
The Voluntaryist

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

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The Culture of Force

By Carl Watner

I recently had occasion to explain to a customer that very few people understand how the stealing commandment ("Thou shalt not steal") applies to taxes. Since our "contributions" to government are not voluntary, that means they are coerced. If they are coerced, that means that taxes are a forcible taking. Q.E.D.: taxes are theft. However simple the logic, since most people view government as a legitimate and necessary institution, whatever "taking" the government performs must not be classed as "stealing" because that would contradict their assumption that government doesn't steal property, but (in their minds) protects it.

I also explained to the same customer that even though government does a horrible job of spending the money it "collects," the question of "how" it spends the money (wisely, foolishly, etc.) is really not the issue. The moral question (Is it right to steal?) is the fundamental concern. Once the government has the money, "collected" from millions and millions of people, argument will necessarily follow as to what the money should be spent on; and then having agreed the money should be spent on a given project, arguing over how it should be doled out to achieve its intended purpose.

Anyone who has listened to the news knows there is endless bickering among politicians, among constituents, and among lobbying groups about the government's budget. Such squabbling represents the attempt to spend "other" people's money on projects to which they would not ordinarily contribute. Whether the division of the spoils is decided by majority vote, or a political bribe, or a threatened veto, the point to understand is that the rightful owners of the money being spent no longer have authority over it. Some other person or group of persons has taken control. Thus, while politicians, pundits, and media commentators regularly question how the money is spent, they rarely—if ever—question the "moral" authority under which the government demands it, and which, if the money is not paid over, they imprison the protester and/or confiscate his property.

Our whole culture is permeated with this substratum of force. For example, in a December 2004 "Evenings at FEE" speech, Harry Browne noted that

From beginning to end, public education is organized on the concept of compulsion. By

means of the property tax, sales tax, and state income tax people are forced to pay for schooling whether they have children or not, whether they agree with what the schools are doing or not. The illusion of having influence through elections, PTA meetings, parent nights, or other legal avenues doesn't change the truth: we are forced to send our children to particular schools where they are educated and indoctrinated in a particular way.

While these points are correct and substantiate my claim that we have a culture of force, it ought to be duly noted that children who are "forced" to go to government schools are taught and (most) accept that government should be responsible for "guiding" and "directing" what happens in society. How many government (or even non-state) school students do you know that have ever been exposed to the idea or could imagine a stateless society where all education was conducted on a private, voluntary basis?

Another event illustrating the abundance of force infecting our society is the government orchestration of relief efforts for victims of the December 2004 tsunami. Not only did domestic governments of every stripe and color get involved, but even the United Nations had to take a hand. Now don't get me wrong. If people want to voluntarily contribute to disaster relief that is all well and good with me. But on what basis should government(s) coercively monopolize (or even have any role, whatsoever) in spending taxpayers' money on relief aid (either here or abroad)? Some miserly folks might never contribute a penny to charitable relief; but obviously some people contribute even after having "paid" their taxes. The point I am trying to make is that most people (by far the large majority of the population in every country) have lost any concept of what it means to respect other people's property. They regularly use the political means to steal, and never give their actions a second thought. They assume that is the way things "ought" to be.

The fact is that force abounds throughout our society. Consider the operation of most of our roads, post offices, libraries, police protection, judiciary services, and monetary system. They are overwhelmingly funded, controlled, and operated by some level of government. My point is *not* that we should not have these services (at least if people desire them, and are willing to pay for them) but that neither should government be responsible for them, nor its coercive powers be directed toward supporting them.

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The Voluntaryist

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The Culture of Force

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It is not the ends, such as the schools, roads, libraries, etc., that people who believe in a voluntary society are opposed to 'per se,' but rather to the means, that is, the manner in which these activities are paid for and supported.

The fact of the matter is that the use of force destroys morality. The two are incompatible because where force exists, the opportunity no longer exists to make a "right" or a "wrong" decision. One's choice is reduced to submit to the government dictates, or risk the wrath of its enforcement agents.

