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# The Voluntaryist

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

OCTOBER 1983

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## From the Bowels of The Beast

*Editor's Introduction: Carl Watner, one of the co-organizers of The Voluntaryists, was sentenced to 40 days incarceration by Judge Joseph Young of the U.S. Federal Court in Baltimore, Maryland. Carl was held in civil contempt of Court for his refusal to comply with the Judge's order that he cooperate with the Internal Revenue Service. In Vol. 1, No. 6 of THE VOLUNTARYIST, we interviewed Carl prior to his hearing on the contempt charge. Carl reported to the Office of the U.S. Federal Marshall in Baltimore, on the morning of November 14, 1983, to begin his sentence. This interview was prepared during the course of Carl's confinement.*

**Vol:** How have you explained your imprisonment to other inmates and what has been their reaction to your story?

**CW:** Most inmates, both in the Baltimore City Jail and the Allenwood Federal Prison Camp (where I presently am) understand my conscientious objection to taxation. Forty days is the shortest sentence that anyone at Allenwood ever heard of and they all smile at my good luck! They also say that they have never heard of a contempt charge for failure to cooperate with the IRS; for refusal to testify or to turn my books and records over to them. I always try to explain that my conscientious objection is much more fundamental than that of the average tax resister, who ordinarily protests the "unconstitutionality" of the income tax or objects to the ways that tax funds are spent. I object to the compulsory nature of both government and taxation. Government employees are the only group of people in society that regularly and consistently use physical force or its threat to collect funds to sustain themselves. It makes absolutely no difference to me how this group of people spends the money it coercively collects; my conscientious objection is opposed to their initiation of coercion or its threat. The majority of the people I have met in the penal system seem to grasp my position. Some have even said they would choose the 40 days in jail rather than cooperate with the IRS.

**Vol:** Would you please tell us what happened when you reported to the Marshall's Office in Baltimore?

**CW:** I, along with my mother, sister, and two friends, arrived before 10 am and reported to the public reception room, which the Judge had designated in his Final Order. I presented myself to one of the secretaries, handed her a previously prepared statement about my case, and sat down in one of the waiting chairs. She told me to report down the hall to the prisoners' Processing Room. When I didn't budge out of the chair, she had a gentleman come around and ask me to follow him down the hall. I told him that "In good conscience I would not willingly do so." He shook his head and walked away. After about an hour and half of sitting, four marshalls came into the waiting room, and gave me one last chance to accompany them. When I still didn't move, they handcuffed me and the three of them carried me out of the room. I simply went limp and let them do the work. They huffed and puffed, and about half way to Processing they had to sit me down and take a rest. When we arrived at the holding cell, they sat me down on a bench and stripped me of my packet of books, my belt and my shoelaces.

**Vol:** Did their actions surprise you and how did you react?

**CW:** With the exception of one marshall who was rather vicious (he pretended that by going limp I might violently hurt him), the marshalls tried to handle my body in as gentle a manner as possible. I was left in the holding cell for about 5 or 6 hours, by myself, although there were other prisoners in other cells. Quite frankly, I didn't know what to expect after they locked the cell door. This was the first time I had ever been in jail. I exercised, napped, and day dreamed to make the time go by. I was in a totally alien environment. I refused to give them any information and refused the lunch they offered me.

**Vol:** What did the marshalls finally do with you?

**CW:** Late in the afternoon, a big, burly marshall entered the cell and said he was taking me to Baltimore City Jail. When I didn't move, he told me in no uncertain terms that he would drag me out of the cell if he had to. Furthermore, he said that I didn't want to mess with the guards at City Jail and that it was a rough jail. Finally, he challenged me by asking if I were man enough to come out of the cell with him. I said yes and accompanied him out of the cell where I was handcuffed and waist shackled.

**Vol:** How did you spend the remainder of your time that day and the other days you spent in City Jail?

**CW:** In jails (as opposed to some prisons), the commodity you have the most of is time. The guards put you in a cell and you wait. They let you out to eat or exercise, then lock you back in; then you wait some more. It's literally like that 24 hours a day. The only word I can use to describe City Jail when I arrived is "pandemonium". There were a large number of newly arrived prisoners being processed through Intake and many other groups of prisoners were being moved around the prison for supper. Around 8:30 pm that evening, the group of inmates that I came in with were assigned cells on the Receiving Section and we were escorted to the appropriate cellblock.

My stay in City Jail lasted nine days. By the end of that time, I had been reclassified off Receiving and assigned a permanent cell and cellmate. Our regular routine was to be awakened by 6:30 am when the guard unlocked our cells so we could get out and use the showers and get ready for breakfast. Breakfast lasted 15 to 20 minutes (usually consisting of 2 or 3 slices of toast, a small box of cereal, milk and a little gruel). After we left the cafeteria, we lined back up in our cells and were locked in until about 9 am. From 9 to 10:30 am we could go to the gym or lineup to try to use a payphone near the cellblock. Sometime between 10:30 and 11:00 am, we got back in line for "feedup" (jailhouse slang for eating), which again lasted about 20 minutes. Lunch was usually leftovers in some sort of soup, 4 slices of white bread, 2 slices of lunch meat or cheese, and a cup of flavored water. After lunch we were locked back in our cells for body count (to make sure no one had escaped). Close to 3 pm we were let out of our cells and we could go to the library or hospital or simply pass the time away with other inmates. Supper was a quick meal around 4:30, after which we usually had another body count. After the count cleared, we were let out of our cells, again, from about 6 till 7:30 pm, at which time we were locked in for the night.

