
The Voluntaryist

Whole Number 50

"If one takes care of the means, the end will take care of itself."

June 1991

Why Not More Freedom?

By David Pearse

[Editor's Note: The following article was prepared by a long-time subscriber, who hopes that it might spark correspondence or replies from others interested in exploring the reasons for lack of freedom in the world.]

I have spent a good portion of my life learning about freedom and its benefits for us humans. I have also spent untold hours trying to convince others of my views about freedom. Up to a point, I have succeeded — I have usually been able to persuade them of the efficacy of my arguments. But that's generally as far as it goes. Yes, they say, we admit taxes are too high, government is too large, and freedom is wonderful, but we're not changing our beliefs or actions, thank you very much. Furthermore, they ask, *If freedom is so unequivocally beneficial, why don't we have more of it?* That question has perplexed me for many years, but I think I finally know why, in fact, we don't have more freedom.

I believe there exists a *prima facie* case for freedom (freedom being defined here as the right to do what you want as long as you do not physically harm another person or his property), both from a psychological and an economic viewpoint.

Psychologically, most of us can agree on at least the basics of a rewarding life: we want to think well of ourselves, and we want to pursue various goals of our own choosing in life so that we can achieve these states of self-esteem, happiness, and meaningfulness. These desired states of life do not come to us automatically: we must discover on our own how best to achieve them. First, we must choose to add meaning to our lives: we must choose some goals which we must convince ourselves are meaningful to us, and then we must enthusiastically pursue them. Next, we must exert the necessary *effort* to work toward our goals. Once we reach a goal or goals, we must set new ones; or, if we do not reach our goals, we must try new approaches or abandon old goals for new ones. In this lifelong process of working toward goals we value — achieving some, abandoning others, establishing new ones — we can create meaning, happiness, and self-esteem in our lives.

Economically, in order to survive, one must do the same thing in the physical world one does in the psychological world — one must set goals and pursue them, only in the physical world, one must actually achieve enough goals to keep oneself alive: one must obtain enough food and shelter on a daily basis to exist. To create wealth above a subsistence level and a measure of economic security for ourselves, we must not only work hard, but save a portion of what we earn.

We all know how difficult it is, even under the best of circumstances, to better ourselves both psychologically and economically. This is because humans possess a number of traits they must overcome if they are to achieve psychological and economic well-being. I believe two of these human traits stand above all others as reasons for our lack of freedom and our concomitant lack of more psychological well-being and economic prosperity.

Basic trait number one is: **people are lazy**. This is not a moral judgment: it is merely an observation of fact. People naturally wish to do the least work for the most gain.

The dictionary says one who is lazy is "disinclined to activity or exertion" and who is "not energetic or vigorous." To a great or lesser extent, this definition fits all of us. It is animal nature — and humans are animals — to do as little as possible to survive. Lions, once they get enough to eat, do little else but sleep all

day. Like other animals, man tends to work hard enough to assure himself of adequate food, clothing, and shelter, but he must consciously push himself — go *against* his human nature — to accomplish anything beyond basic survival.

Some people, including some very distinguished psychologists, believe man possesses a "hierarchy of needs" — a drive to go beyond mere existence to self-actualization — to develop his human potential to the fullest. Everyone is busily engaged — or supposed to be — in self-actualization. But most people cannot muster the necessary determination, persistence, and self-discipline to act in a self-actualizing manner. One need only view present day Americans to realize how true the previous statement is.

People are more likely to hang out in bars than in libraries — cocktails consumed far surpass books read. Instead of filling the nation's drama theaters, people fill its sports arenas. When was the last time a play by Shakespeare drew a hundred thousand spectators? Instead of filling the nation's night schools, most people plop, mesmerized, in front of their television sets. When was the last time anybody developed his potential watching the boob tube?

Most of us think we're doing well just to raise the kids, hold a job, and stumble through life the best we can, which is fine. We can't all be Wayne Dyer erasing our erroneous zones, or maybe we can, but we're too lazy to do so.

There exists in human nature an even more powerful factor than laziness in preventing people from achieving psychological and economic well-being. Basic trait number two: **people are fearful**.

Fear pervades the life of man, and for good reason: there is much for man to fear in life. Man realizes that he must act to live — his existence is not guaranteed. He must constantly solve the basic problems of life — how to obtain enough food, shelter, and clothing to stay alive. He is understandably fearful that at times he might not be able to obtain all the necessities of life; however, since he is naturally lazy by nature, his fear — of death by starvation or exposure to the elements — gives him a powerful incentive to act to overcome his laziness and obtain these necessities.

Nevertheless, man's fears of just about everything in life are omnipresent, ready to kill his incentive and sabotage his actions. As Napoleon Hill wrote in his classic book, *THINK AND GROW RICH*:

Indecision crystallizes into doubt, the two blend and become fear! This fear paralyzes the faculty of reason, destroys the faculty of imagination, kills off self-reliance, undermines enthusiasm, discourages initiative, leads to uncertainty of purpose, encourages procrastination, wipes out enthusiasm and makes self-control an impossibility. It takes the charm from one's personality, destroys the possibility of accurate thinking, diverts concentration of effort; it masters persistence, turns the will power into nothingness, destroys ambition, beclouds the memory and invites failure in every conceivable form; it kills love and assassinates the finer emotions of the heart, discourages friendship and invites disaster in a hundred forms, leads to sleeplessness, misery, and unhappiness...

It takes a great deal of *courage, determination, and persistence* to overcome one's fears and lead a productive, rewarding life, and to his credit, man has succeeded in doing so to some extent; he has progressed from semi-starvation to abundant foodstuffs, from tattered rags to designer clothes, from dirt caves to comfortable houses. As he solves his problems of existence *by*

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The Voluntaryist

Editor: Carl Watner

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From the Editor:

"Like a Voice Crying in the Wilderness" —A Restatement of Purpose

Whole No. 50 marks our golden anniversary issue and nine years of publishing THE VOLUNTARYIST! Though this sum of years does not begin to match the length or the significance of Benjamin Tucker's LIBERTY (27 years), or Murray Rothbard's LIBERTARIAN FORUM (15 years), there is a certain satisfaction in knowing that there has been this much staying power. So let's sit back and take stock of where we have been and where we are headed.

