

Lefevre's Journal

one man's point of view



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*My Wish for You
and Yours is the
Merriest, Most
Satisfying, Delightful
and Joyous
Christmas
You Have Ever
Had*



TO SEEK SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IS TO BE RADICAL — TO GO TO THE ROOTS

Many libertarians are motivated toward a belief in liberty because they detect so many errors; so many problems heaped upon us by the government. This approach to liberty is apt to make one's disposition sour. The Christmas season is a good time to turn that around.

In a sense, we are all revolutionists, seeking to bring about serious changes. But we should be merry revolutionists, not dour-faced pessimists filled with anger and hatred. The libertarian should have fun and satisfaction in standing for what is right. There is joy in being an actionary, not a reactionary. So, please have a jolly Christmas and accept my absolutely fantastic good wishes for you and yours.

At this Christmas time, we have an ideal opportunity to approach the many political and economic problems in our country with a positive attitude that can and will bring success to the cause of individual freedom. So I'm going to suggest a step-by-step formula which can be followed to bring libertarian success into your life. Really, it isn't too

hard. Not if you are willing to face reality.

1. The first step is to know your own capacity. Not a one of us is big enough to have caused all the problems we face and not a one of us is big enough to bring about a solution to all the problems. The best any of us can be is a part of something. We can be a part of the problem; we can be a part of the solution; or we can spin our wheels and experience massive frustration. Begin by deciding to be part of the solution!

Let me state this another way. Each of us has a limited number of resources. We have a certain amount of time each day and a certain number of days to our lives. Each has a certain amount of energy; a limited supply of dollars; a limited supply of goods; a certain number of talents and skills. That's it. None of us knows everything or can do everything. But there is a natural law here relating to the allocation of scarce resources. Whenever you expend a resource, at that particular moment that resource is gone. If you spend a dollar, that dollar is gone totally. When you devote an hour of your time

SIGNIFICANT CHANGE

(continued)

to study, that hour is gone. The time you spend in doing anything is time that is gone forever. Make up your mind to spend your resources constructively. That is to say: allocate your resources in such a way that each allocation is aimed at being a part of the solution.

2. The second step is a matter of realization. The laws of reality, which are the only laws that matter, ordain that each of us can *control* himself and his own resources. We cannot control others without relying on coercion in some form. We may influence others, inform others, persuade others, argue, demonstrate, cajole, and put on the pressure. But in the end each human being controls himself. This is an extremely important point.

Please separate coercion from persuasion and social pressure. They are not the same. We live in a society wherein persuasion and pressure are all about us, whether we experience government interference or not. But the effectiveness of such persuasion depends on our free choice. Further, no matter what we do, contrary pressures and persuasion will always exist. This is the nature of society and is a constant.

So, it will always be true that whatever action you or I take, some observers will decry it or would do it differently. But when we are dealing with persuasion and pressure, the worst that happens to us is that other people disapprove and let us and others know that they are disappointed. Accustom yourself to accept that regardless of what you do, there will be those who will express disappointment.

Coercion is something else again. When coercion is present, you are compelled to act, or to refrain from acting, by force or the threat of force. I am not speaking of displeasure. I am speaking of some kind of physical punishment that will be inflicted upon you by others if you fail to comply.

Disappointment means that some will say, "I wish you had (or hadn't) done that." Coercion means that someone will limit your choices by deciding for you what you will do with yourself or with some resource you own. Failure to comply will result in even more serious impositions physically enforced.

To be free does not mean that you can escape human displeasure. To be free means that you can act despite the displeasure of others. To lose freedom requires coercion. When coercion appears, you do not face displeasure, you face physical harm of one sort or another imposed upon you through the use of force.

What you seek to accomplish, to a large measure derives from your own personal definition of human liberty. It also spells out what your chances of being happy may be. If your goals depend upon getting others to do as you tell them, then you have set

goals for yourself which will repeatedly bring you unhappiness. For others will act as they, not as you, wish. Faced with the possibility of unhappiness, you will constantly be lured into trying to obtain happiness by compelling others to do as you wish them to. It is wiser to accept goals that do not depend upon the behavior of others, but rather depend upon your own performance. Thus, you will offer advantages to others if they agree with you, but you will not threaten them with disadvantages if they don't. This places you properly in respect to others in the business of living.