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# The Voluntaryist

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Contributing Editors: **Carl Watner and George H. Smith**

**Vol:** What sort of physical and psychological adjustments did you have to make in order to get by?

**CW:** Prisoners in jails are real survivalists. They are clever, ingenious and get by with practically nothing. Some had TV's or radios; others read or visited with their buddies. The noise level is very high because there are at least 50 people on a tier, with no sound deadening materials around (and usually the radios and TV's are turned up full blast). Many of the inmates were Negro and some had records of violent crimes. Despite the horror stories I had seen in the newspapers, I neither experienced nor witnessed any physical harm between inmates or inmates and guards. There was a sort of "live and let live" philosophy among these men, which necessarily encompassed a wide degree of varying life styles. I tried to mind my own business but did get plenty of chance to talk to other inmates. Being new to the whole thing, it took me a while to understand the routine.

During the first few days in jail, I started feeling sorry for myself once or twice. However, I realized that this would do me no good and soon straightened up. I simply resolved to make the best of the situation and do the best I could do, no matter how trying the circumstances. I retained the ability to laugh at myself and a few times thought of myself as simply a detached observer from what was going on around me.

**Vol:** What happened to your "experiment with truth"?

**CW:** The truths I was experimenting with were two-fold. First, to prove that all governments have to initiate force against peaceful people at some point, or else cease being governments. That is why I insisted on being carried to jail from the Marshall's Office, rather than simply walking under my own power. Secondly, I wanted to see in fact how dependent governments are upon our cooperation and consent. Although I have not necessarily proved this latter point, all my observations regarding the functioning of government (during my stay in jail and prison) supports this voluntaryist insight. If a large number of prisoners simply refused to do what they were told, there would hardly be enough guards in any one jail to coerce them all. Jails and prisons, much like governments which direct them, are delicate social institutions which must have the cooperation of a great many people.

There were several other considerations which steered me away from total non-cooperation while I was in jail. First was the psychological fear of not knowing what was going to happen to me next. I was not familiar with jail procedures. The fear of not knowing what to anticipate is one of the greatest psychological threats that I experienced. I am not sure what I would have accomplished in City Jail by fasting and immobilizing myself there. I rationalized my departure from my original intentions to non-cooperate in jail by saying that the risks to me personally simply out-weighed the benefits. My jail experiences would have undoubtedly been radically different than those I experienced, had I been non-cooperative from the start. There is simply no way to know what the outcome would have been had I waged my "experiment" on this basis. As it was, I viewed myself dealing with two different

levels of resistance: the first being my refusal to cooperate with the IRS, in which I persisted; and the second being my refusal to cooperate with the Bureau of Prisons, representing my captors. In any case, I tried to do the best I could do.

**Vol:** Under what circumstances did you finally leave City Jail?

**CW:** Although lodged in City Jail, I was still a federal prisoner. On my 9th day of captivity, I was removed from City Jail by two federal marshalls and eventually placed aboard a Bureau of Prisons transport bus, which took me to Montgomery, Pennsylvania, to the Allenwood Federal Prison Camp. Most of those who made the trip were handcuffed, waist shackled, and also leg shackled. The irons almost make you feel like a captured animal and are very demeaning.

**Vol:** What sort of prison is Allenwood and how does it differ from City Jail?

**CW:** What I call "Gresham's Law of Imprisonment" is apparent when discussing these differences. In City Jail, one of the inmates said that if he was ever going to get locked up again, at least he would have the foresight to choose a city with good jail facility. "Gresham's Law" simply says that prisoners will tend to choose places of imprisonment with better conditions as against those with lower living conditions; so there is clearly some sort of competition among jails, even at this level. Officially, Allenwood is a minimum security camp, which means that it has no fence around it, very few guards relative to the 500 prisoners, and an inmate population of mostly white-collar and victimless law criminals. The differences between Allenwood and City Jail were shocking.

In the Baltimore community, Allenwood is often referred to as a "country club" because many of the politicians in this area who have been convicted of racketeering or mail fraud have been sent there to do time. The facility is set up in the midst of the Appalachian Mountains on a 4200 acre government land reserve. The food is bountiful and better than you could buy in your average restaurant. There are no cells, but rather large dormitories with cubicles. Many men refer to it as boot camp, all over again, but only much easier. There are many recreational and educational facilities, including tennis courts, raquet ball courts, pool tables, ping pong, a workout room, etc. The contrast with City Jail is simply unbelievable.

**Vol:** Given your short stay at Allenwood (Carl has only been at Allenwood a week as this interview is being prepared) what does the regular routine look like?

**CW:** Nearly all the inmates have "working" jobs in the camp, so they have to be up for breakfast, which is served between 6 and 7 am. Unless they are on an early morning shift or night schedule, they report to work by 7:30 and get an hour off for lunch during the middle of the day. Most work until about 3:30 pm, and depending on their educational status, they get free time or vocational classes in the late afternoon or evening. They begin the Body Count at 4:00 pm. Every inmate has to be in his place in the dorms in order to be accounted for. Dinner is served after the count has cleared. The evening hours (until the 9:00 pm count and the 10:30 pm lights-out call) are for recreation, watching TV (in the TV room) or playing cards in the game room.