Publication of THE VOLUNTARYIST is a time-consuming task, both in terms of writing and production. As you may well imagine, I sometimes wonder "if the juice is worth the squeeze." Large amounts of my time are naturally devoted to my very loving and caring wife, Julie, and my two sons, William and Tucker, now ages four and two. Business commitments also absorb large chunks of my time and energies. I am grateful that THE VOLUNTARYIST, with a steady roster of slightly over two hundred subscribers (plus numerous exchanges), pays for its mailing and printing costs. Thanks should be extended to the "unsung volunteers" who have assisted throughout the years. This includes Julie for her editing and proofreading, Paul Bilzi, who did this task several years ago, and Charles Curley, whose column "Voluntary Musings" has appeared in nearly twenty issues. Special mention should be made of George H. Smith and Wendy McElroy — for their partnership during the first three years, and Robert Kephart, whose funding allowed us to start THE VOLUNTARYIST.

THE VOLUNTARYIST is clearly a labor of love, and it would be wonderful to discover more people interested in "sharing the labor" — by locating new subscribers, writing articles and letters-to-the-editor, and being on the lookout for items worthy of reprinting. Though occasionally I feel like "a voice crying in the wilderness," surrounded by an onrushing sea of statism, THE VOLUNTARYIST has provided a "public" rostrum. It also has allowed me to publish my historical analyses from a voluntaryist perspective. In addition, it helped put me in touch with Robert LeFevre, and, after his death, assisted in making the contacts needed to fund and publish his biography, TRUTH IS NOT A HALF-WAY PLACE.

One important reason that I continue to publish THE VOLUNTARYIST is that there is a need to "let it not be said that I did not speak out." As I wrote in 1976, long before THE VOLUNTARYIST was ever thought of, "To speak the truth without fear, to disseminate without reserve all the principles with which I am acquainted, and to do so with the most persevering constancy — this is my self-assumed obligation." This in turn has made THE VOLUNTARYIST a most unique publication. As far as I know, there is no other literary forum that integrates a non-State, non-violent, free market outlook with the rejection of electoral politics. How did I arrive at that creed?

Like many other libertarians, I began my voyage under the

tutelage of the writings of Ayn Rand, Ludwig von Mises, and Murray Rothbard. I still have the clipping from THE WALL STREET JOURNAL (June 17, 1963) which mentioned Mises' receipt of a Doctorate of Law from New York University. It was that editorial which led me to the Foundation for Economic Education, which then opened up a Pandora's box of new political and economic ideas. It was during that same summer, when I was fifteen, that I read ATLAS SHRUGGED, a book given to me by my mother.

By 1969, I was corresponding with Morris Tannehill among others, whose book, THE MARKET FOR LIBERTY, convinced me that people could function in a free society (without a State). My next major intellectual move was the purchase of a set of Lysander Spooner's COLLECTED WORKS. In July 1976, I wrote and published my pamphlet, "Towards A Proprietary Theory of Justice," in which I embraced the Rothbardian framework of 1) the self-ownership and 2) the homesteading axioms; from which flowed the corollary doctrines of a) non-aggression, b) free exchange and freedom of contract, and c) anarchistic voluntarism. I probably first read the term "voluntaryist" in Murray Rothbard's MAN, ECONOMY, AND STATE, where reference is made to Auberon Herbert's "Voluntaryist formula."

During the late 1970s and very early 1980s, I published articles in REASON, and the JOURNAL OF LIBERTARIAN STUDIES. I became friendly with Wendy and George, and was influenced by their rejection of electoral politics, a view towards which I was naturally sympathetic. (At one time I had been president of our Student Council, and vowed after that experience never to hold "office" again.) I believe it was in the first half of 1982, that the three of us wrote and published the original pamphlets that were to comprise NEITHER BULLETS NOR BALLOTS. In October 1982 we published the first issue of THE VOLUNTARYIST.

In "The Fundamentals of Voluntarism," which appeared in Whole No. 40 (October 1989), I described voluntarism as "the doctrine that relations among people should be by mutual consent, or not at all. It represents a means, an end, and an insight." Voluntarism does not argue that social arrangements should take on any specific form; it simply advocates anything that's peaceful and reasonable. Voluntarism occurs naturally if no one does anything to stop it. It rests on the premise that force should be abandoned, because the use of violence is never a remedy to social problems. The individuals in a society will flourish only if they are free, and only as men change, can their society become better.

As I wrote in Whole No. 29, our interest is in the enduring aspects of libertarianism and individualism. Among these ideas we would include the concept that taxation is theft; that the State is invasive — hence, historically a criminal institution; that war is the health of the State; that coercive, State power corrupts those who try to use and/or master it; and that the delineation and implementation of property rights are the solution to many of our social and economic ills. Voluntaryist thinking finds its roots in antiquity, when the stoic thinkers realized that character-building — the development of self-controlling and self-responsible individuals — was the essential basis of human happiness, as well as the prerequisite of a better society.