Let me define human liberty as a condition in which coercion is absent. If you are indeed libertarian, this means that you seek to avoid coercion in all ways.

This brings me to the third step, another realization. If you accept the above definition of human liberty, with it comes the recognition that each of us has all the necessary attributes by means of which we can coerce others. Most persons, in finding themselves attracted to human liberty, move in this direction because they fear that others are prepared to coerce them. They want freedom because they do not wish to be coerced. This is excellent as far as it goes. Unfortunately, it often results in the willingness of the so-called libertarian to practice coercion upon others in order to prevent others from coercing him. This does not produce freedom. To provide a *condition* of liberty means that *no one* will coerce *anyone*. The condition of freedom cannot exist if you are coercing others, any more than it can exist if they are coercing you.

Thus, the true libertarian as I define the term liberty, aims at a *condition* of liberty, not merely at his own freedom to do as he pleases.

A free society is not built on having the "right people" coerce others. A free society is one in which there is zero coercion. And if that is what you wish, I can show you how to move in that direction successfully and practically.

Let me sum up the points I have made.

1. Be certain you are thinking within the boundaries of your own capacity. Select goals that depend on your own performance and not on the performance of others.

2. Reality tells us that each of us controls himself, and within that framework all correct human relationships are persuasive rather than coercive.

3. Liberty means a *condition* of zero coercion. Thus, liberty means self-control: no more, no less. The opposite of liberty is the control of some shifted into the hands of others by reliance on force.

I am indebted to Count Leo Tolstoy for the illustration I now wish to use. Tolstoy described the present condition of men, caught up in the toils of the state conception of life, as similar to that of a swarm of bees hanging in a cluster on a branch. The position of the bees in that cluster is temporary and must sooner or later be changed. Each of the bees instinctively senses this and wishes to change her

own and the others' position. Each must fly away to find herself a home. Similarly, men cling to each other, hanging on desperately to the state conception of life. Each wishes the situation to be changed. But each man, like each bee, tends to look to the others to bring about the change. Each bee, like each man, clings to others and the others cling to him. He cannot move off, he believes, because the others cling to him. They cannot all start off together for each one hinders the other. Therefore, they all continue to stay where they are.

It would appear that no real change could ever occur. And this is especially true for those who imagine that political action will bring the change. Political action requires that by some means, fair or foul, a majority of men (or bees) could be coerced (instinctively compelled) into acting uniformly. Thus, if a majority of men moved off together, the rest would be forced to follow. But this will not happen. Reality is against it. For nature ordains that each man (and bee) is a separate living creature with the ability to control himself but lacking the ability to control any other but himself.

Nature gives us the answer. When the time comes for the bees to move, the migration begins as one bee separates herself and flies away. And after her, another and another. Each bee controls herself as nature has ordained and presently the inert cluster from which there seemed no escape for the bees, becomes in fact a freely flying swarm.

The same will happen with men. When men decide it is time for them to act, if they begin to act independently, and thus each in accordance with his own nature, the cluster of men clinging to the state conception of life will become a freely moving social order in which each man acts in harmony with the control over himself which reality insists upon.

So we move toward a free society, not because all men, or even a majority or a plurality move, but because each man, recognizing his own capacities to control himself and no others, acts independently by resolving never again to be a party to coercion, directly or indirectly.

This determination to set one's goals and one's methods within the context of reality requires understanding of reality. Thus, the movement toward a libertarian society is in fact a movement toward understanding of reality. It's an educational movement which can be participated in by each person who learns who he is and what his capacities really are.

Of course the cry will immediately be raised, "But that takes too long. If we have to move toward liberty one at a time, we'll never attain a free society."

How wrong that is should be readily grasped by any student of mathematics. Let me suppose that I took a full year of my life to discuss this question and all other pertinent questions affecting liberty with just one other person. And let us suppose that my calculations thus far are correct and can be

communicated to others. If that is true, then, surely, by the end of one full year, the one other person with whom I was interacting on this basis would know at least as much about liberty as I do.