Look at the increasing amounts collected by taxation. Look at the numbers of people killed by government, either domestically or abroad in foreign wars. Is there not some connection between the increasing use of government force in our society and the amount of crime perpetrated by individuals? If it is right for the government to "steal" and "kill," then isn't it right for individuals to pursue the same actions on their own? My suspicion is that the amount of dishonesty, thievery, mugging, kidnapping, etc. in our society, is directly tied to the increasing societal reliance upon governmental force.

Governments help set the moral tone in society, and the corruption we find there is often mirrored in the personal behavior of its citizens. Thus, there is reason to believe that most of the problems (criminal, environmental, economic, political, etc.) we encounter today stem from the injection of force into our social relations. The use of compulsion by governments among peaceful people is wrong; it is a violation of their right not to be molested by others; and its results are always unsatisfactory. Or as Harry Browne concluded in his speech, "Force never works." ▢

"... [O]ne might reasonably maintain that society would not go to pieces even if the state should exercise no coercion."

—Eugen Ehrlich, FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE SOCIOLOGY OF LAW (1936, reissued 1962), Chap 4, p. 71.

Grant no man the authority to make you his slave

By Peter Ragnar

Are there any among us who would not decry the repugnancy of slavery? I am assuming, of course, that you have reached a higher station in your moral evolution than members of the common mob. Yet, isn't it likely that the lowest serf, imprisoned as a nameless unit of the proletariat, abhors his forced servitude? Like a prisoner gazing beyond his bars, does not the indentured servant, in his most hopeful of moments, dream of freedom? I grant you it is possible some mindless automatons with lobotomized souls would equate their slavery with fate. Such people lack enough vitality in their being to even protest a perfunctory "I wish I were free," and they are certainly not endowed with a single drop of originality in seeking it.

I salute you—the self-owned, the self-reliant, the independent heroes of freedom! You have refused to submit and surrender to the iron boots of slavery. You eschew tyranny and refuse to sanction the officious, pigheaded, bureaucratic assaults and intrusions upon your life. To you these assaults are as impotent as rag dolls. Yet they continue each day, fed by the mentality of the mindless mob granting what they have no right to grant, sanctioning what no one can sanction, and legitimizing what no one can make legitimate.

If it were not for a swarm of obedient servants, myriads mired in the morass of the mob mentality, even a Caesar or a Napoleon would be reduced to flaccid, vagrant nobodies. For who is a Caesar, a Napoleon, or an Alexander the Great without their armies, their hordes of servants, and the greedy solicitous masses humbly beseeching them for perks?

Just imagine a Napoleon in his threadbare uniform, standing on a box in the city square and shouting political slogans, much like an itinerant evangelist seeking converts by wildly proselytizing like a madman. The local citizenry give him a wide berth, as one would sensibly do to anyone so afflicted. Such a clown could hardly be taken seriously, let alone obeyed. You would not grant such a one respect, nor approve of his desire to impose his will. Nor would you, as the case is today, sanction the will of the larger mob over the individual who does not wish to be enslaved. Grant no man the authority to make you his slave! Appoint no one your guardian. Accept no handouts from those distributing stolen property. Commit no criminal acts by accepting monies extorted from others.

When a government is installed by the voting majority it imposes a tribute upon all, known as taxation. Confiscations of property and imprisonment await those who refuse to pay voluntarily. Taxation, administered in this manner, is clearly theft. Mor-

ally, you have no right to be a co-conspirator in the aggressing and extorting of monies, or properties, or in the forced conscription of your own or your neighbor's children being compulsorily sent to "school." If you vote to sanction the unsanctionable, to legitimize the illegitimate, you criminalize yourself. And does your vote really matter (except as evidence that you accept the governmental system)? You only exchange one candidate for another, while the tyrant (the institution of government) remains the same!