**Vol:** Since Allenwood is basically an unguarded camp, what keeps the prisoners from simply walking off? How does the government get their cooperation and obedience without the direct show of force?

**CW:** The best way I know to describe Allenwood is to call it a slave plantation. What makes slaves obey their masters? For the most part, the government gets the cooperation of the inmates here because of the psychological incentives that are

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# Cutting Government Growth

By Robert LeFevre

It would be hard to find any citizen of the United States this late in the 20th century who wishes to enlarge the Federal Government. Almost with unanimity, the cry is: "Government is too big!" Even the professional politicians holding office will generally side in favor of reduction although in a given particular they may call for a new bureau, greater power and enlarged staffs of workers at all levels.

This provides an interesting phenomenon. A government, ostensibly of, by and for the people, clearly hears the expressed demands of its toiling and disgruntled masses. Its principal office holders agree and even join the clamor. And despite all this, the government continues to enlarge and to become increasingly oppressive.

While the expressed wishes of those who profit by the power, prestige and pay provided in office can reasonably be challenged on the grounds of sincerity, it would be absurd to call into question the motivation of the people at large. They are hurting. They've had enough. But the government continues to expand.

The purpose of this paper is to offer the view that a very good reason exists for the lack of success on the part of those who wish to reduce the state in any particular or even altogether. Those entirely sincere individuals who labor endlessly for the reduction of governmental power are, without intending it, playing the political expansionist game. They are engaged in using the wrong tactics and strategy. Doing the kinds of things they've been doing since the very beginning of the American Constitutional experiment predictably will cause further political growth. That is what such tactics and strategy have done before and are doing now.

When a given individual or group becomes concerned enough to "do something" aimed at reduction, the first step taken is to join the ranks of the political activists. This is the first error.

Government consists of two types of workers: those who are paid for what they do; those who volunteer their services free of charge. Both groups work for the state. *Every individual who begins working within the political system in an effort to accomplish anything enlarges the system by his own presence.* When a group is organized and begins to seek reduction as a concentrated unit of pressure, a significant growth of the numbers working for government occurs in the process. This is always true even when the purpose of the activist is reduction in size and scope. The state invariably arranges its structure in such a way that its magnitude depends on the numbers of persons involved, rather than on the political direction taken.

Ironically, the first result of the sincere reductionist is growth brought about by his own contribution aimed at shrinkage. The reason this point isn't seen or, if seen is overlooked, ties to the principal reason each individual or group seeks government reduction in the first place. The reason is economic. Taxpayers' purses are flat. They are keenly aware of dollars and a distinct lack of them in their own respective cases.

Thinking in terms of dollars causes them to focus exclusively on the paid minions of the state. They and they alone, are responsible for all the growth, the activists fondly believe.

But this is a fallacy and it produces a disastrous line of

reasoning. If one cares to examine the record one will discover that *it would be altogether impossible to hold an election in the United States without the unpaid help of hundreds of thousands of volunteers.* True, many of those who aren't paid in dollars are expecting rewards of some kind: a job, prestige, recognition, or even the wielding of a little precinct power. Clearly, many will be disappointed and will have no tangible gain. But hope springs up forever. No one is more susceptible to the blandishments of politicians than those who wish to be politicians too.

Those who ring doorbells, whoop it up for any candidate or issue, endorse, sign petitions, march, picket, protest and clamor for a conclusion in governmental circles satisfactory to themselves ARE WORKING FOR GOVERNMENT even when the result they seek is less government. It can be no other way. The size of government is usually measured by the total numbers of those working for it. If the unpaid volunteers are added to the roster of those paid, the number working for the government at all levels (federal, state, county and city) increases by an estimated 43% during election seasons! Since the "election season" is virtually omni-present, the result is nearly a constant.

To heighten the sardonic character of this discovery, the volunteers seeking to reduce the state, while enlarging it themselves, are additionally urging their friends and acquaintances to "get involved." Indeed this has been the magic elixir employed by American politicians from the beginning to foster and stroke political growth. This expectation of volunteering is now so pervasive that an individual refusing his or her services in promotion of the election process is accused of indifference or apathy and may even be warned that a failure to volunteer some of his money and certainly a small amount of his time could bring on the charge of "unAmerican".

It has been suggested from time to time that the total number of persons participating in the election process is of no great moment and arouses little concern. The reverse is easily demonstrated. However, to grant whatever justification is possible to those holding the view, it appears to arise from the fact that whether an office is filled by an 80% turnout or by a 15% turnout, the new office holder is firmly in position. This is not quite what it seems and the point will be met later. Meanwhile an examination of the history of elections in the United States is in order.

Prior to the adoption of the American Constitution, the struggling colonies contained a welter of ideas and ideals relating to the kind of government to be obtained here, if indeed, any was necessary. The single unifying note appeared to be that the colonists were bone-weary of having their lives and properties ruled from above by a distant, unfeeling, haughty monarch who rarely asked what they wanted.

Without trying to tabulate the various ideas floating about, it is clear that some of the better minds (Jefferson, Mason, J. Adams, Franklin, etc.) favored some method wherein the electorate could convey its wishes to those in charge. Jefferson was perhaps the most suspicious of the voting process while at the same time being among the most ardent backers of an enfranchised populace.