Let us suppose that in the next year, both this other person and I now undertook to repeat the process, each with one person alone. At the end of the second year, there would be four of us acting independently. Presume that we continue. The third year, there will be eight of us. The fourth year, sixteen.

By the end of thirty-six years, how many will be acting independently and in accordance with his own reality? Figure it out for yourself. It is a number larger than the population of this planet!

Real changes come about this way, although we should never expect total reformation. There are some who won't do the work or who resist learning. But as we stop to think, it is clear that important, beneficial, lasting changes have occurred this way, and this way only. If I were able to sway masses to vote "the right way," others, too, could persuade the masses to vote another way. And that leaves us with no progress at all, over the long pull.

Most of the people in the world now accept the view that the world is round. At one time, most of the people believed the world was flat. When was the election held, or the war fought, which made it possible to change that idea?

Most of the people in the world now believe that two plus two makes four. At one time, most of the people in the world couldn't figure that out and may not have agreed. When did we elect someone who changed that way of looking at things?

Real progress occurs when some one person discovers a truth and, without waiting for others, acts upon it. As others see it happening, they too practice it. In time, the bulk of belief swings in the direction of that truth.

When it occurs in this fashion, the change is permanent. Each man always believes what he will. Each man changes his own mind and always will act on the basis of his deepest convictions. If and when men as individuals begin to believe that freedom means self-control as opposed to imposed external control, and forego coercion as a *modus vivendi*, then and then only will we be free. The means to the attainment of the end sought are in harmony with that end.

That puts the future in your hands just as much as it is in the hands of any other person. You cannot solve the problem for others, but you can resolve it for yourself. Freedom, when it comes and if it comes, will come because each of us has earned the right to be free.

So be merry and have a good appetite this Christmas. Let your digestive juices be sweet and your outlook joyous. Do all that YOU can do by removing yourself as a source of coercion. That is within your capacity. And it is the ultimate act you are capable of performing.





In the fall LeFevre's Journal I mentioned a quotation from the pen of James Russell Lowell, admitting I couldn't find the reference. A reader, who unfortunately is anonymous, tracked it down and sent it to me. I hope he will accept my thanks.

Be noble! and the nobleness that lies
In other men, sleeping, but never dead
Will rise in majesty to meet thine own.

James Russell Lowell
Sonnet IV, 1840

LINDA ABRAMS: "Your article on the Colorado campus frankly answered questions I had held a long time. More 'behind the scenes' stories would be very welcome." *Behind the scenes stories are difficult for me to do. They reveal just how foolish I can be. But I'll try for more.*

BRIAN J. MONAHAN: "Re your 'Do You Really Want To Be a Libertarian?' Rothbard's premise for participation in the political swindle is to expose more people to libertarian ideas rather than hoping to dismantle the State after being elected. This in spite of his disillusionment with the so-called libertarians who have been elected and his agonizing over pragmatists and factions within the Libertarian Party. What did he expect? And who's the pragmatist? Murray Rothbard is not merely human; he is one of the most brilliant expositors of economic theory and history to come down the pike. Sad that he doesn't stick to it — and Ayn Rand to novels!"

L. P. CASSIDY: "Thanks for restating your position on 'political action by libertarians.' This will be one letter to offset in small measure the verbal abuse that will be hurled your way."