Gandhi's pronouncement that "if one takes care of the means, the end will take care of itself," (HARIJAN, February 11, 1939) has, from the very beginning of THE VOLUNTARYIST, been a focal point of our thinking. We have always insisted on the congruence of means and ends; that it is the means which determines the ends; not the ends that justify the means. The means are at hand, closest to us. They dictate what road we shall set out on, and thus eventually determine our destination. Since the methods used to struggle towards one's goals are more important than the goal itself, THE VOLUNTARYIST rejects electoral politics and

*"Let him that would move the world,
first move himself."*

—Socrates

William Lloyd Garrison

Tyrants! Know that the rights of man are inherent and inalienable, and therefore not to be forfeited by the failure of any form of government, however democratic. Let the American Union perish; let these allied States be torn with faction, or drenched in blood; let this republic realize the fate of Rome and Carthage, or Babylon and Tyre; still, those rights would remain undiminished in strength, unsullied in purity, unaffected in value, and sacred as their Divine Author. If nations perish it is not because of their devotion to liberty, but for their disregard of its requirements. Man is superior to all political compacts, all governmental arrangements, all religious institutions. As means to an end, these may sometimes be useful, though never indispensable; but that end must always be the freedom and happiness of man, INDIVIDUAL MAN. It can never be true, that the public good requires the violent sacrifice of any, even the humblest citizen; for it is absolutely dependent on his preservation, not destruction. To do evil, that good may come is equally absurd and criminal. The time for the overthrow of any government, the abandonment of any alliance, the subversion of any institution, is whenever it justifies the immolation of the individual to secure the general welfare; for the welfare of the many cannot be hostile to the safety of the few. In all agreements, in all measures, in all political or religious enterprises, in all attempts to redeem the human race, man, as an individual, is to be held paramount. The doctrine, that the end sanctifies the means, is the maxim of profligates and impostors, of usurpers and tyrants. They who, to promote the cause of truth, will sanction the utterance of a falsehood, who are for trampling on the rights of the minority, in order to benefit the majority, are to be registered as monsters of the human race.

—SELECTIONS FROM THE WRITINGS AND SPEECHES OF
WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON, 1852, PP. 116-117.

revolutionary violence. A voluntary society must be sought peacefully and must be based upon the improvement in the moral tone of the people who comprise it. All we can do as individuals is to “do our best:” to present the world with one improved unit — ourselves —, “and then leave the rest” to take care of itself.

In a recent book about slavery in South Carolina (BORN A CHILD OF FREEDOM, YET A SLAVE), Norrece T. Jones, Jr. indirectly reminds us of the similarities between slavery and our status as citizens. Jones points out how slavery is, in essence, a state of war between the slave and his master. “The assault on slaves was not only physical but mental. ... [W]ithout capturing the minds as well as the bodies of their workers, [the masters realized] that all effort at control would be futile.” Jones quotes Thomas Higginson, an abolitionist, who stated

I have never heard one [referring to the slaves] speak of the masters except as natural enemies. Yet they were perfectly discriminating as to [good and bad owners]. ... It was not the individuals, but the ownership, of which they complained. That [the ownership] they saw to be wrong which no special kindness could right.

If slavery had prevailed, without exception, throughout the world during the 18th and 19th centuries, Negroes born into that condition would have found it quite difficult to imagine that they might one day be at liberty. If freed slaves had not lived in the North, the slaves in the South would have had no practical example of freedom to which they might aspire. Nor would they have found their condition especially intolerable, since they could have comforted themselves with the thought that Negroes all over the world were in similar straits.

Our situation in the United States, today, is nearly analogous to that of the slaves. There is no bastion of pure voluntaryism anywhere in the world to which we can escape (though we can take solace from the fact that the freer nations are generally more peaceful and prosperous). What is citizenship and statism if not slavery? The American State (including all levels of government) robs us of nearly half the fruits of our labor. It rules us, it tries

to count us and register our births and deaths, it inflates the currency, regulates and governs us in thousands of ways. The State attempts to maintain public opinion in its favor by controlling what is taught in the schools, manipulating the economy, involving the populace in the electoral process, and by “sharing the wealth” via progressive taxation. Slaves (citizens) that are contented with their lot are less likely to rebel than dissatisfied slaves. But to those who see through the smoke and mirrors is it not a war against the State to keep what we earn and to demand the right to do as we please, peacefully, without outside interference?

The American State is a slave-state, and like every other State in history it is at war against the people it governs. *It is still a criminal institution, regardless of how democratic or “kinder and gentler” it appears to be. Regardless of how much better living conditions may be in the U.S., we should never lose sight of the fact that the lesser of two evils is still evil.* The State may not have to use armed might and force to control us simply because it has been more successful (than many other governments) in capturing our minds, and, thus, enslaving us. As Ayn Rand once asked, “What is my life, if I am but to bow, agree, and to obey?” If we are enslaved, what difference in principle does it make who is our master? A State, is a State, is a State, regardless of who, or where, or how its decisions are made and enforced.

Given the nature of the State and our opposition to all States, let me again restate our mission:

THE VOLUNTARYIST'S Statement of Purpose

Voluntaryists are advocates of non-political strategies to achieve a free society. We reject electoral politics, in theory and in practice, as incompatible with libertarian principles. Governments must cloak their actions in an aura of moral legitimacy to sustain their power, and political methods invariably strengthen that legitimacy. Voluntaryists instead seek to delegitimize the State through education, and we advocate withdrawal of the cooperation and tacit consent on which State power ultimately depends.

Why Not More Freedom?

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himself, he infuses his life with meaning, happiness, and self-esteem.

Please note that it took man many thousands of years before he made significant progress in his unending battle against lack of food, clothing, and shelter, and that even today the great majority of people still live in wretched poverty, fearing that each new day will bring disease or death. Why is this?

They lack *freedom*. Under freedom, people have an incentive to work, to save, and to prosper — to set goals, to change and to grow. With the adoption of capitalism comes a concomitant growth in living standards. But many people today still do not enjoy economic well-being, mainly because they have no freedom, or at least not enough of it. *Regardless of natural resources, population density, or other factors, the people living in the freest countries produce the most wealth and enjoy the highest standards of living — period.*

Freedom is also a prerequisite for psychological health. The very definition of a psychologically sound person is one who is *actively* striving to change his thoughts and actions and then doing so: it is the conscious pursuance of goals and objectives — of change in oneself — that defines mental health. *Freedom* to act to change oneself is a precondition of the psychologically rewarding, meaningful, happy life.

