
The Voluntaryist

Whole Number 129

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

2nd Quarter 2006

The Unconquered Remnant: The Hopis and Voluntaryism

By Peter Spotswood Dillard

What is the oldest voluntaryist society existing in the continental United States? The answer may surprise you.

Perched atop three mighty mesas in northeastern Arizona, the Hopi Indians have developed a peaceful, nonviolent, and anarchistic society that has endured for at least a millennium. Archaeologists believe that the Hopis are descendants of the prehistoric Anasazi, or "Old Ones," who occupied the Four Corners region before disappearing in the late 13th century. Hopi tradition teaches that their people ascended into the present world through a hole in the bottom of the Grand Canyon called *Sipapuni*. They soon met Maasaw, ruler of this world, who divided them into clans and instructed them to find the center of the earth. After wandering for many years, the clans converged on the Hopi mesas. The Bear Clan established the Third Mesa village of Oraibi and required the other clans to demonstrate some skill or special knowledge before establishing their own villages.

There is no "Hopi Nation." Before the U.S. War with Mexico, when the Mexican government decided to make a boundary around the Hopi country, the "Hopi thought the boundary lines to be so ridiculous that they laughed about it." [Yamada 20] "The Hopi Nation" is simply a bureaucratic fiction imposed by the Spanish, Mexican, and United States governments in order to deal with a group of people whose ancestors have always lived in a decentralized collection of independent and autonomous villages. As anthropologist Wayne Dennis remarked, "The native system of [Hopi] government is, in effect, a practical form of anarchy." [Hennacy, 200]. Hopi unity is expressed, not in allegiance to a monolithic Hopi state, but through voluntary commitment to a common spirituality known as the Hopi Way. Even here, the clan structure ensures that spiritual authority does not become concentrated in the hands of any one person or group. Each clan possesses its own expertise or ceremony indispensable to the Hopi Way. Hopi clans are matrilineal, with members of a given clan living in different villages whose inhabitants are also connected by ties of marriage, kinship, and shared history.

Nothing for certain is known about how decisions are made in the village councils and sacred kivas.

Nevertheless, a statement from Heremequaftewa of Shungopavi village provides a window onto what is essentially a voluntaryist philosophy:

The Hopi knows it is not right to go about trying to change people who have religious beliefs that are different from their own, and he will not try to force them to follow the Hopi way of life. I would not try to force the young people of the white man to live and believe my way. I will not even force my own young people to be initiated into our religious societies. I will only ask them if they want to join or be initiated into them. If they say "no," it will be respected. This is the very basis of our life, *we must not force other people to change their ways.*" [Yamada, 55].

Heremequaftewa's statement indicates a form of decision making in which no arms are twisted (authoritarianism) and no votes are taken (majoritarianism), but a voluntary unanimity among individuals is sought. Thus, Hopi decision making resembles the traditional village councils of other Southwestern Indian tribes, such as the Pima and the Tohono O'odham. However, it could be best compared to the Quaker "sense of the meeting," in which the group attempts to find unity, and where the principled dissent of even one individual is enough to prevent the meeting from moving forward on a given matter.

Geographical factors have blessed the Hopis with a strong natural defense against invaders. The name *Hopi*, which means peaceful, has always been indicative of a people who shied away from war. The Hopi Way forbids fighting and killing, and there have been numerous Hopi conscientious objectors and draft resisters, since they were granted U.S. citizenship in 1924. [Waters, 317, 332; Clemmer, 198; Bonvillain, 14] As one of their traditional leaders, Dan Katchongva wrote, the Hopi must not participate in war. "It is the only way we can get right with the Great Spirit. If we turn loose our bow and arrow on anyone, we will receive an even greater tragedy than our victim." [Yamada, 46] Fortunately, the remoteness of their region and its scant natural resources have discouraged the incursion of greedy aggressors. Six thousand feet above sea level, and accessible only by twisting roads and torturous switchbacks, the mesas are well nigh impregnable fortresses. Rarely have the Hopis resorted to military force, a notable exception being their participation in the Pueblo Revolt against the despotic Spanish in 1680. Perhaps the tragedy

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Subscription Information

Published quarterly by The Voluntaryists, P.O. Box 275, Gramling, SC 29348. A six-issue subscription is \$20 or .07 ounce of fine gold. For overseas postage, please add \$5 or 1/3 of the regular subscription price. Single back issues are \$4 each or 1/5 of the regular subscription price. Please check the number on your mailing label to see when you should renew.