JACK ALLEN HARRIGAN: "Your latest issue comments on how there were people skeptical about your rea-

sons for selling the Colorado campus. Gee, I believed and understood first, right off. I've even used the situation to illustrate various features of education and the impact of individualism. It is salable, but not quite like corn flakes." *I'm certainly glad my original explanation made sense to you.*

JAMES KIEFFER: "I don't know if I agree with what you say completely. I sense a little mysticism - sometimes - in a small way - in your writing. Perhaps I'm wrong. I do know, however, that religious 'teachings' are the main cause of most of the world's troubles, and have been for centuries. Currently, witness Ireland, Vietnam, the mid-East, Philippines, India (Pakistan, etc.), and so on." *Many of the ideas advanced by various religions have been sound enough in themselves; it is only when people attempt to enforce them on others that we get into difficulties.*

MANUEL KLAUSNER: "I disagree with your blanket opposition to the Libertarian Party, which can serve as an effective educational force without ever electing anyone to office. When and if it ever elects a candidate, it will be vital to scrutinize the actions of libertarian officeholders — and to repudiate them, if necessary. I consider the Libertarian Party worthy of support." *The Libertarian Party will assist educationally by showing just how bad political action always is. But it seems a shame to experience repeatedly the errors which our intelligence has revealed.*

DALE GREEN: "I consider the basic political-economic question to be: 'Can the use of initiated violence in human relationships gain and keep human values?' Violence can be used to transfer possession of human values in some cases, but it necessarily destroys some human values in the process. Its use

does not create or make new values or in any way add to the total values of humanity. Even if it could be shown to be effective, could it be shown to be efficient? The use of violence in human relationships must destroy some of the values of the victims and never creates new values to take their place, therefore, it is always a negative sum 'game.' Yours for peace and freedom for everyone." *You have given an extremely concise and accurate explanation of the use of force.*

JAMES FAUBLI: "When you first offered me a gift, I thought I was being hustled and sent no money, but then the gift came anyway and kept coming. Now I know you are real — I would wear the Pine Tree with pride if I had one. Is it too late?" *You got in under the wire. I am real enough - and thanks for giving us a try.*

WILLIAM MARGOLIS: "Your ideas on how a sub-marginally productive disabled person can be 'libertarian,' in your neat sense of the word, would be interesting to read. How can one be free when physically unable to earn one's daily bread in this very real world?" *The magnificent example of successful living embodied in your book of poetry is the key I'd recommend to all who are physically handicapped. Keep up your chin and keep trying. Thousands physically handicapped to some degree are entirely self-supporting in the marketplace. But what if the handicaps are such that employment is impossible? Frankly, this is such a remote possibility that it is a difficult question to answer. Without knowing the special circumstances it's almost impossible to offer concrete suggestions. But, Bill, they could be made. There IS something you can do — as your book of poetry shows. Perhaps you should be a writer, editor, critic, teacher, musician, counselor, proof-reader, columnist — I'll leave it to you.*

DAVID DIAL: "I'm enclosing a photograph of the street sign 'Lefevrestrasse' I took one day while riding my bicycle out to Templehof Airport." *This street sign in Berlin will probably be as close to fame as my name ever comes.*



NEIL JENKINS: "LeFevre — you are a rascal! You upset my status quo; you try to make me think; you verify by indisputable logic what my 'gut feeling' has told me for a long time! And as another product of American education I resent reasoning, thinking, or other similar intellectual exercises. Shame on you! It's really un-American."

A. E. PROSSER, JR.: "Fly-by-night movements rise and fall, and others are waiting in the wings for their brief day in the sun. Disillusionment inevitably arises. So, do we have that which will attract unstable souls searching for solidity (not solidarity) and stability in a world gone mad? The shift in emphasis from enterprise to security in less than two generations also bodes ill for our nation's future — and public schools are primarily to blame for this state of affairs." *When people have been taught but not truly educated, and when they believe that they must follow leaders, they become almost defenseless against the confidence man. People who swim about like fish with their mouth open can count on a skillful angler casting in their midst.*

J. R. ROAF: "Somewhere recently I read that man is a rationalizing but not necessarily a rational animal. One would certainly be justified to use more than just luck to avoid amputation of a left leg or even what counterfeit money is left over. Then just one step more to ask Robin Hood to rob the rich just a little more to pay back a fraction of what he has robbed me of in the past. Oh, well! I'm enclosing a little bread for the little people inside the box." *This demonstrates the difference between a rational argument and a rationalization.*

JONES: "The animal routine in issue two was inane, as are all such discussions about people and pets." *I hope I don't have too many discussions that you feel are inane. Some who read the Journal like both people and pets.*

LESLIE LON SCOTT: "In the mail today I received another letter from Conoco and another *LeFevre's Journal*. I've used Conoco products exclusively for many years and I've read *LeFevre's Journal* and theories for many years, also. It seems to me you share the same ideals and hopes for our coming generations. It seems logical therefore to send my copy of the *Journal* to you, Mr. Mulligan, and to you, Mr. LeFevre, I will send a check and the Conoco booklet." *I appreciate this introduction. I deeply admire any businessman or firm which can survive today amid*

all the government pressures and the clamor of those who are angry at them simply because they have succeeded.