Freedom, then, is the one indispensable ingredient necessary to allow people to pursue their psychological and economic well-being. *Freedom of choice and action in life are vital to a psychologically fulfilling and an economically prosperous life.*

But in point of fact, man has never been completely free. From earliest times, he has always been ruled by someone or some body, whether that person or group be a chief, a witch doctor, a king, a dictator, or a government, elected or otherwise. Nowhere has a society ever existed where people lived in freedom and took complete responsibility for their own lives. Man has always

wanted — nay, demanded — someone ruling him and making his decisions for him. He has always been willing to trade at least some of his freedom for at least a measure of servility.

Why? If freedom is so vital to psychological and physical well-being, why throughout history has there been such a dearth of it? Why have the people of the freest country in the history of the world — the United States of America — who fought a revolution to “secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity,” been busily giving away that freedom for the last 200 years, a process that continues to accelerate with each passing day? In short, if freedom is so vital to our survival and success as individuals, *why have we always been so willing to part with it?*

Throughout her life, Ayn Rand wondered the same thing. She was forever lamenting the fact that characters she wrote about in her novels did not exist in the real world — strong people willing to set high goals for themselves and pursue them against any and all odds with no assurance of victory. To my knowledge, she never perceived what it was in human nature that prevented the vast majority of people the world over from throwing off the shackles of authoritarianism for the risks, challenges, and rewards of freedom. She became so depressed over the state of the world and her inability to change it that, after writing *ATLAS SHRUGGED*, she became more and more inactive, depressed, and bitter, and from all accounts she died a lonely and alienated woman.

True, if people have too much of their freedom taken away, sometimes they will rebel. Sometimes there comes a time when people, whether they be leaders or followers, realize that the lack of freedom has impoverished their nations to such an extent that it is impossible to continue under the present system any longer. The recent upheavals in Russia and Eastern Europe bear this out.

But why do people not throw off the chains of government completely? Why do people elect the same politicians who constantly take away more and more of their freedoms? Why do they fail to summon the energy and courage necessary to risk, to change, to experiment until they find what is richly rewarding and eminently satisfying to them in a free society? *Why do they not wish to assume responsibility for their own lives?*

For all of us, making the positive choices in life — exerting the necessary effort to pursue our goals and summoning the courage to do so — is a daunting task; people succeed to a greater or lesser degree. A small minority of people, while perhaps not entirely satisfied with their lives, are at least willing to take responsibility for them: they are willing to work within a framework of freedom to achieve what they will.

But for most people, total freedom is a scary concept. Who will protect our lives and property? How will we educate our children? Who will provide for us in our old age, or if we lose our jobs, or if we get sick or hurt? Most people are too lazy and too fearful to want to solve such problems on their own — they want someone to handle these problems for them. Most people simply do not have the drive and courage it takes to lead a free life —

to take responsibility for themselves, to set goals and pursue them, to revel in their growth as individuals. Most people will trade their noblest aspirations for a government safety net, their hopes and dreams for a handout and a sermon, *all in the name of security, or what they perceive to be security.*

Under freedom, people must work to overcome their laziness and fear, but under authoritarianism, people do not have to do so. When people are told that the State is going to do many things for them regardless of what they do for themselves, they are only too willing to trade their freedom for the (perceived) government security.

What is the thing people fear most? Loss of life and property. What is the first thing that people demand government do for them? Defend their lives and property. People are scared to death of having to provide for their own protection, and they ridicule any proffered free market alternatives to government control of defense of life and property. Ergo, we have government police departments and armed forces. No matter that the police can't protect people — we have more private security guards than we do police — no matter that government armed forces attack each other at regular intervals — they have slaughtered tens of millions of people in this century alone — people still demand to be protected by government bodies.

Actually, government pretends to provide security for people. We all know that, due to bureaucratic inefficiency, people pay more for inferior government goods and services (including defense of life and property) than they would in the free market. **But people are willing to accept more costly and lower quality government goods and services in return for not having to exert the effort or bear the anxiety of obtaining these goods and services in the marketplace.** A person would rather the government take care of his major responsibilities — defense, education, retirement — thus allowing that person to work at his mundane job and not have to worry about the major decisions affecting his life, *even though he's going to pay more in the long run in lost income and decreased freedom.*

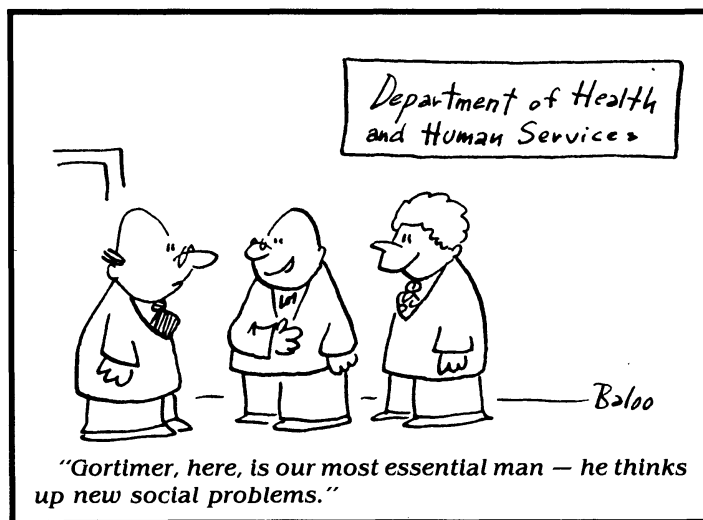
People truly believe that somehow they can make government more responsive to their needs and desires, or as a friend of mine writes, “to alter its priorities, reduce its scope, and operate more efficiently.” But when faced with such government boondoggles as the savings and loan fiasco, the national debt farce, and defense procurement procedures, where government costs the taxpayers hundreds of billions of dollars, people shrug their shoulders as if to say, “That's government. What can you do?”