Oh yes, you may agree that you have been burdened by government, and so seek solace by voting for change. You may feel that you are choosing the lesser of two evils. Here I implore you to bear in mind that the lesser of two evils is still evil! To endorse a little evil is similar to accepting a little carcinoma. Evil is still evil! This is more than the simple sin of looking in the other direction as a co-worker steals from his employer. This is your sanction of murder and theft! This is your approval of extortion! This is your endorsement of slavery! Can you cast a vote in good conscience that will result in the oppression and enslavement of others? When you vote for a candidate, you are in fact saying it is perfectly right for him to force your neighbor to submit to your desires — desires which can be enforced at the point of a gun. Except in distancing yourself from the crime, is there really any difference between hiring someone to rob your neighbor and committing the act yourself? Even more serious is the fact that, by voting, you have essentially hired a hit man to kill the "others" with whom you disagree. Of course, if you hired the Mafia to do the dirty work, you'd go to prison if you were caught. You escape responsibility by voting and having government agents act on your behalf. The crimes are identical. The only difference is that the first method is "politically" approved and legal, and the second is not.

Bear in mind, laws of convention made and enforced by the collective are not like the laws of nature, which, when violated, extract perfect retribution. Therefore, in the furtherance of my own evolution, I can only say "NO" to ALL the candidates. So you see, in a sense I am casting a "NO" vote against all of them. My choice is simply "None of the Above!" One candidate may steal from me more or less than the other, but that's not the point. The basic premise, for honest conscious minds, is that stealing cannot be legitimized. Your integrity should never allow you to cast a vote. Do not sanction your own enslavement. Grant no man the authority to make you his slave. Grant no man the power to enslave your neighbor, grant no man the sanction to steal or murder in your name, lest you cause yourself irreparable moral damage. When asked how one could be a free man and yet a slave, the ancient Athenian sage, Diogenes, answered, "Simply, by the number of times you say *master*." Diogenes, who recognized no master, always

embraced a NO vote. He argued that Athenians, who voted by casting various-colored beans into a receptacle, should "Abstain from beans."

Once, while sunbathing by the river, Diogenes was approached by Alexander the Great. Alexander's shadow loomed over the reclining, naked Diogenes. "Do you know who I am?" asked Alexander. "That's not the question you should be asking," retorted Diogenes. "You should be asking if *you* know who *you* are." Alexander, like all avaricious, unctuous politicians, was asking the same banal and prosaic question, namely: Do you recognize my authority to control you? Do you acknowledge my power over you? Diogenes' refusal to kowtow to Alexander simply meant Diogenes recognized no authority except "the primacy of his own right judgment." Freedom, in Diogenes' view, was the "absolute dominion over his own will. This was the inner realm over which no outside force, not even an Alexander and all his soldiers, had any power, whatsoever."

Regaining his composure, Alexander boasted, "I'm Alexander the Great!" Unimpressed, Diogenes, in a dismissive tone replied, "So, *be* Alexander the Great!" No one had ever spoken to Alexander with such self-assured authority before. In fact, no one could, except the individual who knows that no person can truly control another. Now feeling more like the average solicitous bureaucrat, Alexander adopted a more servile attitude, offering, "Is there anything I can do for you?" Casually waving his hand, Diogenes replied, "Move over. You're blocking my sunlight."

So what are you waiting for? You should dismiss these pompous pinheads with a wave of your hands, instead of using them to pull the lever in the voting booth. You were born free and you should remain free. You need no one to speak for you. You require no guardians. You have no need for an elder brother watching over your shoulder. You will learn from your own mistakes and grow strong by them. You require no handouts. For it is only by your own hand, and by voluntarily trading with others, that you can honestly obtain all the fruitage for the greater life. You may fail or you may succeed, but only so long as you grant no man the authority to make you his slave may you pursue your quest for a more bountiful life. ▣

"Isn't the most effective prison the one in which the authorities have absolute control but are saved the trouble of dealing with prison riots because the convicts are all tranquilized? ... In the end a global prison without fences may be the worst of all, ... This is the most dangerous form of totalitarianism, impossible to throw off, because it never appears to be what in fact it is."

—Michael D. O'Brien, *ECLIPSE OF THE SUN* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1998, pp. 175-176).