DAVID CARL ARGALL: "We, as libertarians, are not in politics because we 'intend to use whatever means appear necessary to accomplish the desired result.' At least not in the sense of the end justifying the means. The means are justified by the result, not the goal. Let us look at the result of political action vs. no political action." *To arrive at a successful libertarian state of being, I think ends and means have to harmonize, not justify.*

MONICA SWIFT: "Just a small gift in appreciation for your ability to convey clearly the meaning of human Freedom and Liberty. Many thanks."

JEANNE FULLER: "Have still not quite found my niche but hope to stay off the backs of my fellow Americans. There is nothing shameful in any kind of work so long as it is honorable and keeps one's self-respect." *If you can stay off the backs of your fellow Americans and perform honest work, that is the best any of us can do.*

JOEN GLADICH: "It's always a joy to note your *Journal* in our mail box. So many seem to feel we should have Richard Nixon's blood. I know that many things he did were very harmful but if we return harm for harm, we aren't helping any, are we? Is any organization thinking about organizing your two-week course?" *If anyone does wish to organize another two-week session, I hope they will proceed. I have all the work that I can handle merely teaching courses. However, the two-week session is best and I do hope somebody will take the time and do the work to set one up again.*

V. S. BODDICKER: "I believe Nixon has performed one of the best deeds of any president. I now find more people with less confidence in government." *I wonder what people will think when, in a few years, they look back at Nixon as better than the incumbent, whoever he may be.*

ROBERT ORMSBEE: "It wasn't clear — but I trust you're continuing your letters. Count me in for two copies of the next four."

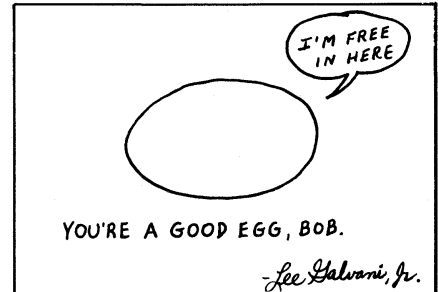
WILLIAM FLUHR: "The spiderweb background on pages 2-3 made it difficult to read your excellent thoughts." *A spiderweb is difficult to read through and almost impossible to extricate oneself from.*

GEORGE A. CAMPBELL: "If you have three or four extra copies of your last issue and can send them along, I have some good thinking people who

might join the ranks." *Thanks for boosting the readership.*

ROXANNE SULLIVAN: "Have procrastinated long enough. Enclosed is donation. Wish you success with the *Journal*. Hawaii is just 2,500 miles away." *Maybe I'll stop procrastinating and get over to Hawaii again.*

LEE GALVANI, JR.:



Thanks, Lee. I'm reminded of C. S. Lewis' observation that a man can't go on being a good egg forever. You either hatch or you turn rotten.

AGNES McFEE: "How I wish it were all that easy — just to 'get involved,' join, give effort, money, voice — so that everything could be fixed and we could live happily ever after. Sadly, it won't work. It isn't an easy lesson. In spite of all, some do learn, and in that lies our only hope. It usually begins with a personal frustration or perhaps from reading a treatise or book. Our hero becomes alarmed about what is happening to the little freedom he has left. He must do something and quick, too. He becomes a 'ball of fire.' But things don't seem to be a whole lot different than when he started months or years ago. His despondency deepens. After much introspection he reluctantly admits there is only one person he can change directly — himself. Then comes the hardest part: to live that which he believes. He must learn to expand that tiny flame rekindled inside himself . . . the symbol of that perfect ideal, self-responsibility; to keep on learning, refining his thinking, sifting all ideas — guarding and keeping the flame, willing it to show him the secret path toward Truth. He knows, at last, he can not and should not force anyone to follow in his footsteps. But perhaps his small rekindled flame might light faintly the way for one other so that together their combined flames may join others and ignite a benign conflagration which can envelop the whole world in its beneficent glow." *Perhaps there is no more beautiful experience than to see one's highest values reflected in the glow within the heart and mind of another. I hope reading this *Journal* provides such an experience for others.*



