s income, rather than by merely redistributing it.

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**BRUCE KNIGHT** is professor of economics at Dartmouth College.

Second, some people are nevertheless so much poorer than others that some relief must be provided also by redistribution. But here arises that deceptive, and therefore coercive, species of addition to, subtraction from, and general revision of the truth which is euphemistically called “persuasion.” To see how it damages freedom, let us begin by sketching the elements of freedom, and then proceed to inspect some of the elements more closely.

### The Elements of Freedom

In a society the elements of freedom are reducible to

1. personal choices,
2. social responsibilities,
3. the functions of the political state.

1. Freedom means, in the active sense, opportunity to choose. Thus, a “free economy” implies the freedom of persons (especially parents) and their voluntary associations to choose between production and leisure, between various productive occupations, between consuming and saving, and between different products. Despite private and public restrictions on them, these freedoms are very real in the United States, and they are also vital to freedom and efficiency in general.

The choices of all spenders set prices on products. And each free price does two things that simply must be done somehow. For one, it rations the existing stock of the product: each person takes as much as he chooses at the actual price, and the total quantity demanded equals the stock. For the other, it reg-

ulates the output, increasing it if the price exceeds the cost of production, and decreasing it if the cost exceeds the price. Thus buyers judge their own needs while producers must produce according to buyers' choices and do it efficiently.

2. Free men stand responsible for the consequences of their choices, not only to themselves and their families but to their fellow men in general. Otherwise individual freedom is social nonsense. A free man is his brother's keeper. The strong are responsible for protecting the weak, and the lucky are obligated to help the unfortunate.

3. Free men are required to choose, directly



or indirectly, the functionaries of the political state. This is because they have, in practice, no other equally good way of maintaining responsible freedom. The primary function of the state is to protect freedom, as against aggression from without and private violence, fraud, and monopoly from within. The other chief function is to serve as an alternate to individual initiative where individual initiative won't work. Cases in point are conservation, sanitation, parts of formal education, monetary control, and aid to the unfortunate.

Note that the coercive power of the state is not in itself a valid argument against state action. On the contrary, we confer this power on the state precisely because we believe that any other actual arrangement, such as relying on private goodness and public exhortation, would be worse not only for freedom but also for justice and efficiency.

The case for freedom rests on two general grounds: that it is an efficient means to ends, and that its exercise is desirable in itself. Economic freedom conduces to abundance. More deeply, one cannot be an adult person without the privilege and responsibility of making economic choices. One's actions reflect neither in-

telligence nor morality, high or low, except insofar as one chooses them. Yet choosing is necessarily subject to limits imposed by living in a society that must have a political state.

### An Analogy

As a device for clarifying partisan errors concerning freedom and state aid, I risk an analogy between the operation of a motor and the operation of a national economy. The motor uses gasoline as fuel to generate power. In our economy the "motor" is the price system, or market mechanism, and it utilizes the "fuel" of choices to satisfy wants.

To think clearly about conducting an economy, therefore, we must consider carefully both the science of prices and the ethics of the actual conditions under which different people do their choosing. When the question of redistribution arises, however, what seems to happen is that the "reactionaries" do violence to real freedom by ignoring or overrating the quality of the fuel, while the "statists" do so by overlooking or underestimating the virtues of the motor. For typical illustrations I shall draw sparingly on the generous supply of reproaches I have received from both factions.

### "Reactionaries" and the Means of Choosing

As an example of overrating the fuel, take the recent charge of a book reviewer that I "strongly favor such communistic policies as . . . the forcible transferring of the gains of the successful to those who have fallen behind in the competitive race." This is a "persuasive" way of saying I believe in taxing the richer to help the poorer, which, of course, I do. Terming it "communistic" recalls Churchill's reference to St. Anthony the Hermit, who refused to do right if the devil told him to do it.

If merely agreeing or partly agreeing with Communists about something makes us "communistic," Senator McCarthy is threatened with overwork, since many of us resemble Communists in numerous practices, of which eating and sleeping might be mentioned. More seriously, what the reviewer's chastisement amounts to is a cavalier dismissal of the fact that there are *unjust* inequalities in the personal distribution of the *means* of choosing.