The Role of Consent

By Gene Sharp

[Editor's Note: In his article, "Freedom and Liberty," Robert LeFevre (LeFevre's JOURNAL, Fall 1978) wrote that "No human being has the ability to control another. Controlling another, when the other does not wish to be controlled, is impossible." This insight into human behavior is the basis for understanding the argument that government ultimately rests on consent, and that if that consent (in sufficient numbers) is withdrawn the government must fall of its own weight. The following article embraces what we have labelled the voluntarist insight: that political power is not derived from guns and bombs, but rather from the power and decisions of countless individuals. This excerpt (less footnotes) from THE POLITICS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION (1973, pp. 25-31) is reprinted by permission of the author (letter dated November 17, 2004). This book is available in three volumes, from the Publisher, Porter Sargent Publishers, 11 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108. Also available from the same publisher are SOCIAL POWER AND POLITICAL FREEDOM and GANDHI AS A POLITICAL STRATEGIST. Prices and other information are available from the publisher: www.extendinghorizons.com and tel. 1-800-342-7470. Gene Sharp founded the Albert Einstein Institution in 1983 to advance the study and use of strategic nonviolent action in conflicts throughout the world. See www.einstein.org.]

In light of the above discussion, it is reasonable to view the political obedience on which a ruler's power is ultimately dependent as a consequence of a combination of fear of sanctions and free consent—the latter arising either from a more or less nonrational acceptance of the standards and ways of one's society, or from a more or less rational consideration of the merits of the regime and the reasons for obeying it. This is compatible with the discussions by several theorists who describe obedience as arising from a mixture of "coercion" and "consent." Clearly sanctions *alone* could not produce the necessary degree, extent and constancy of obedience. Yet if *other* reasons for obedience are present, an increase in sanctions may increase compliance. Nevertheless, the fact remains that sanctions do not *always* produce an increase in obedience. This may be because in order to produce obedience, sanctions must also operate through the volition, or will, of the subject. This possibility merits further exploration. If true, it has important political implications.

Let us first admit that there is a meaningful sense in which obedience is *not* voluntary, in which the individual is a more or less helpless victim of vast social and political forces which impinge upon him—even determining his beliefs, his moral standards, his attitudes to social and political events and consequently his obedience to the State. If these forces

are insufficient to produce obedience, there is always the repressive power of the State, which he has learned to fear. This combination of pressures, controls and repression is, more often than not, seen as a conclusive reason for the view that obedience follows more or less automatically from the issuance of commands. As we have seen, however, the wielding of political power involves social interaction, and obedience is by no means as uniform or universal as this deterministic view of obedience would lead us to expect. The reason for this inconsistency may be simple: the view that political obedience is constant, that it is determined by these social and political forces (or, if all else fails, will at least be produced by sanctions) is fallacious.

A. Obedience is essentially voluntary

In reviewing the reasons for obedience, we find that although they are highly influenced by various social forces, each reason must operate through the will or the opinion of the individual subject to be effective. If he is to obey, the subject must accept a combination of the current reasons for obeying as in fact being sufficient for obedience. Because sanctions do not automatically produce obedience, the subject's evaluation of the reasons for obedience will even include sanctions. The will or opinion of the individual is not constant and may change in response to new influences, events, and forces. In varying degrees the individual's own will may then play an active role in the situation. There is thus an important sense in which the obedience of subjects is essentially the result of an act of volition.

"Never let me hear you say it is someone else's fault. It often is, but you must never shirk your own responsibility. There's always something where you're at fault, too, and that fault you must discover and learn to recognize and take the consequences of it ... both because it's the only honorable thing to do and also because it's the easier way. You can't change others, but you can do something about" your own attitude and faults.