He preferred newspapers to government, an idea that has never been explored to ascertain its practicability. He also believed that the "democratic process" (voting) would work best at the Town Hall level. He vacillated between favoring small and relatively powerless satrapies and no government at all.

It is also evident that while most Americans accept Jefferson as a champion of the "little fellow" holding neo-aristocrats such as Washington and Hamilton in some dis-

dain, Jefferson personally lived and thought like an aristocrat and a French aristocrat at that. He was leery of the wisdom of the very class of people who today accept him as a symbol. He wasn't certain the "masses" could manage everything without help from "their betters."

Indeed, some of his views respecting women could today bring gasps of horror. He did not favor education for females, classifying their mentalities as "giddy" and "frivolous." He thought it better that they not learn to read since reading would fill their heads with notions beyond their ability to cope. Despite whatever shortcomings he may have had, he was the intellectual leader of the Anti-Federalists in opposition to the adoption of the Constitution.

Had there been political parties in the modern sense, a battle-royal might have ensued during the first presidential election of 1789. What might have occurred isn't known, of course. The Federalists, who favored the Constitution, nominated George Washington and before his august countenance all opposition evaporated. He ran unopposed and obtained 69 electoral votes, the total available.

During this and the next three presidential contests the rules as set forth in Article II, Section 1 of the Constitution were followed. The Electoral College voted for TWO candidates for President and the party receiving the fewer votes was named Vice President. This procedure was altered by the ratification of the 12th Amendment after which separate balloting occurred for each office.

It is instructive to realize that there should have been 132 electoral votes cast in 1789. The reason they were not is that the conventions in Rhode Island and North Carolina had not yet approved the Constitution, although the electors had been chosen. A dead-lock between the Federalist Senate and the Anti-Federalist House in New York prevented the certification of any electors. The choices of the electors whose votes were not counted appears to have been: 34 for John Adams; 35 for others not named and 4 abstentions.

The importance of causing posterity to believe in the universal popularity of Washington has persisted to this day. It helps to underscore the theme. The professional pols (those being paid) become nervous if they find their positions supported only by a minority.

So significant is this nail-biting syndrome that the early politicians were constantly in a state of jitters over the validity and solidity of their positions. No one challenges the fact that during the next eight elections, attendance at the voting booths was pretty sparse. Figures denoting the popular vote count from 1789 up to and including the election of 1820 are non-existent. Whatever popular tabulations that may have existed have long since (to borrow a phrase from George Orwell) been relegated to the "Memory Hole".

When, at last in 1824, a popular tabulation was retained for the benefit of historians, it shows the following: John Quincy Adams — 115,696; Andrew Jackson — 152,933; William H. Crawford — 46,979; Henry Clay — 47,136. This means that the total popular vote came to 362,744. The figure is significant.

We are all well aware that at the outset, voting requirements were determined by the separate states. Juveniles (under 21), women, blacks, and Indians were excluded altogether. In some states to qualify as a voter, it was necessary to profess belief in the Holy Trinity. In others, a simple affirmation that one was a good Christian would suffice provided no serious charges were brought against one's character. Known criminals, drunks and wastrels were excluded on general principles. Most particularly, financial capacity was a requirement. Some states required evidence of property ownership, the amount of property varying from

state to state.

What is really significant about these strictures relates to population size. According to figures available at any library, the total population of the newly constituted nation was slightly higher than 3,000,000 (excluding Indians) at the time Washington was chosen unanimously by 69 electors out of 132.

When, in 1824 the voters trooped to the polls, the population had enlarged to 9,638,000 plus. (Census of 1820). In thirty years, the number of persons being counted as having existence on these shores (excluding Indians) had more than tripled. Yet in 1824 the total voting muster stood at 362,744. If that is the total who voted for all candidates in 1824, one can only conjecture as to the size of the turnout in 1789. But it is reasonable to suggest that it was significantly less.

Clearly, despite the constant efforts of those holding power to make it appear that "the people" were well-informed and that the pols were acting as the voters wished and later approved, such was not the case.

First, the people were not well informed. Research shows that the combined total of all subscribers to all periodicals in all of the original states was less than 80,000. Bear in mind, the population at the time is larger than the 3,000,000 mark. There would have been considerable overlapping and the actual number of individual subscribers is not known. But if it can be assumed that every issue of every periodical carried explicit information about what was transpiring politically; if it can be further assumed that at least four persons read each issue in a population largely illiterate; and if we may further assume that all of those reading who understood what they read became political activists and immediately voted for or against their best interests — if all these assumptions can be tolerated — we come to the fascinating conclusion that only one in ten had anything to do with the "government of, by and for, the people."

Obviously we will never know the size of the active electorate. But while we are assuming, it is just as reasonable to imagine that significant numbers of persons learning of what was afoot in the halls of the movers and shakers did nothing whatever. So we can reasonably suggest that very few persons bothered to vote; that a slightly larger number was aware of what was going on but didn't bother to get involved; and that the greatest amount of the populace not only didn't take action; they didn't know any action was being taken. They were ignorant of the whole proceeding.

This inescapable conclusion was on the minds of those holding office, you may be sure. They were well aware, despite the brave statements that a working democracy depends upon an informed citizenry, that in this country the very existence of the government depended on the ignorance of the populace which would surely have opposed it had they known about it. Indeed, a rebellion or two actually did erupt. But a rebellion is hard to turn into a general movement in a short time. Opposition to the British government had taken more than a quarter of a century to bring to fruition. The same lack of public media and the same dearth of literacy which prevented active participation for the government prevented organized opposition to it.