CONSIDERATIONS OF AN IGNORANT MAN WHO FOUNDS A COLLEGE

I am often asked what particular event in my life caused me to originate the ideas I teach in my various seminars and which I constantly put forward in material I write.

When someone asks why you do this or that, usually a simple answer is anticipated. However, very few of us act from a single motivational point. We act from a whole fabric of desires, assumptions, and attitudes.

Before examining my tapestry of reasons, let me post a disclaimer. The ideas that I put forth are not necessarily my own. I am indebted to a number of fine minds, both from ancient times and modern, who have contributed largely in the development of the libertarian ideas I have put together.

On viewing my library, hearing me lecture, or reading my material, many people have commented that I am an extremely well read person. I am not. I am a very slow reader and have never even attempted to read many of the books close at hand. They are printing books faster than I ever will read them and I don't ever expect to get caught up.

The personality with which I am either blessed or cursed was formulated in part in the government school system. I learned quickly that you didn't have to know what you were talking about but you had to memorize what the professor was talking about. The professor could be wrong, but he had to be remembered.

This discovery made me highly antagonistic to the school system. I tended to distrust and disbelieve my instructors. Whatever they said I greeted with skepticism. I was rebellious from an early age, disdainful of many of my elders who actually knew a great deal more than I did, but whose knowledge I was loathe to accept. When I read something, I would not accept it as I read it. I would have to analyze it and think about it, deeply, for a long time — which does not promote speed in reading.

When it came to various IQ tests, etc., my score depended to a degree on how fast I permitted myself to proceed. If I concentrated on doing what I was told to do, I could come up with a very good IQ score. If I concentrated on doing what I wanted to do, I would come up with a very poor score. And the question always was, who is going to be in charge of my mind? Will I use my mind as I wish to use it, or the way someone else wishes me to use it?

I was a loner in other respects, as well. I was the product of a broken home, my father and mother divorcing when I was eleven years old. And I was raised a vegetarian so that in all of my life I have never eaten flesh foods of any kind. This fact had far greater impact in the development of character than one would normally assume. At first, I would not eat what was served to others and later I found

I could not eat what others ate. The result was that at mealtime with others, right at the moment when most people were putting aside their differences and sitting down and recognizing the unity that all men have, I'd be sitting down and recognizing my unique individuality — something that kept me apart from others.

Additionally, I was born with a birth defect — serious enough so that the doctor assured my mother that I would never walk. He was wrong and I did learn to walk, and in my teens I became a fairly good amateur athlete. Nonetheless, the defect was there and after sustaining a back injury during my war years, I underwent, for a considerable period of time, excruciating pain often for a week or more at a time. Some of my early students in Colorado may recall seeing me hobbling around on a cane, or possibly two canes, because of a ruptured disc. The operation performed on my back while I was in the service was partly experimental and has been replaced by a superior technique.

These characteristics and circumstances have so accentuated an apparent uniqueness that one of my students asked me — and did so with straightforward seriousness, I thought — if perhaps I was from some other planet and had been let off somebody's space ship. I can only answer that to the best of my knowledge I am an earthling! My mother was an honest lady and would have informed me. These peculiarities and variations have tended to make me introspective; to become inured, although not immune, to painful experiences; to study problems in depth rather than skimming the surface.