—Anne Holm, NORTH TO FREEDOM (1965), p. 168

Even in the case of obedience by habit, the subject accepts the view that it is best to continue to obey without consciously trying to examine why he should do so. Feelings of moral obligation, a psychological identification with the ruler, and acceptance of a "zone of indifference" all involve a basically voluntary acceptance of the ruler's wishes. The role of self-interest in procuring obedience may vary, depending upon the relative importance given (more or less consciously) to it by the subject, in the context of a variety of other attitudes. In certain situa-

tions the subject may even conclude that it is in his self-interest to *disobey* a regime—especially if he foresees its collapse. The degree of his lack of self-confidence also varies and may be influenced by changes in the attitudes of other subjects.

Even in the case of sanctions, there is a role for an act of will, for choice. The sanction must be *feared* and its consequences be seen as more undesirable than the consequences of obedience. This is not to deny that there is always “a margin of obedience which is only won by the use of force or the threat of force.” Even Gandhi would admit that “consent is often forcefully procured by the despot.” To say that there is a role for will or choice even in the case of sanctions is to say that one can choose to obey, thus avoiding the sanctions threatened for disobedience. Or one can choose to disobey and risk receiving the threatened sanctions.

Here a distinction must be made between obedience and coercion by direct physical violation. If, for example, a man who is ordered to go to prison refuses to do so and is physically dragged there (that is, if he is coerced by direct physical violation), he cannot be said to obey, argued Austin. But if he *walks* to prison under a command backed by *threat* of a sanction, then he in fact obeys and consents to the act, although he may not approve of the command. *Obedience thus exists only when one has complied with or submitted to the command.*

Physical compulsion affecting only the body therefore does not obtain *obedience*. Only certain types of objectives can be achieved by direct physical compulsion of disobedient subjects—such as moving them physically, preventing them from moving physically, or seizing their money or property. Even to achieve such limited objectives in the face of large numbers of disobedient subjects would require a vast number of enforcement agents to force or constrain each of them physically. Most other objectives of commands, and certainly active cooperation, cannot be produced by even continuous direct physical violation of persons—whether the command is to dig a ditch, obey traffic signals, work in a factory, offer technical advice, or arrest political opponents. The overwhelming percentage of a ruler’s commands and objectives can only be achieved by inducing the subject to be *willing* for some reason to carry them out. Punishment of one who disobeys a command does not achieve the objective (for example, the ditch remains undug even if the men who refused to dig it have been shot).

The threat of physical compulsion or sanctions produces obedience and consent only when the threat affects the subject’s mind and emotions—in other words, when the subject fears the sanctions and is unwilling to suffer them. This was Simmel’s point too: he argued that despite penalties for disobedience, the choice to obey or disobey is always possible. *It is not the sanctions themselves which produce obe-*

dience but the fear of them. In Robert Michels’ words: “Even when authority rests on mere physical coercion it is accepted by those ruled, although the acceptance may be due to a fear of force.” Of course, it is almost axiomatic that most people in most situations are quite unwilling to suffer the penalties for disobedience. Even when their dislike of the status quo is high, there will be hesitation. Gandhi, for example, on the basis of his efforts to produce large-scale disobedience and voluntary acceptance of imposed sanctions, observed that feelings must be very intense to make possible the acceptance of such sacrifice. However, disobedience sometimes occurs despite sanctions, as will be described later in more detail.

If, then, choice and volition are present even where obedience is largely produced by sanctions—where one could least expect an act of will—the obedience of subjects in general can be regarded as voluntary and as arising from consent. This is especially so because generally people obey for reasons other than the threat of sanctions. Clearly, permanent obedience cannot be produced only by threat of sanctions. It is reasonable to conclude with Austin that obedient subjects *will* the obedience they render, that they obey because of some motive, that they consent to obey. Their obedience is therefore essentially voluntary. This is one of the significant characteristics of government.