People refuse to acknowledge that they cannot somehow get democracy and government to work. Carl Watner, the editor of this publication, stated the problem very clearly in his article on democracy (*THE VOLUNTARYIST*, August, 1990) when he concluded: “The search for democracy is like the search for the ‘fair’ tax or ‘good’ government. Due to the nature of the beast, there can be no such thing. Yet the clamor for democracy has persisted for at least 2500 years.”

People simply refuse to acknowledge the truth about government: it does not exist to provide goods and services as cheaply as possible to people nor to provide goods and services that people cannot otherwise provide for themselves; rather, it exists to expand itself at the expense of the very people it serves. When politicians get elected, they spend the rest of their terms not serving the people, but figuring out how to get re-elected. The bureaucrats, when appointed or hired, do not think about how best to serve the people, but rather how to steal the most money from the public to expand the bureaucracy. Ever tried to oust an incumbent or fire a bureaucrat?

The implications for freedom are ominous. When a government offers to do for people what is difficult for people to do for themselves, people generally let the government do it for them. Which means that the few people in society who truly believe in freedom and want to lead their own lives unencumbered by the shackles of government are forever stymied in their desire for freedom by the vast majority of people who are too unconcerned and fearful to abolish government and give freedom its chance. **The majority of people who both want and need government make it impossible for the minority of people who**

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Voluntary Musings

A Column of Iconoclasm

By Charles Curley

*"Nothing can defeat an idea
--except a better one."
--Eric Frank Russell*

"Democracy: The worship of jackals by jackasses."

H. L. Mencken

This is an improvement? The feminist movement in this country is a lot like the high school algebra conundrum: if a snail climbs up a 60 foot well three feet every day, and slides back two every night, how long will it take the snail to climb the well?

The liberal feminists seem to support increased independence for women from the men in their lives. That's the three feet upward. The two feet backwards is the increased dependence on the State which the so-called feminists want women to accept. (Not that this is sexist of them: liberals want everyone to be dependent on the State — and themselves to be in charge of it.) Thus, the liberal solution to every problem is to pass yet another law for the alleged benefit of women.

But this is still a dependency! Like the choice between methadone and heroin, there is no real difference. Dependence on one's husband or dependence on the State: Women get a poor deal either way.

What a lot of people miss is that "feminism", so construed, is yet another form of collectivism, like racism or marxism. What is necessary is individualism: to treat each individual according to that individual's unique characteristics. In a society in which that principle is consistently applied, the good parts of feminism will blossom, and the collectivism wither.

Individualism is what feminism should be but isn't.

"In America sex is an obsession, in other parts of the world it is a fact."

Marlene Dietrich

Same thing for politics.

Missing the point: Various news media, including THE ECONOMIST and INSIGHT (the Moonies' attempt to counter the liberal media) have observed, correctly, that three states have passed term limitation for politicians.

In Colorado, the wrath extended to Congress, where incumbents such as Ms. Pat Schroeder will be forced out in twelve years time. The ballot initiative passed with 71% for it, the highest margin of any of the Colorado initiatives.

In California, Proposition 140 squeaked by with 52% of the vote. It limits all state-wide office-holders to a maximum of six years in any one office, with no return after a period out of office. In addition, legislative salaries were cut by one third, as were office expenses and staff. Vicious, those California initiatives.

The same publications also observed, correctly, that the same electors returned the incumbents to office with the same return rates to which we have become accustomed. Of 100 contested seats in the California legislature, only three incumbents were not re-elected. THE ECONOMIST thinks this odd.

Not odd at all. H.L. Mencken described an election as an advanced auction of stolen goods. Quite so. The average voter probably figures that, since those goods are going to be stolen anyway, he might as well snaffle as much of the swack for himself as possible. One good way to do that is to return to Washington, Denver, and Sacramento politicians with clout, with seniority in the committee system. In a word, incumbents.

Think of it as a variant on the NIMBY syndrome: Not In My Back Yard. It's OK to have prisons — but not in my back yard. It is okay to have nuclear power plants — but not in my back yard. It's OK to have freeways — but not in my back yard. It's OK to get rid of everyone else's incumbent politicians — but not in my back yard.

Bye, bye, Willie Brown. Might be worth the trip to California for the party the day he goes.

"Every revolution evaporates and leaves behind only the slime of a new bureaucracy."

Franz Kafka

"That was how it had been, he could see now. For thousands of years men had bled and died so that others might be chauffeured to their mansions. They had sacrificed themselves because they had never been able to penetrate the carefully woven curtain that obscured the truth — the curtain they had been conditioned not to be able to see through or to think about. But the Chironians had never had the conditioning.

"The inverted logic that had puzzled him had not been something peculiar to the military mind; it was just that the military mind was the only one he had ever known. The inversions came from the whole insane system that the Military was just a part of — the system that fought wars to protect peace and enslaved nations by liberating them; that turned hatred and revenge into the will of an all-benevolent God and programmed its litanies into the minds of children; that burned and tortured its heretics while preaching forgiveness, and made a sin of love and a virtue of murder; and which brought lunatics to power by demanding requirements of office that no balanced mind could meet. A lot of things were becoming clearer now as the Chironians relentlessly pulled the curtain away."

James P. Hogan

VOYAGE FROM YESTERDAY, 1982

Actions speak louder than words; trite but true. Yet how many of those people who claim to be individualists, or anarchists, or voluntaryists, or libertarians are anything more than the arm-chair variety?

What, dear reader, would you do if you came upon your spouse collapsed on the floor? Stand there and wait for "Joe" to do something about it? What are you doing to prevent your home from being burglarized? Depending on the police department?