Circumstance played the major role in supporting the Constitution and the political activists. Every government rests upon a base which consists of the people within a given territory who are ruled. The principal difference between a military force per se, and a government, is that the military force does not require approval from its victims whereas a government does. The significant base of any government consists of those persons who are being victimized by it, but

who continue to approve of it despite their victimization.

In the American usurpation, the territory involved was largely unsettled (not counting Indians again) and, as immigration brought thousands and thousands of new families and individuals onto the continent, they accepted as established fact the very government of which many of them had been ignorant. This meant that the base for the American government was buttressed by immigrants who approved of what had happened and gave their sanction to their own immediate and future exploitation.

From the year 1790 until 1820 the population tripled but not by reason of a baby boom so much as by the admission of new (and ever more populous) states. This influx provided the propaganda device by means of which those holding power sought to show that more and more people were becoming active in political affairs.

With some variation the facts stand opposed. In terms of the aggregate which could have been actively involved, the movement is either stationary or retrogressive.

Between 1790 and 1820, nine states were admitted under the Constitution. (Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Mississippi, Ohio, Tennessee, and Vermont.) The populations of these states were counted in the general census of 1820 and it is from these newly joined states that the professional pols got their major boost. The base on which the American government rested was significantly enlarged.

The same process continued for a number of years. The increasing size of the electorate (active) did not however keep pace with the increasing size of the electorate (potential).

Finally came the Civil War. When it ended, black males were enfranchised. This move broadened the base, at least in theory, but the result was a disappointment to the pros since few blacks registered to vote and those who did ran a dreadful risk by virtue of racial prejudice.

To move still further toward convincing the American public that popular support blanketed political procedures like maple syrup blankets a stack of cakes, revision of voting qualifications was undertaken. The revision of state prerequisites became an ongoing issue with both major political parties chest-thumping in favor of their respective but usually contrary positions.

Ownership of property was dropped as a requirement, replaced in some states by a poll tax. Religious requirements had been removed earlier and now the political base was broader than ever. All this swelled the ranks of the active but it still failed to convince.

Finally, having done everything else conceivable, the pros gave women the vote, thereby nearly doubling the base. But with a continued decline of those who could have been reasonably and intelligently involved, still further steps were needed to sell the product.

The next step was to lower the voting age to 18, thereby bringing still more innocents into the arena. And of course in the midst of all this, more states were added, more immigration took place and a new crop of potential voters emerged from their playrooms.

This policy (surely none will argue that the trend to broaden the base is not a policy) has now reached a plateau where organized pressure groups (already working for and with the government) wish illegal or undocumented aliens to vote.

The suggestion has even been made that the head of a family could be granted a franchise to vote on behalf of juniors of his own hearth. This would fulfill the dictum of "one man, one vote" so dear to the hearts of those who want you to believe that THE PEOPLE love the politicians and are proving it by acting within the system. At the moment about the only

persons excluded from the franchise or from plans to bring them under it are violent criminals and congenital idiots.

It is safe to point out that a vast majority of all those who have become active as political volunteers, have done so because they believe the government has been intrusive against them. Certainly, some have taken to the hustings one way or another in hopes that the government would intrude against their foes or rivals. But where is the evidence that any of this active involvement has actually brought a reduction in the size, scope and power of the government?

Only one conclusion is possible. While the purpose of reducing or eliminating the state may be an honest objective, a strategy has to be adopted and a tactic accepted which will move in the right direction. There is no mystery as to which is the wrong direction. Since every act in which a person or group becomes active with the system enlarges the system, it follows that the way to reduce the system is to separate and disconnect from it to the greatest degree possible. To become totally apart from the state apparatus is probably not possible today in any pure sense. We may be able to keep our thoughts unsullied but we live in a world where government permeates virtually everything and the hand of the state corrupts all it touches. We do not move from where we are to where we would like to be in one bold stride. But this need not imply impotence. There are effective things to be done.

Reference was made earlier to the fact that while it is true that a candidate elected by 15% of the electorate is as firmly planted in office as he would have been with an 80% participation, that truth isn't all that it seems.

In 1963 in Colorado Springs, a special election was scheduled for April 4, wherein three members of the City Council (out of nine) were to be chosen, a school tax levy was to be voted on and the Green River law (preventing door to door solicitation) was up for repeal.

It happened that a tremendous springtime blizzard swept out of the Rockies, closing schools and roads, disrupting wire service and hampering all commercial and professional activities. The turn-out at the polls was the lowest on record. However, the city council filled its upcoming vacancies, the tax was approved, but to the dismay of the professional pols, the Green River law was repealed.

A few weeks later a reporter covering the Council meeting reported that the Green River law ought to be enforced, despite its repeal. His rationale was that in view of the minuscule voter turn-out it was reasonable to assume that voters of Colorado Springs still desired the Green River law, but because of the bad weather had been unable to say so. The council apparently went along with this conclusion.

This writer happened to be editor of the local paper, the Gazette Telegraph, and following the story of the council proceedings ran an editorial in which the newspaper agreed with the position taken. However, the editorial went on to point out that with this same rationale the three new members of the council had not been approved since it was reasonable to suppose that the voters didn't want them any more than the repeal of the Green River law had been wanted. Further, any funds dispersed from the school tax should be returned forthwith since the money had not been properly appropriated with voter approval.