Many of my friends are far more skillful than I in leaping from question to question and from answer to answer. My own tendency is to take a challenging idea and dive to the bottom of the sea with it. I like to probe in depth; to take an idea as far as it can go, both up and down, and then, of course, interrelate that idea with other ideas already established and see where it takes me. It is this desire, and my enjoyment in functioning this way, which has resulted in the particular coloring and assortment of libertarian ideas which I have woven together to provide my own way of looking at life. Out of this has arisen my respect — no, my devotion — to that magnificent trait that humans possess, called liberty; the ability to select based upon reason — even the ability to select when little reason is present.

Another basic trait, to be a participant rather than an onlooker, has led to some very humorous and sometimes tragic developments. For instance, as the man founding Freedom School and Rampart College, my primary purpose should have been to attract instructors to the school who could teach

while I assumed managerial and executive duties. But I rebelled at relinquishing to qualified teachers the classroom I had so eagerly established. This was particularly true after I brought teachers to the Freedom School in Colorado and noted inconsistencies in their presentations, weak spots they were undoubtedly not aware of — at least they seemed weak spots to me. And consequently, I had to get into the act and do the teaching myself.

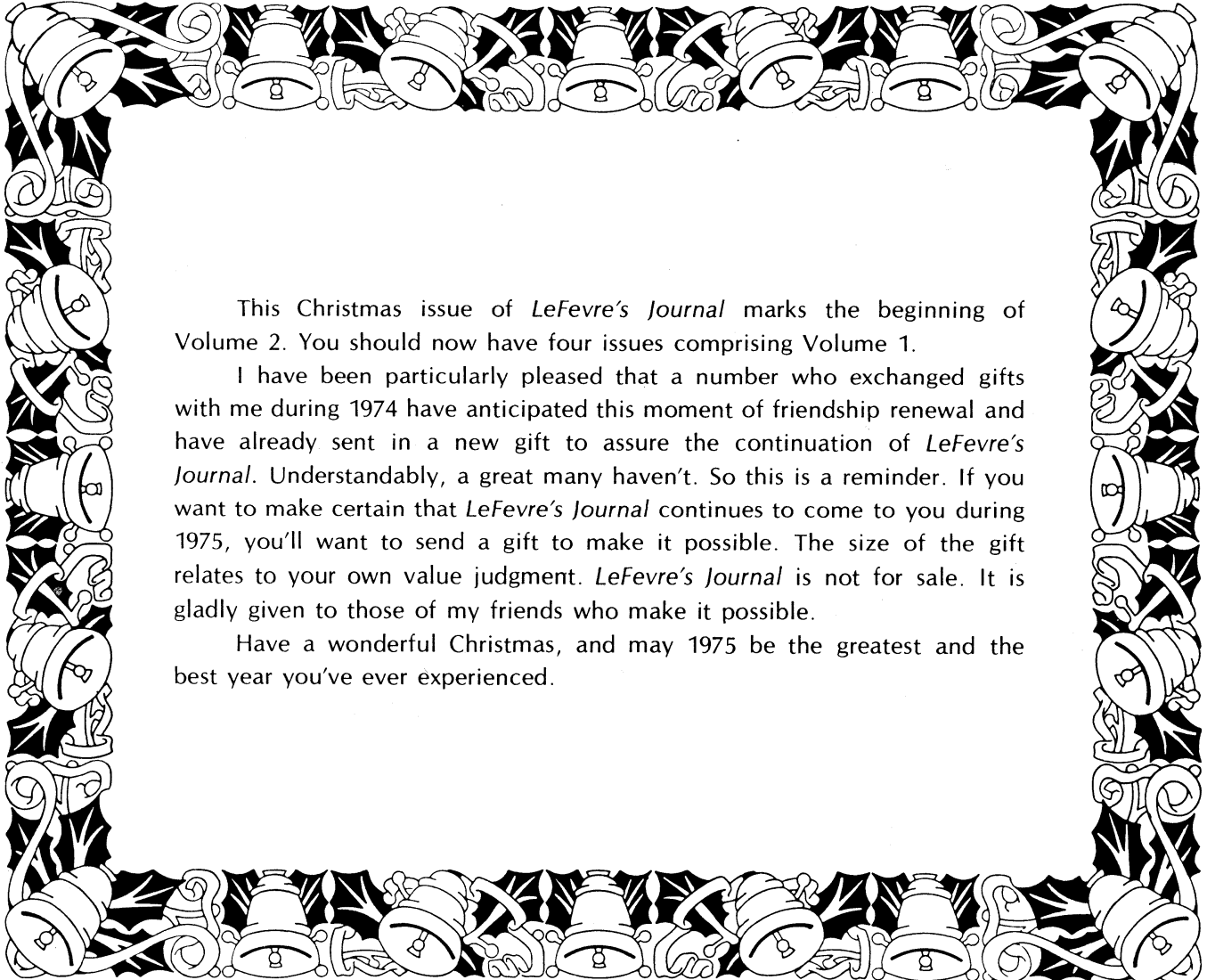
Thus I never functioned as a top-rate executive. A good executive is a person who inspires others to make maximum use of their talents and abilities while he keeps hands off. In my case, every time I observed the behavior of another person, I was tempted to see how much better I could do the job than he could. I've been a constant competitor, not a person willing to take a position and rest on his laurels but a person who has to continually prove himself by being in the thick of it. And this has been my lifestyle from the beginning.