If individualism means anything, it means the ability of a person to take care of herself. Theoretical libertarians talk about privatizing this or that piece of the State, yet they miss the chance to privatize so many little bits of the State, the ones that might actually be useful: emergency services for one. So many of those who call themselves libertarians are so withdrawn into their own egos that they are incompetent to meet a real emergency.

By real emergency I do not mean Hammerfall, or a Soviet invasion of Miami. I mean the emergencies one is realistically likely to meet in daily life. Have you taken a CPR course? What would you do if you were the first on the scene of an automobile accident? Have you renewed your Scouts first aid? Have you taken an NRA home firearms safety course?

It pays off, too. I once stopped at the scene of an accident. No-one was injured, but broken glass was all over the place completely blocking a major highway. I went to call it in, and then spent an hour sweeping glass off the highway, along with the highway crew. Later, one of them asked me why I had stayed. The reason: I'm an anarchist. It is part of my ethic *not* to let "Joe" do it. I also told her, you'll never see a liberal stop at a traffic accident. The woman who had asked me thought about that one for a while.

"There's a whole galaxy out there, and a few billion more beyond that. It'll take a long time for it to get crowded. Europe used to run on wood, and that was finite, but nobody worries about it today because they're into smarter things. It's the same with everything else. The human mind is an infinite resource, and that's all you need."

James P. Hogan

VOYAGE FROM YESTERDAY, 1982

On home education:

"After my mother came to the conclusion that the New York City public school system was proposing to kill her only child with diseases, she kept me out of school entirely. It helped that we moved so often. Even so, from time to time the truant officer would come around to complain. She would inform him that she herself was a fully accredited teacher, a graduate of Lehigh State Teachers College, and well able to tutor her son at home. Perhaps

she was. I don't remember any lesson, only books in endless supply. But that is not a bad way of getting an education...

"I have no doubt that in the long run I owe the fact that I am the *ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA*'S source for the Roman Emperor Tiberius to those old pulp novels."

Fred Pohl

THE WAY THE FUTURE WAS, 1978

(How many other *BRITANNICA* articles have been written by science fiction writers? Heinlein wrote an article on rare blood.)

"I said the mind was an infinite resource, but only if you don't squander it. Don't you think that makes an interesting paradox?"

James P. Hogan

VOYAGE FROM YESTERDAY, 1982

"Human beings are like horses, born wild but with a capacity for domestication."

S.M. Sterling

UNDER THE YOKE, 1989

Informal privatization is taking a new shape in the Soviet Union. Since college-bound students are now exempt from the draft, the quality of maintenance in Soviet military equipment has gone down. Meanwhile, crime in the Soviet military is up 14.5% in the last year. One major "problem" is the theft of small arms, which are now readily available on the black market. (Senators Kennedy, Biden, et alia, please note.) These thefts are exclusive of the mass raids in some of the less docile republics, where entire armories have been liberated by irate citizens.

Some truly heroic entrepreneurial efforts have taken place. One to which the Soviets will admit is the attempted informal privatization of 21 tanks. After a fire fight and "negotiations," the would-be radical perestroikists surrendered to pursuing Soviet army units.

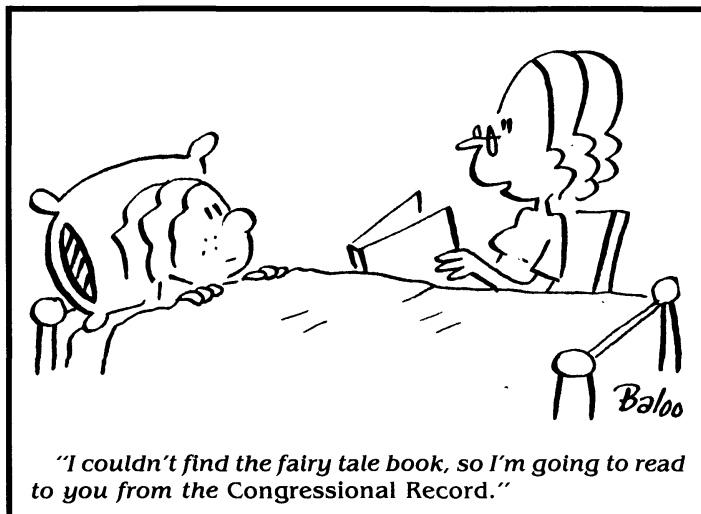
One hopes that the Soviet would-be entrepreneurs received more than the several cases of vodka that some East Germans got for their tank after the Berlin Wall came down. That appears to be the going price for Soviet tanks informally privatized and sold for scrap.

"Only an armed people can be the real bulwark of popular liberty."

V. I. Lenin

Geneva, Wednesday, January 25, (12)
VPERYOD No. 4, January 31 (18), 1905

Useful Experience: Evading the laws is so ingrained a habit to those who have lived under socialism that it carries over automatically to those recently liberated from socialism. During the heady days after Romania had rebelled against the Ceausescus, the National Salvation Front issued a decree allowing private enterprises, but only for firms with twenty or fewer employees. Well! said ROMANIAN LIBERIA, the nation's



largest circulation daily, we have 120 or so employees, so what do we do. So the journalist did the obvious thing: they formed six firms, with twenty employees each. They have the first certificate of privatization, number 001, as proof, too.

"I came to office with one deliberate intent: to change Britain from a dependent to a self-reliant society—from a give-it-to-me to a do-it-yourself nation; to a get-up-and-go, instead of a sit-back-and-wait-for-it Britain."

Margaret Thatcher, 1984

Obviously it worked. The Tory Party, at least, got up and went.

No excrement, Sherlock: Mr. George McGovern, formerly a United States Senator, now owns and runs a 150 room motel in Stratford, CT. Having obtained an honest job, he told the Washington POST recently, "I wish I'd done this before I'd run for President. It would have given me insight into the anxiety any independent businessman or farmer must have. Now I've had to meet a payroll every month. I've got to pay the state of Connecticut taxes. It gives you a whole new perspective on what other people worry about." Maybe it should be required for elected office!