The results are instructive. Granting that this is a single case and it relates to a city of modest size, it does help to reveal the nature of political thinking. Politicians in modest sized urban centers are just as human as their counterparts in Washington D.C. or elsewhere. They are all equally human.

In Colorado Springs, for the better part of that same fiscal year the council did virtually nothing at all. The local pols



kept a low profile and aside from routine affairs retained a posture in which their posteriors rested on their own palms; they sat on their hands.

While existing evidence may not be conclusive yet, every indicator available points to the enormous sensitivity of politicians to the public in general. But there is zero evidence to support the argument that a given political figure is fundamentally concerned with a person who may be of a different political persuasion. In this country the government has welcomed as political equals such strange bed-fellows as the "barn-burners", the "know-nothings", the "vegetarians", and the "Bull-Moose". It has even taken to its bosom "anti-Masonics", and such innocuous blocs as the "Independents" and the "Libertarians."

The rationale employed is conspicuous. It was perhaps expressed best by the League of Women Voters, an organized club of unpaid government workers. One year the good ladies adopted as their slogan: "We don't care how you vote; but vote!" Clearly those who are concentrating on a party victory would prefer that every active electioneer be their own. But in the long run it really doesn't matter. A given election may be won or lost but there's always "next time." Besides, political positions shift as pressures build or as gas is released and pressure drops. So one year a person will lean left and another year will lean right and some will try to lean in several directions at once. The important item is ACTIVITY WITHIN THE SYSTEM and not the slant of the moment.

But the person who is honestly working FOR GOVERNMENT per se (such as the L of WV's) isn't so much involved in party as in participation. The true sanction of government arises from this area: those who favor government per se regardless of other considerations.

How then can practical programs leading toward reduction or possible elimination of the state be managed? The answer is found in the Gandhi experience. I do not refer here to Gandhi's economic position which is both innocent and childish. Nor am I concerned with his diet, his education, his appearance or his religion or lack thereof. I refer exclusively to his tactics. He didn't mount an attack on the power holders. He simply refused to strike back. And by so doing he demonstrated a position of non-power-seeking with which his tormentors could not cope. He refused to play the power game. He separated himself from the state and so long as he lived and was able to exert his influence, the particular tactic swept all opposition before it.

The Achilles heel of government is the election process itself. It is wholly at the mercy of unpaid government workers. No one HAS to work for any election. Withdrawal is both moral and legal. De-registration can be accomplished. It certainly should be simple (and financially sound) to refrain from making dollar contributions to any party in any contest whatever. It is easy to refrain from signing petitions.

True. If a single individual severs these strands by himself the effect is small. Few would be concerned. It would be no more a problem than having someone join an opposing party. But the evidence appears that the professionals are already gravely concerned about the constant erosion of participation at the polls. There has been talk of making voting compulsory and we are already treated to a law wherein taxpayers' funds are handed to competing political candidates in a wholly unjustified manner violating the civil rights of the individual who does not wish to participate in elections on moral grounds!

But there is a gain regardless. The best part is that the separatist will feel good! Also, he will be setting a fine example.

When, through failure of other methods, this procedure is

adopted by any significant number of people, the results will be all that anyone could reasonably expect. Meanwhile don't say it won't work until you've tried it.

## A POLITICAL PRISONER

*On September, 1980, Timothy Dove was indicted by a Federal Grand Jury on two counts of Failure to File Income Tax Returns and two counts of Filing False Withholding Exemption Certificates. Sentenced to 2½ years—the imposition of two years being suspended—Tim was placed on probation. He jumped bail and spent the next year living deep in the Alaskan wilderness. While in Anchorage, earning money for a grubstake, Tim was turned into the authorities by an anonymous caller seeking a reward. Tim is currently serving a 34 month sentence of which he has done almost 14 months. Tim's address is:*

*Timothy A. Dove, 10214-006D, P.O. Box 1000, Sandstone, MN 55072*

*The following is a letter Tim wrote to Carl.*

Carl Watner,

I have been living and practicing your strategy to a certain extent for several years. I agree wholeheartedly with your philosophy of "voluntaryism".

I received your letter and Number 4 of *The Voluntaryist* a few days ago. I'm pleased to have located someone of like mind, and I'm grateful to you for devoting so much time and energy to organizing voluntaryists. Libertarians sorely need more non-political, educational organizations.

I would describe myself as a libertarian-anarchist. I don't know that I am as anti-party as you, but I'm rapidly moving in that direction. I feel I owe a lot to the Libertarian Party. After all, the Libertarian Party (LP) did introduce me to libertarianism. I subsequently developed a sophisticated understanding and integration of libertarian philosophy while actively organizing and promoting the Alaska Libertarian Party (1973-1980). After that, my struggles with the IRS overshadowed all other activities. In spite of my close association with the LP, particularly the ALP, I have developed numerous reservations concerning the effectiveness, if not the consistency of political action.

In the early years (1973-1975), the ALP was little more than a philosophy discussion group involving a couple dozen people. We had absolutely no political experience; we were uncertain of what we were supposed to be doing as a political party, but we were trying nonetheless. With no chance of winning elections then and with no "politicos" yet involved in the party, we easily maintained ideological consistency in promoting the party. Our sole purpose was to utilize the political forum to spread libertarian ideas.