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An "Open Letter on Taxes"

By Ammon Hennacy

[Editor's Note": Ammon Hennacy (1893-1970) was a self-described Christian-anarchist and pacifist, author of THE BOOK OF AMMON (1965) and THE ONE-MAN REVOLUTION IN AMERICA (1970). The expression the "one man revolution" was taken from Robert Frost's poem "Build Soil - A Political Pastoral" (part of which follows) -

You see the beauty of my proposal is
It needn't wait on a general revolution.
I bid you to a one man revolution —
The only revolution that is coming.

The following letter appeared in THE CATHOLIC WORKER, February 1953, page six. It was addressed to Mr. William P. Stuart, Collector of Internal Revenue, Phoenix, AZ. While there are a number of statements in this "open letter" which voluntaryists might question (for example, Hennacy opposes taxes because the money supports war, not because taxes are theft; and he blames overproduction on the free market), Hennacy, and the Catholic Workers with which he was associated, must be respected for acting out their principles and living consistently with their ideals.]

Dear Mr. Stuart:

I am refusing for the ninth consecutive year to pay my income tax. I suppose that you are aware that my action is taken for the same reason that I have refused to pay all along: namely, that most of this tax goes for war and the upkeep of an unholy and un-Christian social system. The philosophy upon which my action is based is that of the Christian anarchist, who regards all government as based upon the return of evil for evil in courts, legislatures, and prisons. Opposition to all government is therefore a necessary part of the daily life of one who seeks to follow the Sermon on the Mount. As all churches uphold the state, I do not belong to any church, but attend mass and pray for grace and wisdom because of my love and respect for Dorothy Day and Robert Ludlow, editor of the CATHOLIC WORKER. This was the first publication to support my non-payment of taxes. Its basis of voluntary poverty and manual labor on the land I accept as an integral part of my life

as a revolutionary Christian.

A hundred years ago the test of whether a person was socially conscious or not was whether he supported slavery or opposed it. Practically all the good religious people justified ownership of slaves by quotations from the Bible. Northerners whose fortunes were based upon the slave trade denounced William Lloyd Garrison, the abolitionist. (Garrison was also the first Christian Anarchist. Tolstoy having been encouraged in this direction by Garrison's famous Peace Declaration in Boston in 1838, in which all government was considered anti-Christian.) Mr. Stuart, your ancestors as well as mine, likely hid escaped slaves and helped them get to freedom in Canada. The law said that escaped slaves should be returned to their masters, but good Quakers broke the law.

Today the measure of social consciousness is whether we support war and conscription. All thinking people must admit that the state is a Monster - a Monster of corruption and inefficiency, a Juggernaut that crushes freedom, that regiments us from cradle to the grave, supposedly for our own good. Yet, while most churches grudgingly allow members to be conscientious objectors, they all with the exception, generally speaking, of Quakers, Mennonites, and Brethern [sic], support war when it comes. And, with very few exceptions, all pacifists pay taxes for war. They may wish to do differently, but the reason they pay up is because they are so attached to the comforts of capitalism that they dislike to inconvenience themselves for an ideal. People who thus know better but do not do better are properly classified as pipsqueaks [sic]. Peter Maurin, the French peasant, founder of the Catholic Worker movement, said that "he who is a pensioner of the state, is a slave of the state."

The Christian Anarchist patterns his life after that of the early Christians. He does not vote for officials or go to courts to get even with those who may wrong him; neither does he need a cop to make him behave. He wants no social security benefits or pension. As Dorothy Day says of my refusal to pay taxes, in her recent book, THE LONG LONELINESS (Harcourt, 1952): "as he does not accept from Caesar, he does not render to Caesar." Instead of opposing war and the state most people fall for this BIG LIE.

Hitler said that if you said it loud enough and often enough THE BIG LIE could be put across. He proved it for the duration of his despotism, which fell somewhat short of the 1,000 years that he had planned. With our loyalty oaths we are adopting the methods of Hitler. With our lack of moral perception we double-talk on our Voice of America and throw our dollars over the world thinking it will cover up our imperialism in Puerto Rico and our continued despoilation of the American Indian. By calling the

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The Father's Stick

By Peter Ragnar

In the dark shadow of the father's stick, a child trembles —perhaps not so much from the threatened pain, as from the fear his will might be broken. As this rare innocence matriculates into manhood, he realizes true freedom is control of self. As he becomes an adult, he must become a self-responsible individual; for with responsibility comes authority. He alone has authority over himself. "No man hath power over his rights and liberties, nor he over any other man's." He grants no government the right of aggression; he makes no concession to servitude; he grants no one the power to punish him for his vices, or to reward him for his virtues. For the harshest judge he will ever meet will be the conscience of his own mind.