Why Not More Freedom?

Continued from page 4

want freedom to have it. Thus it has always been and, given the unchanging character of human nature, I assume that thus it always will be. Freedom-lovers can implore, plead, reason, argue, cajole, revolt, or whatever, but they will not likely get people to give up their addiction to authority.

Sometimes, people seeking freedom actually find it. The early American colonists who emigrated from Europe came to the New World with the express purpose of escaping authority — religious, political, or otherwise. When they arrived, they set about doing the thing that freedom both allows and demands of people — working to survive. These early settlers realized that government was basically antithetical to their survival — they barely earned enough for themselves and could see no point in giving any earnings to a distant government that did little for them. Eventually, they fought a revolution to preserve their freedom when a distant king tried to exert more authority over them. They fought and won.

The American Revolution ranks as the number one freedom-enhancing event in history; almost all freedom in the world today can trace its existence to that one singular achievement. After the revolution, Americans produced a constitutional government that they hoped would "secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity." Until the twentieth century, citizens basically succeeded in restricting the scope and expense of their government, but since then, government has enormously enlarged itself by circumventing and reinterpreting the Constitution (the income tax was illegal prior to 1913, but then suddenly became legal), and it's been downhill for freedom in this country ever since. But unlike colonial times, today there are no new worlds to which to escape and start over.

Even today, people resent higher and higher taxes for fewer and fewer goods and services, but now government and special interest groups combine to deny the will of the majority, who are too lazy and fearful to change the governmental process. So every year, no matter what politicians the voters elect or what initiatives they pass, government and the special interests always figure out a way to steal more and more of our incomes. Like a cancer, government grows ever larger, and although people are fearful that it will eventually engulf them, they are even more fearful of what might happen if they slay the monster. So they change nothing substantive.

Freedom continues to make modest gains from time to time in different places. Americans elect Ronald Reagan and the British elect Margaret Thatcher, who both introduced more freedom into their respective economies. Conditions become so desperate in Russia and Eastern Europe that even their leaders realize the game is over — that without some freedom, their countries cannot survive. But even then, established governments give way grudgingly, if at all: it is not at all clear yet that

the Soviet Union will keep its democratic reforms, such as they are.

But true freedom — the absence of coercive authority in the lives of men — is a pipe dream; human nature simply won't allow it. We freedom-lovers are doomed to write and read articles in our various publications about the folly of government and dream of what might be, but never will.

Though wishing for more freedom, I am undaunted by the reality of my situation — my freedom will continue to diminish. But as long as I can read Thomas Jefferson, H.L. Mencken, Ayn Rand, Murray Rothbard, Robert Heinlein, and others of that ilk, I can be happy. As long as I can rail at the evilness of government, I can add meaning to my life. As long as I myself live as freely as I can and force no one to do anything for me, I can maintain my self-respect.

Life is in the struggle. Goal-directed action is its own reward. Even though total freedom remains a chimera, it is still the supreme value, for without freedom, other positive values are unachievable. So I shall continue to read and write about freedom and to extol its virtues to anyone who will listen, and I shall find comfort and succor in others who carry on the fight with me. That is all I can do, and that is enough.

(Editor's Postscript: For my own part, I believe that the kind of society we live in is a reflection of the kinds of individuals that compose it. If we say that society lacks freedom it can only be because a large majority of the people living there lack the desire or the inner resources to earn it. Too many people wrongly believe that governments can provide them with freedom. (See "A Study in Freedom" in this issue.) Rose Wilder Lane and Bob LeFevre never tired of reiterating, "freedom is self-control, no more, no less." As we have discussed in these pages, they intended this expression to convey the message that a true condition of freedom only comes about as each person respects the rights and boundaries of others. This explains the importance of self-government in a free society, in contrast to the attempt at the governance of others prevalent in statist societies.

In short, I think we "don't have more freedom" because too many people are interested (directly or indirectly) in trying to have others behave and act as they would like, rather than trying to control their own actions, and taking responsibility for same. This lack of self-government has come about for many reasons, including people's fears and laziness. Undoubtedly it is also the result of statist propaganda and 12 years of brainwashing in State schools. Very few people understand that their actions can be directed by an outside authority only if they submit to such direction. One may be at liberty physically, but be a slave mentally. This is what Etienne de la Boetie called "voluntary servitude."

I think David's view of the American Revolution is incorrect, and an example of State propaganda that is all too easy to swallow. The ideology of the American Revolution was not libertarian. The revolutionary slogan was "no taxation without representation," not "taxation is theft." There is a significant difference in the impact of these two statements. The former legitimizes taxation, whereas the latter condemns it. I believe it is proper to state that the American revolutionaries fought as totalitarian a war as they were able to, using outright confiscation, government financing, loyalty oaths, and price fixing to accomplish their goals. The State never disappeared, and one historian that I quote in No. 21 of THE VOLUNTARYIST actually has written that "there was no general perceptible break in the actual continuity of government" during the revolution. The colonists simply swapped one State for another, as I concluded in my article "A Plague on Both of Your Houses."

While the immediate prospects for more freedom may appear dim, the long term prognosis is not that bad. For one thing, State-run societies must eventually self-destruct due to the fact that each person is a self-controlling entity. A slave society may last hundreds of years, yet it cannot endure forever. I do not believe that there is anything inherent in human nature that will prevent people from recognizing and comprehending the truths of self-government, voluntarism, and the free market. It may take them, as a people, considerably longer if the State has captured

control of the command posts of their culture and economy, but ultimately the truth will prevail. I agree with Hanford Henderson, who once wrote, "I honestly believe no mortal can have a full vision of the right, and not afterwards be constrained to follow it. He may go haltingly, he may stumble and fall, he may be blinded and seduced by false lights and siren voices, but always in his heart of hearts, the great loyalty persists, and here or elsewhere he will arrive.")