In 1975, with the inclusion of a substantial number of ex-republicans with a great deal of previous political experience, the direction of the ALP altered irrevocably. Led by Dick Randolph, the avowed purpose of the ALP has become solely "to elect people to office". Education has taken a back seat. Emphasis is on appearances, not substance. We learned to look and sound like a political party to be "credible". Controversial issues, those which needed airing the most, were quietly shelved in the name of respectability, while those issues considered popular were elevated to the forefront of political campaigns.

There is no question of our success as a political party. We were the first, and to this day the only, LP organization to elect a Libertarian to the State House. Indeed, we re-elected him in a landslide LP vote along with a second Libertarian Legislator two years later in 1980. But at what price? And have we advanced the cause of freedom?

No honorable libertarian should accept money from the

(Cont. on page 8)

built into the penal system. Most prisoners here are due to get out within 1 to 3 years and they do not want to jeopardize their chances for release or parole, or to lose their accumulated 'good time'. They all realize that the living standards here are excellent compared to other institutions where they could be sent for disciplinary segregation. In short, they are bribed in order to get their cooperation.

Allenwood can also be viewed as the nearest thing to a communist society in operation in this country. It's basically maintained as a closed system, with nothing private permitted in. You surrender your clothing and personal belongings when you enter and are issued government clothing, etc. Anything else is considered contraband and subject to immediate confiscation. You are given a camp job and everything you need to survive. There is no relationship between the money you "earn" on the job (anywhere from 11 cents to \$1.00 per hour for slave wages) and how you live. Inmates must stay within prescribed boundaries and they get demerits or incident reports (the inmates call them "shots") for infractions of the rules. Visitation from the outside is strictly controlled (inmates are searched both before and after visits and visitors must be approved). Incoming correspondence is opened to check for contraband and outgoing mail is subject to censorship. Certain types of personal articles may be purchased through a commissary account, but inmates are prohibited to accumulate more than \$10 in change. Paper money is outlawed.

**Vol:** What is your attitude about cooperating at Allenwood? Isn't the slave camp analogy going a little too far?

**CW:** Regardless of what might happen, I could never stomach working for the government as a slave. I don't think this issue will come to a head with the administration, only because I am serving "dead" time on a civil contempt and not filling out a criminal sentence. I see a definite problem in accepting one's own slavery as it is played out at Allenwood. One should not acquiesce in such a situation, as far as I am concerned, and of course, I realize that this is as applicable to the government outside of Allenwood as to the government inside.

I don't think the slave analogy is going too far at all. The attitude of many inmates is characteristic of slave behavior. They act like slaves always do. Their productivity on the job is low; they sabotage wherever there is a chance of not being caught; and they complain incessantly behind their masters' backs. Since they have no incentive to be responsible for the property they are handling, they are wasteful and careless. Allenwood is the site of a large Federal Prison Industries manufacturing factory, where the government uses slave labor to produce wooden furniture, such as desks and chairs. Everyone says that the production line is run inefficiently and that even the government supervisors are slack and take little interest in their jobs. You might say that federal prison camps are an example of government collectivism in its most extreme form. In short, Allenwood is an example of voluntary servitude at its worst. At least ordinary jails have bars to confine their prisoners. Here they are not necessary.

**Vol:** Despite this voluntary cooperation with the camp administration, do you sense any sort of anti-government sentiment in the air?

**CW:** Although I haven't run across any other voluntaryists at Allenwood, there are several other tax resisters and evaders here. One is very libertarian inclined and received a year's sentence for filing a 5th amendment income tax return. Another tax resister is doing time as a result of having been framed by a government informant for illegally possessing a firearm. The tax evaders have been convicted for amounts

ranging from \$4,900 to \$8,000. Even if the government could collect these evaded taxes and penalties, it would never cover the cost of prosecuting and incarcerating these men for a year or two.

Many of the more independent-minded people here recognize how the prison system works and how highly dependent it is on them for their support. There is almost a sort of self-loathing apparent among the more thinking; they realize they are supporting their own enslavement, yet do not want to take the risks associated with challenging the system. Many of these people consider themselves to have been crucified and unjustly prosecuted by the government. Nevertheless, there seems to be a total lack of perception that the government is an illegitimate institution. It's just that they have been picked on; not that the system is evil. Even when I point out in the midst of explaining my conscientious objection to taxation that the government is the greatest criminal organization in the country, they still are unable to draw the conclusion that it should be abolished. Despite their own experiences and injustices at its hand, they still grant it the legitimacy it needs to exist because they think that only the government can provide needed public services, such as schools, roads, post offices, etc.

**Vol:** What do you think the end result of your 40 day prison experience will be? Will your experiment with truth have proven anything to you? Will it have been worthwhile?

**CW:** One of the inmates at Allenwood described the two common reactions to imprisonment. He compared imprisonment to the body sustaining a wound or injury. Sometimes the body heals more strongly (around the injured area). Other times, the body can become permanently weakened. My prison experience has only reinforced my voluntaryist outlook. My psyche and personality have undergone stress as a result of this experience, but I am more resolute than ever to carry voluntaryism forward. Nothing I have undergone or seen has changed my perception of the criminal and invasive nature of government; in fact my whole experience has only confirmed it more deeply. My convictions are as absolute as ever and I am still set in my ways. I have observed much, learned some things about myself and human nature in general.