Since in a competitive market one gets the same value that he gives, and finds his real freedom no greater than his actual means of choosing, "equal freedom to use unequal power" adds up to the ethical absurdity of freezing the status quo of inequality. If freedom is to make moral sense, the question of distributive justice must be faced.

Of course inequality and injustice are not the same thing. If it is bad to reward equally deserving men unequally, it is not much better to reward unequally deserving men equally. Yet there is in the world a great deal of dumb luck, good and bad. And there are also lamentable man-made devices for distributing opportunities unfairly. Thus, even if we do not consider, for example, how labor unionism obstructs the entry of laborers into the lucrative skilled trades, it is still nonsense to say that the children of unskilled workers have equally good opportunities with the children of more affluent families.

By equalizing opportunities, our national income could be increased while making its distribution less uneven. One legitimate means to this end is the machinery of government finance. If ethics recognizes mercy as well as justice, some aid may go also, in cases of doubt, to persons who do not literally "deserve" it. Nevertheless, the flame of partisanship is merely fanned when there is shoddy pretense that "the successful" are identical with the virtuous and that "the competitive race" equals a fair field with favor for none.

### "Statists" and the Machinery of Choosing

The "statists," on the other hand, illustrate their typical error by zealously branding as "reactionary" any man, including the writer, who protests against certain *forms* of public aid, as if disliking their pills were the same thing as favoring disease. In short, they pervasively disregard the fact that the price "motor," the mechanism of prices based on freedom of choice, is amazingly well designed to promote freedom, justice, and efficiency in general. Blaming the motor for the defects of its fuel, they resort to tinkering which makes matters worse.

The worst of all redistributive devices is that

of direct price controls. To help allegedly poor buyers, "ceilings" are set below free prices; and, to help allegedly poor sellers, "floors" are set above free prices. Of course, freedom is thus restricted by preventing prices from being determined by the free choices of buyers.

As for justice, the trouble is that the buyers of a product range all the way from the poor to the rich, and that the sellers of a product display the same range. In many cases a rent ceiling injures a poor seller, such as a widowed landlady, for the benefit of a rich buyer, such as a tenant who is a skilled laborer. In many cases a farm price floor soaks a poor buyer, such as a stenographer who buys bread, to enrich a wealthier seller, such as a big wheat grower. This is redistributing income "from the idle poor to the needy rich." It is not justice.

As for efficiency, price-fixing prevents prices from rationing products and regulating their output. In such emergencies as war, government officials may perform these functions better than a free market would. Ordinarily, though, it is out of the question for one official to know as much about the positions of many families as each parent knows about the relative needs of his own family for different goods. And it is equally impossible for any official to understand the comparative requirements for many products as well as each businessman understands how the price and the cost of his own product compare.

Worse than this, public officials largely duck the responsibility of really trying to do the jobs they won't let free prices do. Thus the ceiling on *scarce* goods "rations" by leading holders to sell less and seekers to want more, and it "regulates" output by discouraging production! And thus the floor on *surplus* goods first leaves stocks unsold and then proceeds to stimulate production! A housing shortage of millions of units, and billions of dollars of surplus farm products held by our government: these are not efficiency.

Another form of aid consists in giving beneficiaries more of certain commodities, which are specified by the state. Thus, tax money is spent to provide more housing, medical treatment, or education for the families of the poor.

This does not directly tinker with the price motor. But it does restrict responsible freedom, since it makes state officials rather than parents the judges of what families most need. If aid is justified in the first place, why not let parents decide the form? In other words, why not simply add to their money income and let them spend it according to their own best judgment?

We can hardly argue that taxpayers have a "right" to control the form of aid if the aid itself is deserved. This right seems to exist only where parents are *irresponsible*. And irresponsibility, where it exists, will usually consist in the fact, not that parents don't know family needs better than state officials do, but that they are morally too weak to do what they know they should. In deciding this matter, I submit that the general rule should be to hold the parents of needy families innocent unless there is strong evidence that they are guilty.

#### Why Not?

As "conclusions" are usually inconclusive, let these questions serve as a summary. Why not distinguish devotion to freedom from both the aversion to taxes and the relish for handouts?