I Do Have a Choice

By R.S. Jaggard, M.D.

I want to be productive. I want to produce goods and services of value to my neighbors, and, I want to deal with them in willing exchange for mutual benefits.

My life-long ambitions, my training and experience, and my present position all add up to the fact that I am best qualified to help others by performing medical services for them. For these reasons, I practice medicine in a situation wherein I offer my services to any and all persons, dealing financially with each individual patient on terms that are mutually acceptable to the two of us.

Granted, I am not able to practice under the free enterprise system, because the state requires that I have a license to practice medicine. This creates a semi-monopolistic system, wherein all prices for all services by all physicians are artificially high because of restricted availability. Also, huge, direct subsidies from government to the vast majority of doctors cause higher medical fees for all.

In my efforts to be of service to others, I do NOT accept *direct* subsidy, because I do not accept any payment from government. I do get *indirect* subsidy because some of my patients pay me with cash which they have received as subsidy (direct or indirect). Government has become so pervasive, invasive, and intrusive that it enters into all sorts of contracts with all sorts of people in all walks of life, and all of us are "subsidized" in various ways.

The most obvious way in which many doctors now get large, direct subsidy payments is by participation in the government programs. Those doctors who provide politically-selected-and-approved care and treatment to politically-selected-and-approved patients, and who push the "right" buttons on the computer, (or use the "right" code numbers), get huge paychecks from government — with strings attached. They try to rationalize their acceptance of government paychecks (and political control over their medical decisions) with the excuse that this is the "practical" way to live in modern times. They object when the political controls are used against THEM, to their detriment, and suddenly they find that THEIR "rights" are being violated.

Government gets its income by taxation, taxes are collected by force and violence (or the immediate threat of same), and, disbursement of tax money is made in accordance with political rules that give special consideration and special benefits to special people with special political power.

Traditional medical ethical codes clearly say that the physician should serve the best interest of the individual patient. The physician who depends on "somebody else" for income can NOT remain devoted to the best interest of the individual at all times.

I try to practice in the traditional Hippocratic manner as best I can. I do not accept money from the government medical programs, because I do not want to personally steal from the public treasury. Neither do I want to steal by proxy, so I do not give patients any statements or receipts that they can use to get money from government medical programs to give to me in exchange for medical service.

I do not want anybody at any time to steal from the public treasury for any reason, and I certainly do not want them to steal, and then claim that they are doing it for my benefit.

Force, violence, stealing, and political interference on behalf of special interest groups are all destructive actions which are *counter-productive*. I want to be productive, to be free to act with individual moral responsibility for my actions. I want to build a better way, the voluntary cooperative way, for the benefit of all persons, for all future times.

A Study In Freedom

Today, more than ever before in our history, individuals and groups are talking about freedom. There are institutions calling themselves "freedom schools" which reportedly instruct in ways and means to conduct demonstrations, create riots, strike, picket, and march, in an effort to evoke public sympathy.

In this context, freedom is equated with a certain amount of property and money. It is claimed that for a man to be free he must have assurances of food, clothing, and shelter, whether he has earned these things or not.

It is also claimed that freedom is something government can grant to some men by reducing the freedom of other men. There is a growing philosophy that government should provide jobs and money, and should look after the health and the general welfare of all. There is an accompanying conviction that if we wage war in the far corners of the earth and thus defeat communism, we will, as a result, obtain freedom.

In all this action, the real meaning of freedom as a fundamental right and an implicit characteristic of man is overshadowed and eclipsed. Thus, we are led to believe that freedom is not merely the right of a man to do as he pleases with himself and his own property, but it is his right to do as he pleases with other men and the property of other men.

By looking to government to make us free, we are in process of converting this nation from a land of individual free men, productive, constructive, and forward looking, to a collection of governmental dependents, seeking government contracts, government sinecures, government guarantees, government protection, government education.

Real freedom cannot exist under government controls, restraints, taxation, and regulation. Nor can it exist if men presume that they have a right to extract, by threat or violence, the property other men have rightfully acquired, whether such action is backed by government or not.

Freedom and tyranny are, and must be, opposite things. A free man governs himself and enters into voluntary relations with others. A tyrant imposes his will upon others and prevents voluntary choices, while compelling involuntary reactions.

But freedom is not merely an escape from, or an evasion of, government. Freedom is neither license to do as one pleases, nor

compulsion to do as the tyrant pleases. Freedom stands on its own ground above either license or compulsion. Freedom means self-control and self-government. The price to be paid for human liberty is the price of self-discipline. Eternal vigilance is not enough. There is a moral imperative implicit in human liberty.

The great questions of our time relate not to the attainment of specific goals but to the adoption of principles which require moral means of procedure.

[From Rampart College/Freedom School Bulletin—1966]

Points To Ponder

... I have never understood how a candidate can attack his opponent bitterly in the primary and then urge all good party members to support the scoundrel a few months later; all this does is breed cynicism and disbelief in the electorate.

—A. John Nastari

... The future will depend on what we do in the present.

—Mahatma Gandhi

... No one has ever doubted that truth and politics are on rather bad terms with each other, and no one has, as far as I know, ever counted truthfulness among the political virtues. Lies have always been regarded as necessary and justifiable tools, not only of the politician's or the demagogue's, but also of the statesman's trade. Why is this so?

—Hannah Arendt

... People try nonviolence for a week, and when it 'doesn't work' they go back to violence, which hasn't worked for centuries.

—Theodore Roszak

... Freedom is like a weed, it can grow through concrete once the seed has taken root.

—Unknown

... Anybody can walk a narrow plank suspended two inches above the ground; but hardly anybody could do the same on a plank suspended between two precipices; thus, it is "imagination" rather than "fact" that controls and influences most of the critical issues in our lives.

—A. John Nastari

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