The conclusions of the discussion thus far may be put succinctly. A ruler’s power is dependent upon the availability of its several sources. This availability is determined by the degree of obedience and cooperation given by the subjects. Such obedience and cooperation are, however, not inevitable, and despite inducements, pressures, and even sanctions, obedience remains essentially voluntary. Therefore, *all government is based upon consent.*

Support for this view comes from widely diverse political thinkers and actionists. For example, Austin wrote that the view “that every government continues through the people’s consent” simply means that in every society, “the people are determined by motives of some descriptions or another to obey their government habitually ...” William Godwin, an earlier and more libertarian thinker, argued that people can be held in subjection only insofar as “... they are willing to be subject. All government is founded on opinion.” Acceptance of this view came even from Adolf Hitler: “For, in the long run, government systems are not held together by the pressure of force, but rather by the belief in the quality and truthfulness with which they represent and promote the interests of the people.”

To say that every government depends on the consent of the people does not, of course, mean that the subjects of all rulers *prefer* the established order to any other which might be created. They *may* consent because they positively approve of it—but they

may also consent because they are unwilling to pay the price for the refusal of consent. Refusal requires self-confidence and the motivation to resist and may involve considerable inconvenience and social disruption, to say nothing of suffering.

The degree of liberty or tyranny in any government is, it follows, in large degree a reflection of the relative determination of the subjects to be free and their willingness and ability to resist efforts to enslave them.

Three of the most important factors in determining to what degree a ruler's power will be controlled or uncontrolled therefore are: 1) the relative desire of the populace to control his power; 2) the relative strength of the subjects' independent organizations and institutions; and 3) the subjects' relative ability to withhold their consent and assistance.

"Even the most benign states have made the most extraordinary demands on those they have claimed as their subjects: to sequester their children in state institutions for thirty hours a week, to dispose of their bodily wastes in only prescribed ways, to treat their sick exclusively with state-licensed healers, to prove a proprietary relationship to land solely through state-issued deeds, and so on."

— Joel S. Migdal in Migdal, Kohli, and Shue (eds), *STATE POWER AND SOCIAL FORCES*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 24.

Ultimately, therefore, freedom is not something which a ruler "gives" his subjects. Nor, in the long run, do the formal institutional structures and procedures of the government, as prescribed by the constitution, by themselves determine the degree of freedom or the limits of the ruler's power. A society may in fact be more free than those formal arrangements would indicate. Instead, the extent and intensity of the ruler's power will be set by the strength of the subjects and the condition of the whole society. Those limits may themselves, in turn, be expanded or contracted by the interplay between the actions of the ruler and those of the subjects.

The political conclusions to be drawn from these insights into the power of all rulers are simple but they are of fundamental significance in establishing control over dictators and finding a substitute for war. Errol E. Harris has formulated them succinctly. He argues that political power "can never be exercised without the acquiescence of the people—without the direct cooperation of the large number of people and the indirect cooperation of the entire community." Therefore, tyranny has "flourished where the people through ignorance, or disorganization, or by actual connivance and complicity, aid and abet the tyrant and keep him in power by allowing them-

selves to be instruments of his coercion."

... a nation gets the government which it deserves, and those to whom this dictum is distasteful are either the small minority of dissidents, too few to influence the popular will of which they are victims, or else those whose discontent is inconsistent with their practice, and who cooperate with the tyranny they deplore in spite of themselves and often without realizing it.

Leo Tolstoy had such insights into the nature of all government in mind when he wrote about the English subjection of India:

A commercial company enslaves a nation comprising two hundred millions. Tell this to a man free from superstition and he will fail to grasp what these words mean. What does it mean that thirty thousand men... have subdued two hundred million...? Do not the figures make it clear that it is not the English who have enslaved the Indians, but the Indians who have enslaved themselves?

It was not simply English military might which subjected India to English rule, argued Tolstoy; this subjection could not be understood except in the context of the condition of Indian society which led the Indians to cooperate with, submit to, and obey the new *Raj*.

Such obedience and cooperation are not offered automatically, for people do not give equal obedience and help to every person and group which lays claim to governing them. Nor does any particular ruler necessarily receive equal obedience and assistance throughout his reign.