In determining who should be aided at the

expense of others, why not be candid about the connections between real freedom and the ethics of the manner in which the means of choosing are distributed? And, in cases of doubt, why not let mercy season justice? In determining forms of aid, why not leave the price system undisturbed unless the heads of aided families are irresponsible? And, in cases of doubt, why not assume the innocence of the parents in question unless there is proof of guilt? I believe confusions on these questions expose freedom to partisan heat, leading one advocate of freedom to consider another a "statist" and the second to consider the first a "reactionary."

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*The above article by Professor Knight may be an indication of the way many Americans look upon the political economy. But how closely might a libertarian go along with the professor, and when might he break step?*

*The article beginning on page 3, written by one libertarian (our Reverend Edmund Opitz), touches upon some of Professor Knight's subject matter.*

*The reader's comment upon one or both articles is invited.*

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

DEAR EDITOR: Just want you to know that I think the [April] issue of *F & F*, devoted entirely to our foreign policy, is one of the *best*. It is a superb contribution and should awaken a lot of people into doing some serious thinking. . . .

FREDERIC W. OVERESCH, Grosse Ile, Michigan

DEAR EDITOR: Your unusually fine journal has been desecrated with the world federalist "line" . . . Let's have no more of that . . . "mainstream" pollution. Someone may take it for the truth.

A. G. BLAZEY, Washington, Indiana

DEAR EDITOR: [April's] is an exceptional issue—indeed, unique. This is a wonderful idea—one which should be very fruitful. . . .

Any further commentary . . . will be nothing more than elaboration on this:

Isaiah 48:18— "O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea."

GEORGE W. DEARMOND, JR., Dallas, Texas

DEAR EDITOR: I have read with much interest the April number of *Faith and Freedom*. . . . It is with some misgivings, however, that I note the ideas advanced. . . .

The belief that . . . Russia is innocent of intervention in [the Korean] War; . . . that it was fear of invasion by American troops at her border which prompted Communist China to intervene and that South Korea would probably be better off under Communist rule than as a free nation; . . . that the constitutional principle which provides for the common defense is a false principle and should be resisted; . . . that there should be no further delay in the recognition of Red China and the establishment of unrestricted trade with all Communist nations (which could open a highly profitable market for military equipment . . .); . . . these are all ideas the Communist apparatus intensely desires and is diligently seeking to plant in the thinking of . . . the American people. And nothing could serve this purpose more effectively than to plant them through such an agency as Spiritual Mobilization. . . .

GEORGE E. BURLINGAME, Beverly Hills, California

# WITH THE OPINION MAKERS

"A farmer's son will avoid passing the woodpile because he knows if he passes it he ought to bring in some firewood to his mother."

With this homespun example, Bishop Fulton Sheen, in a recent column, drove home a great point. If we really seek the truth, we had better realize that it brings with it the stern call of duty.

Bishop Sheen warns that truth, while it brings freedom, exacts from man a double price. First, he who embraces it often finds himself at odds with current opinion. Second, while truth brings power, it is a hard taskmaster; it drives men on. They cannot shrink from its mandates.

There is, as the Bishop points out, a refuge from both these penalties. We can, like the Communists, let someone else do our thinking. But those who do not covet such sheltering must realize that if they would be righteous, *they* must prepare *themselves* to be counted.

It is a hard choice. Bishop Sheen did not say so, but if he were asked he would probably say that to make this choice, there is but one lasting help—a living faith.

**B**ecause the Bricker amendment was narrowly defeated in the Senate, America remains without adequate safeguards in both domestic and foreign relations.

Yet if we take the long view, supporters of the Bricker proposal have made substantial gains, for there is tangible evidence that they have made a real dent on public opinion—and on interventionist opinion at that.

None of the opinion makers opposed the Bricker amendment with more conviction than *The Christian Century*—it had called the proposals an indication of "glandular isolationism and phobic anti-UNism."

But now that the skirmish is over, *The Century* itself acknowledges that the amendment was aimed at a real danger. It is now predicting, editorially, that the issue will remain alive until some sort of constitutional action has been taken to check the use of executive agree-

ments which have the same effect as treaties.