Whenever a new idea appeared, whenever a new opportunity was offered, I was never content to stand on the sidelines. I either rejected it or plunged in. And I didn't just plunge in to my ankles; I plunged in all the way, frequently head first, and

sank to the bottom of the new concept, idea, activity, or whatever. You can color me enthusiastic. I'm totally devoted to whatever I think is worthwhile, and then if for any reason I change my evaluation, I lose the devotion totally. I have finally reached the place in life where I'm not trying to remold myself. I'm willing to accept myself as I am.

This is what I set out to do: to find an understanding of life, a philosophy if you please, that would always place me intellectually above reproach. To take this position one has to be tough minded. No matter what one does, criticism will always abound. A person has to assure himself that the position he takes is consistent, based on discoverable principles systematically developed from prior positions of consistency; that it is a highly desirable position; that it is possible of attainment; and then, when he is sure he has reached the best that he is capable of, to stand firm irrespective of the attacks that surely will come his way.

I learned long ago that if I would make a few modifications in my philosophy, I could make it palatable to many. I could probably attract a large following. This I did not want to do. From the beginning I wanted to be intellectually correct and



This Christmas issue of *LeFevre's Journal* marks the beginning of Volume 2. You should now have four issues comprising Volume 1.

I have been particularly pleased that a number who exchanged gifts with me during 1974 have anticipated this moment of friendship renewal and have already sent in a new gift to assure the continuation of *LeFevre's Journal*. Understandably, a great many haven't. So this is a reminder. If you want to make certain that *LeFevre's Journal* continues to come to you during 1975, you'll want to send a gift to make it possible. The size of the gift relates to your own value judgment. *LeFevre's Journal* is not for sale. It is gladly given to those of my friends who make it possible.

Have a wonderful Christmas, and may 1975 be the greatest and the best year you've ever experienced.

CONSIDERATIONS

(continued)

consistent, even if I was the only person to arrive at that point. I wanted my conclusions to be in harmony with reality, come what may.

To attempt this requires asking some very hard questions. And it requires that you stand with your principles even in the face of jeers and catcalls. Even when the questions are hard and the answers even harder, you still have to stand your ground. The criterion is not desirability, or ease of comprehension. There is only one criterion. Does the view taken coincide with reality? If it does, then you must hold at that point.

I took the view that somebody had to take this position; that it was important to the development of libertarian thought that someone go to the end of the line, and if necessary take a position that was totally unpopular provided only that it was in harmony with reality. And of course I have been very pleased to see that many people, recognizing what I was doing, thought it through the same way I did and confirmed my position, although it is a tough one, and it is hard for most people to acquire.

But that's it. This is how I came to put the libertarian philosophy together in the way that I see it. It ties back to my own characteristics as a teacher, to ideas I have gathered from many other people, and to an attitude of wanting to get to the bottom of the question, to take a consistent stance, and to hold that position irrespective of criticism. 



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