B. Consent can be withdrawn

We have seen that obedience by the subject is the consequence of the mutual influence of various causes operating through his will. These causes of obedience are not, however, constant. The reasons for obedience are variable and may be strengthened or weakened. For example, the degree of a ruler's authority will vary. Other reasons for obedience may increase or decrease. Conditions and outlooks, the state of the subjects' knowledge, their attitudes and emotions—all may change. They may alter the subjects' willingness to submit or to resist. Even fear of sanctions is not constant. Such fear may grow because of increased severity or personal insecurity. Or it may decrease, because of reduced severity or increased willingness to accept sanctions because of overriding goals. The subjects' willingness to submit to a particular policy or to a whole regime may also be altered because of new beliefs (or new insights into old ones) and because of changes in perceptions of the established system. As a result of all these possible variations, the necessary consent of the subject is unstable. It is always characterized by minor variations; it may at times be characterized by major changes.

Obedience therefore varies. For example, decline in the ruler's authority may undermine the subjects' willingness to obey and also weaken their voluntary cooperation. When one or more reasons for obedience lose strength, the ruler may seek to counteract that loss by efforts to increase other reasons for obedience, such as by making sanctions harsher and more frequent or by increasing rewards for loyal service. If such efforts are not successful, the continued decline in grounds for obedience may lead to the disintegration of the particular regime.

The change in the subjects' wills may lead to their withdrawing from the ruler their services, cooperation, submission and obedience. This withdrawal may occur among both the ordinary subjects and the ruler's agents and administrators. There is abundant historical evidence that changes in the opinions of the subjects and agents have led to reduced obedience and cooperation with the established rulers and, in turn, to the weakening of the regime.

The attitudes and beliefs of the ruler's agents are especially important here. Destroy the opinion of the supporting intermediary class that it is in their interest to support the ruler, urged Godwin, "and the fabric which is built upon it falls to the ground." Likewise, he argued, an army, domestic or foreign, which is used to hold a people in subjection may be influenced by opinions and sentiments of the people at large. The army may then decline to provide the ruler with assistance in suppressing the people, just as the general populace may withhold its assistance.

Gandhi, who experimented widely with the political potentialities of disobedience, emphasized the importance of a change of will as a prerequisite for a change in patterns of obedience and cooperation. There was, he argued, a need for: 1) a psychological change away from passive submission to self-respect and courage; 2) recognition by the subject that his assistance makes the regime possible; and 3) the building of a determination to withdraw cooperation and obedience. Gandhi felt that these changes could consciously be influenced, and he therefore deliberately set out to bring them about. "My speeches," he said, "are intended to create 'disaffection' as such, that people might consider it a shame to assist or cooperate with a government that had forfeited all title to respect or support."

Changes in the attitudes of workers in factories or citizens in politics, for example, which result in withdrawal of obedience and cooperation can create extreme difficulties for the system. It can be disrupted or paralyzed. At times this can happen even when the ruler's own agents continue their loyal obedience. The sheer difficulties of maintaining the normal working of any political unit when its subjects are bent upon an attitude of defiance and acts of obstruction are sufficient to give any ruler cause for thought. Without the obedience, cooperation, assistance and submission of the subjects and agents, power-hun-

gry men claiming to be rulers would be "rulers" without subjects, and therefore only "objects of derision."

If a ruler's power is to be controlled by withdrawing help and obedience, noncooperation and disobedience must be widespread and must be maintained in the face of repression aimed at forcing a resumption of submission. However, once there has been a major reduction of or an end to the subjects' fear, and once there is a willingness to suffer sanctions as the price of change, large-scale disobedience and noncooperation become possible. Such action then becomes politically significant, and the ruler's will is thwarted in proportion to the number of disobedient subjects and the degree of his dependence upon them. The answer to the problem of uncontrolled power may therefore lie in learning how to carry out and maintain such withdrawal despite repression. ▣

Books Received for Review

THE WOMAN AND THE DYNAMO: Isabel Paterson and the Idea of America by Stephen Cox (New Brunswick: Transaction Press, 2004). ISBN 0-7658-0241-4. Isabel Paterson (1886 - 1960) "was one of the most extraordinary" individualists of the 1930s. Her influence on Ayn Rand, her reaction to FDR and the New Deal, and her authorship of **THE GOD OF THE MACHINE** (1943) are all outlined in this definitive biography.