The Bricker amendment was a device for checking the alarming growth of unrestrained executive power. The fact that the liberal *Christian Century* perceives this means that the battle of opinion is being won. And in the end, votes will follow the tide of opinion.

**L**ast midsummer found J. B. Matthews exposing the affinity of clergymen for Communist causes. But a far more telling indictment against some of the clergy is returned in the March 22 *Freeman* by Lawrence R. Brown, who analyzes the rationale of "The Christian Left." While he agrees with Dr. Matthews that the clerical leftists have helped communism, his thesis is based on something more meaningful than the number of organizations they have joined. He says that they have helped communism because, essentially, they agree with it.

With keen perceptiveness, Mr. Brown points out that it makes little difference whether the leftist clergy are few or many. The point, he says, is that "... it is they who command the public attention. It is they who on all political matters are accepted as representatives of religious thought."

Of course we cannot simply rail at the liberal clergy, he says, just because they help the Communist cause. But there must be a reason why they help, and to him it is obvious.

Christians, he says, have always looked for the Kingdom of Heaven. In early days they anticipated the return of Christ to rule on earth, but later in the Western world the Kingdom came to be thought of not as earthy, but as the abode of the redeemed. So Christianity for centuries concerned itself mainly with the saving of men's souls.

But the liberal thinkers decided that righteousness should also come on the earth, and since God Himself was not going to intervene, they decided that they themselves must set out to establish the Kingdom. Modern thought shunned consideration of the soul; it wanted

to make the body secure. The way to do it was to cure our environment. That led straight into remedying all ills by legislation, and became socialism.

The flaw in the approach of the clerical leftists, contends Mr. Brown, is that they want to establish on *earth* the kind of equality that has been promised for *heaven*. For the Christian concept of equality of souls, the liberals have substituted the idea of equal worldly possessions. This is the only position of the Christian left. And its real shame, the author concludes, is not so much that its leaders have paralleled communism; it is that they have forsaken Christianity.

Say it often enough and people will begin to believe it is true. At first the reformers told us the Welfare State was "the right thing to have." Now they are saying "the American people are all for it."

The latest echo comes from Charles H. Seaver, writing in *Social Action*. He strives manfully to prove that we can continue to increase state welfare functions without doing violence to free institutions. To clinch his argument, he uses an example which, to the thoughtful, undermines his point rather than establishing it.

"It was only a hundred years ago," writes Seaver, "that a Rhode Island farmer threatened to shoot Henry Barnard if he ever caught him on his land advocating 'such heresy as the partial confiscation of one man's property to educate another man's child.'"

This statement accurately reflects the Welfare State proposition. Its advocates are willing to confiscate property to achieve their ends. How carefully, one wonders, have these people considered the final consequences of a policy that permits the state to take property?

This much is surely true: a free capitalist society is founded on the concept of private property; communism's first act is to destroy it. The farmer was essentially right. To the extent that we sanction confiscation, we move from a free society to a Communist tyranny.

"IN every life there is a road to Damascus, though not all men take it. At some point on this road, the word is spoken; the choice is made; the future breaks loose from the present. The moment of dedication is clear and conscious—and if the earth does not shake, the heart trembles. For once the choice has been made, the past is destroyed, and with it the comfort of withdrawal. Like Paul, we are eternally committed."

With these significant words Ralph de Toledano introduces a story which, while modern and perhaps unique to our times, is nonetheless as old as Christianity. For, author de Toledano is talking about conversion.

Titled "The Road to Anti-Communism," this remarkable tale in the April *American Mercury* follows the progress of the author himself through student flirtation with the Young Communist League to the Hitler-Stalin pact which washed away the enchantment.

Even after this, the young writer clung for a while to the "non-Communist left" as exemplified by Americans for Democratic Action. The Hiss case made his break final, as the liberal leftists forsook devotion to truth and decency toward individuals. Frantic in the face of overwhelming evidence against one of their idols, they fought to save Hiss by heaping abuse upon his accuser. At that point, says de Toledano, the liberal leftists "became professionals in the new Popular Front."