More than ever, I realize that each person is a self-owner and that even criminals who have committed depredations upon the person or property of others still have individual rights. A criminal who has been duly convicted is still not the slave of the State. In my view, they owe a debt to their victims, which under the present penal system, they are prevented from even attempting to pay off. Coercion and punishment as it exists under the present governmental system appears inhumane and inefficient and certainly not directed towards restitution.

**Vol:** What advice would you offer to voluntaryists or others contemplating their own acts of civil disobedience towards an unjust government?

**CW:** When I entered my permanently assigned cell at City Jail, there was a sign that read: Be All You Can Be. I would simply add: Be sure you are right then go ahead. Realize that you might be jailed and suffer far worse than I have. Realize that this is the price of taking a conscientious objection position. Disobedience and withdrawal of cooperation is a highly personal decision and each person must make their own experiment with the truth. But it will always be my belief that if one partakes of the voluntaryist spirit and uses right means, that the end will take care of itself.

Carl Watner  
November 28, 1983

state. Yet Randolph, and later Fanning (and also all of those who won seats on the local or city level) accepted their salaries from the government. Several of us tried to convince Randolph, because he was the first, to decline his salary and set up a blind trust of voluntary funds with an independent agent, which would pay him up to the amount of his government salary. He dismissed the idea as "impractical". Lost forever was the opportunity to demonstrate to the world that Libertarians believed taxation was theft and would rather do without than accept stolen funds from the state. Imagine the repercussions such an act would have generated!!! Headlines: "FIRST LIBERTARIAN ELECTED TO STATE OFFICE REFUSES PAY!" Unfortunately, such was not to be. Alas, this was only the first of a series of small compromises, culminating in an outright abandonment of principle in pursuit of money, influence and votes.

Ironically, Randolph was elected to office at a time when the State of Alaska possessed an embarrassment of riches. Under our State Constitution, the state is the exclusive owner of all the subsurface mineral rights on State and private lands. Next to the Federal Government, who still controls 75% of Alaskan land, the State Government owns most of the land. Very little is privately owned. The Federal Government transferred to the State several million acres of virtually uninhabitable land on the Arctic Coast. The gamble paid off handsomely a few years later with the discovery of the single largest pool of crude oil in North America on those very same lands. The 900 million dollar lease sale and the prospect of billions in future royalties was not enough for the insatiable appetite of the State for revenue. Even before the oil started to flow a huge severance tax and a special oil corporation property tax were passed. State revenues skyrocketed from a mere 100 million to over 5 billion per year. There was more money than the government knew what to do with.

With this embarrassment of riches Randolph and the ALP successfully spearheaded the movement to repeal the state income tax. The income tax accounted for only ten percent of the revenues at that time.

Randolph believed it was dangerous for the State to possess such huge revenues. He knew that the sources were royalties from State ownership of the oil wells and high taxes on the oil industry, but he focused his attention on the rapidly accumulating surplus rather than on its source. He came up with the outrageous idea of equally distributing \$10,000 to every man, woman and child in Alaska as a "libertarian" proposal to dispossess the State of its riches. The end result was a more modest distribution of \$1,000 which the Administration proposed. Thus, we came to see thousands of Alaskans lining up at the State Revenue Offices to fill out their ap-

plications for their \$1,000 Permanent Fund Dividend Check.

Randolph's popularity mushroomed, of course. The Party was taken seriously by the press and the people as a viable political force. But has the cause of freedom been advanced in Alaska? Though the LP is now a household word, what does it mean to Alaskans? The LP is perceived as a bunch of disgruntled, anti-government conservatives, who happily give away hand-outs of government funds, which we are told is "only our fair share of the oil money."

Gone are the long philosophical discussions of a society without the state. Gone from the Party are all the radicals who created it. All that's left is a bunch of chamber of commerce types, empty rhetoric, and expensively purchased advertising hoopla.

I had my doubts about the effectiveness of political action even before Randolph was elected. So I shopped about for other strategies. I hit upon Murray Rothbard's idea of a libertarian "cadre", which was supposed to infiltrate other anti-government groups. I had previously met a few local tax resisters and I was philosophically sympathetic with their efforts, but I considered it too risky personally. Two incidents occurred which changed my mind. First, the growing realization of the full extent of the "con of inflation" made me angry enough to motivate me when I figured out how we were all being swindled by fiat paper money. Secondly, while working on the pipeline construction project I personally experienced IRS tyranny to the tune of \$700 per week. I decided it was time for a little libertarian infiltration of the tax revolt movement.

Initially, I adopted the strategies and arguments then popular among tax rebels: no money in circulation, 5th Amendment, and other constitutional defenses. Instead of libertarianizing the tax rebels, they temporarily turned me in to an "ultra-conservative constitutionalist", at least as far as taxes.

I think perhaps you are closer to the right track. I toyed with the idea of simply refusing to accept the jurisdiction of the court over my person, and refusing to participate in the proceedings. But I let myself be talked out of it, concluding that the court would probably gag me and then appoint some attorney I'd never met to represent me. I think your strategy of civil disobedience and conscientious objection is a far more libertarian message. I feel I have given that message by my actions; that is, by simply refusing to capitulate before the might of the United States Government. I chose to go to prison rather than submit.

I enjoy your paper, Carl. Keep up the good work. It bolsters my faith in my fellow man to know that there are people like you out there.

For Freedom In Our Time,

Timothy A. Dove

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# The Voluntaryist

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