AGAINST LEVIATHAN: Government Power and a Free Society by Robert Higgs (Oakland: The Independent Institute, 2004). ISBN 0-945999-96-8. This collection of previously published articles, by the author of **CRISIS AND LEVIATHAN: Critical Episodes in the Growth of American Government** (1987), contains two essays of significant historical interest. In "War and Leviathan in Twentieth-Century America: Conscription as the Keystone" and "The Normal Constitution versus the Crisis Constitution," Robert Higgs takes a critical look at constitutional government. In "Government Protects Us?" he points out that he has "grown increasingly skeptical" about whether we must have a government to protect us, and, in fact, whether government is a predator rather a protector.

THE CHURCH AND THE MARKET - A Catholic Defense of the Free Market by Thomas E. Woods Jr. (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2005). ISBN 0-7391-1036-5. The author analyzes Catholic social teachings in light of Austrian economics. He argues that since the popes have been not granted any special insight into the discipline of economics, it is therefore appropriate to critique the Church's interventionist stance. "Those of us within the Church who advocate the Austrian approach to economics are not demanding that the popes preach Austrian economics from the Chair of St. Peter. ... We ... claim that ... what we teach is not only not antagonistic to, but in fact is profoundly compatible with, orthodox Catholicism." (p. 215) ▣

Violence and the Lie

By Alexander Solzhenitsyn

We shall be told: what can literature possibly do against the ruthless onslaught of open violence? But let us not forget that violence does not live alone and is not capable of living alone: it is necessarily interwoven with THE LIE. Between them exists the most intimate, the deepest of natural bonds. Violence has nothing with which to cover itself except the lie, and the lie has nothing to stand on other than violence. Any man who has once acclaimed violence as his METHOD must inexorably choose the lie as his PRINCIPLE. At its birth violence acts openly and even with pride. But no sooner does it become strong, firmly established, than it senses the rarefaction of the air around it and it cannot continue to exist without descending into a fog of lies, clothing them in sweet talk. It does not always, not necessarily, openly throttle the throat, more often it demands from its subjects only an oath of allegiance to falsehood, only participation in the lie.

And the simple step of an ordinary courageous man is not to partake in falsehood, not to support THE LIE! Let the lie come into the world, even dominate the world, but not through me. But writers and artists can achieve more: they can CONQUER THE LIE! In the struggle with falsehood, art has always been victorious, always wins out, openly, irrefutably for everyone! Falsehood can hold out against much in this world, but not against art.

And as soon as the lie is dispersed, the repulsive

nakedness of violence will be revealed, and violence will collapse in impotence.

That is why, my friends, I believe that we are able to help the world in its white-hot hour of trial. We must not reconcile ourselves to being defenseless and disarmed; we must not sink into a heedless, feckless, life - but go out to the field of battle.

Proverbs about TRUTH are well-loved in the Russian language. They express enduringly the immense folk experience, and are sometimes quite surprising:

“ONE WORD OF TRUTH OUTWEIGHS THE WHOLE WORLD.”

And it is here, on an imaginary fantasy, a breach of the principle of the conservation of mass and energy, that I base both my own activity, and my appeal to the writers of the whole world.

[Editor's Note: The LIE is any threat or violence which causes a person to go against his or her individual conscience. In my anthology, I MUST SPEAK OUT (p. 201), Solzhenitsyn answers the question: “What does it mean, *not to lie*? ... It simply means: *not saying what you don't think*, ...”; not supporting what you don't really support; in other words, not giving out false appearances. These excerpts are from Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, THE NOBEL LECTURE ON LITERATURE (1970), New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1972. From Section 7 (Concluding Remarks), pp. 37-38; freely paraphrased and combined from the translations by Thomas P. Whitney and others found on the worldwide web. Also see Os Guinness, TIME FOR TRUTH, Grand Rapids: Hourglass Books, 2000, p. 19.] ▢

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