In the space of this short article, author de Toledano, who has earned fame as author of *Seeds of Treason* and *Spies, Dupes and Diplomats*, has given to many of us new insights into the bitter struggle for men's minds that has raged, especially in America, this past decade. It is a memorable recital.

But the road did not end with disillusionment. The torment of doubt brought assurance; the challenge of disbelief brought belief. For any man, the anti-Communist road—if it is not to end in failure—must end where it took Ralph de Toledano—who puts it thus: "Beyond anti-communism, there was man's courage, man's dignity, and self-contained within his duty to God, man's hope."

## THE MYTH OF THE GOOD AND BAD NATIONS

RENE A. WORMSER

(Henry Regnery Company, Chicago, 1954, Pp. 180, \$3.00)

Rational and realistic observers of the American and world scene are rather generally agreed that our aggressive and interventionist foreign policy, which has abandoned traditional American neutrality and noninvolvement in foreign squabbles and intrigues, is a greater menace to our present security and future prospects than communism, even if one accepts Senator McCarthy's most robust views relative to the menace inherent in the latter.

In leading us into this lamentable and dangerous state of affairs, nothing has been more potent or mischievous than the myth that some nations and peoples possess a monopoly of virtue and rectitude, while others are congenitally evil, mendacious and belligerent. Although this absurd frame of reference in approaching world affairs runs counter to all fact, logic and sound history, it persists, and there is a determined effort to prevent those facts which would dissipate it like a snowflake in the midday sun, from reaching the public.

For a long time England took the lead in characterizing France as the natural enemy of mankind and peace, from around 1550 until 1900—at about which time the English navalists and imperialists supported by the personal prejudice of Edward VII, replaced France with Germany as the chief menace to humanity. Correlatively, the United States warmly sympathized with Prussia in 1870, but by 1914 had switched her affections to France. As a matter of fact the people of the United States—following the leadership of the press and politicians—have shifted in their evaluation of the virtues of the leading states of the world no less than five times since the onset of the Spanish-American War in 1898.

Germany, regarded by much of the Western

world as perhaps the chief mainspring of Western science and culture from 1860 to 1900, was transformed into a "butcher-bird of Europe" which had plotted and preyed upon innocent neighbors for a thousand years or more. Dr. Richard Brickner wrote a book, *Is Germany Curable?*, during the second world war, which implied that the German nation was incurably insane and that the world could only be saved from its paranoiac machinations by exterminating all Germans. The Stalin-White-Morgenthau Plan sought to implement this diagnosis, so far as it was possible to interject such malicious nonsense into postwar public policy.

The travesty attained its most extreme development in strictly Orwellian double-think, when the "peace-loving nations" were listed as those which had made war between 1939 and 1945.

Books have been written to combat such menacing phantasma, an early example of which was Albert J. Nock's *The Myth of a Guilty Nation* (1922), the first notable work to attack the legend of the unique wickedness of Germany in 1914. Last year, the eminent English authority on naval and public affairs, Captain Russell Grenfell, made clear in his *Unconditional Hatred* how enormous was the price paid by England and the world for the irrational hatred and punishment of Germany in the present century.

Now Rene Wormser, in a brief and readable but powerful and informing book, has undertaken this task on a world scale. It is an epitome of "Revisionism" as applied to world history, especially since 1914. Discussing in a thoroughly informed and impartial fashion the causes, course and results of the two world wars, Wormser tears completely asunder the fiction of the unique—or even the main—German responsibility for these conflicts and the chaos and suffering which followed them.

Mr. Wormser shows that the ethics of all parties to the two world wars were on much the same level, and their record for barbarities

during and after the struggles of about the same order and magnitude. He sets forth with great clarity the inevitable bankruptcy of world policy today which is founded on the thesis of the unique goodness or evil of particular peoples and nations, including even the Russians and Chinese. He ends with the sound conclusion that: "There are evil governments and evil leaders. There are no evil peoples, no evil nations. Nor can we afford to be led astray by the concept that any government has the essential and changeless quality of goodness."

Only on the basis of such a sane and generous social philosophy can there be any hope of building enduring peace and international security. With such philosophy the reviewer is in hearty agreement.

It is likely that the reading and understanding of this book by several million of our more intelligent and influential Americans would contribute more to world peace and our national security than all the new agencies of destruction which our scientists and technicians have spawned since 1939. This would constitute a real H-bomb explosion in the realm of political and social intelligence. Unfortunately, due to the book reviewers' "black-out" of honest historical writing, it is unlikely that this kind of book will get any popular hearing. We seem doomed to move on from ever greater myths to ever more devastating catastrophes.

HARRY ELMER BARNES

## **ADVANCE TO BARBARISM**

F.J.P. VEALE

Foreword by The Very Reverend W. R. Inge  
(C. C. Nelson Company, Appleton, Wisconsin, 1948,  
Pp. 305, \$4.50)

Men write books either to make money by giving pleasure, or to maintain what they believe to be some important truth which flatterers and fools have conspired to conceal. Mr. Veale's unquestionable truth is that our century has reverted to a form of war which has already gone far toward turning our civilization into an unnecessary hell on earth.

Writing with admirable self-restraint en-

livened by flashes of wit and dry humor when the subject permits, Mr. Veale—a noted British barrister—dwells chiefly upon the lynching parties officially misnamed "War Crime Trials," and upon the scientific baby-killing usually known as "strategic bombing."

Alas, want of space does not here permit detailed discussion of the total lack of justice and the still more striking lack of wisdom shown at Nuremberg. Let it suffice, as our author reminds us (without the slightest sympathy for the evil deeds committed in National Socialist Germany), that none of the traditional rules which attempt to safeguard justice were observed. The court could not appear impartial since the so-called judges were not neutrals but were recruited from the victorious allies; and no allied crimes were allowed to be considered.

The precedent created, i.e. that the leaders of the losing side in future wars will be killed after capture, destroys reason for not indulging in unlimited savagery.

## **H- for Herod-bomb**

Since present United States military policy stresses the part to be played by long-range bombing planes carrying atomic bombs which must find their most appropriate targets in cities, let us see what city bombing is like.

The Herod of the New Testament is still unfavorably remembered because he had a few babies killed in Bethlehem. But even today, at least in the West, most people would be shocked to find on entering a town recently occupied by hostile ground troops, that the place is littered with mangled corpses of civilians, including little babies. On learning that this devastation was part of a deliberate policy of the hostile high command, obviously the actual killers and especially the policy makers would deserve little mercy. Nevertheless, as Mr. Veale shows beyond question, the policy of doing just that from the air was deliberately begun on May 11, 1940 by our British Allies, and was followed by our own Air Force.

*Advance to Barbarism* puts the question clearly: to what extent can civilization long survive this sort of war?

HOFFMAN NICKERSON

# CURRENT READING

## THE REPUBLIC AND THE PERSON

GORDON KEITH CHALMERS

(Henry Regnery Company, Chicago, 1953,  
Pp. 270, \$4.00)

The president of Kenyon College here sets forth his conception of a responsible American liberalism as applied to higher education. This book is not so much an abstract analysis of that false philosophy which today flaunts the labels and some of the phrases of liberalism; it is a full-bodied and practical discussion of what ought to be in a college curriculum if we are to meet the growing standards of a humanistic and classical liberalism. "This means, let the end and aim of common education be the understanding of ourselves, our kind and what surrounds us."

One of Dr. Chalmers' most interesting suggestions is for the return of the theological faculty to the university. This will serve a double purpose; it will enrich the university's life by the addition of an equal department of learning concerned with the purpose of individual life, and it will add ballast to theological instruction.

The author observes: "In America, theology effectively left the Protestant universities about a century ago, when self-contained professional seminaries were established either within the university or elsewhere." The result has been that theological thinking has "more and more lost both its feeling for and its grasp of the worldly concerns of secular critical minds"; and this has "produced the tragic paradox of fatalism in Protestant thought, which its promulgators do not even seem to recognize. The university at its best is first of all concerned to approach the norm for man. Theologians out of contact with this central human enterprise can complacently say, as some now do, that they are progressive because they have substituted Housing for the Old Testament."

It is a compliment to a book of this kind to say that it inspires confidence in the kind of institution Dr. Chalmers heads.

EDMUND A. OPITZ

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