His ultimate pleasure is freedom from coercive molestation. His greatest joy is the cultivation of virtue. His *summum bonum*, the supreme goodness, is his right of peaceful, voluntary, action. Now he no longer fears the father's stick. He realizes each person must conclude what is conducive to, and what is destructive of, personal liberty. Each person must have the freedom to learn from his own mistakes and decide on a proper course of action. Each person must live under the guidance of his own judgment. Each person must have the freedom to pursue his own happiness. And each person must grant such equal rights to others!

"Ah! Beautiful and lofty, such high ideals," you say, "But what about the needs of a society? Isn't that why governments are created in the first place?"

"But," I retort, "These needs are most effectively met by voluntary trade and agreement among individuals unhindered by force." Human rights can only be respected by the voluntary cooperation of a free people. "Between men there can only exist two relations: logic and war." If other men cannot convince or persuade you to change your course of action, then they must either leave you alone (to go your own way) or force you to go along with them. If they refuse to "prove" themselves to you then you are under attack and "every means will be used to make you obey" (from the threat of the father's stick to manipulative propaganda).

What is government? Does it embrace logic or war? The other day at the store the checkout clerk asked if I'd like to give a dollar for a particular cause. I quietly smiled and said, "No thank you." Was I threatened with a fine, jail time, or physical violence? Of course not! Why? Because my compliance was voluntary. However, if I were stopped by the police for not wearing my seat belt, I'd have trouble on my hands. It doesn't matter that I've driven safely for over 50 years. It doesn't matter that I've never had an auto accident. And it doesn't matter if this happens to be the first time in all those years that I

wasn't wearing my belt. But it does matter that I am being coerced into buckling up!

So, what is government? It is nothing but *force*! What gives government its power? - the cooperation of the people. Remove cooperation and you've just given government an orchidectomy, turning it into an impotent eunuch. Yet the real crime, the collusion of the mindless collective, still remains veiled. Its members are fully culpable through their complicity, their criminal participation. Each should be made individually responsible for the acts of the government. Yet ask anyone to sign a legal contract of accountability, and not one out of a million would put his or her signature on the line. What does that tell you?

If you refuse to cooperate with the "voluntary compliance" sought by the IRS, you will eventually be met with force. That force is successful, however, only if enough of the crowd grants their tacit support to those supercilious and odious officials. And if you haven't been repulsed by the sycophantic political party-liners or your local electorate, please take a closer look. Do self-owned sovereigns ingratiate themselves through flattery and servility? Do they crouch fawningly at the shadow of the father's stick? Never will they stoop so low!

Oh, I can hear it now. You are saying to yourself, "It sounds like he's against authority and the powers of government. Every nation's inhabitants must obey its rules. That's why you have to pay your taxes, vote, and support its wars that bring democracy and peace to the less fortunate. I think he's just shirking his responsibility as an American!"

Yes, *I am* against authority—*unlawful* authority. It is unlawful to force another to act against his will, to violate his conscience. It is unlawful to cause anyone to violate nature's law. It is unlawful for any body of people or any individual to trespass against his neighbors. It is unlawful not to keep your word. And it is unlawful to wittingly or unwittingly, willingly or unwillingly, engage in (or even condone) the trade of stolen properties, (properties taken from people by the force of law) and to conspire (or even associate) with the criminals who do so. In other words, it is immoral to accept money from the government that it has illegally confiscated from others.

Am I opposed to government? I'm familiar with only two types. One is imposed by others from the outside; it is called political government. The second comes from inside oneself, and is called self-government. The first is coercive, the second is voluntary. The first is unproductive (as world history evidences); the second is highly productive, as it provides the world with one improved human unit.

As for birth in a certain geographic area justifying the imposition of taxation, that's absurd! First, all taxation is theft (since it is involuntary). Second, everybody must be born somewhere. It's like saying all children born belong to the government, not the

parents. Who gives government the right of ownership over that which it didn't produce? In fact, what product does any government ever produce but war? Since war is the rule of force, all government is but force, and the shadow of its stick is always on the ground before us. If peace is the negation of force, then government and peace will remain eternal antagonists. And thus, it is inane and puerile thinking to expect that freedom can be obtained or even defended by force. As you sow shall you reap! And as you take care of the means, the end takes care of itself!

Destruction can never give birth to freedom, any more than freedom can engage in enslavement. To possess freedom, you must grant freedom. The father's stick must be grafted back to the tree of life. Once a bold warrior met a sage, and, attempting to impress the sage with his martial arts prowess, he cleaved off a limb from a nearby tree in a blinding display of swordsmanship. Nonplussed, the sage pointed at the limb's stump and retorted, "Now if you really want to impress me, show me your power by making it grow back together."

Through time immemorial, every government has failed to produce either peace or freedom. The only production in which it engages is fraud, destruction, deception, and force. It wields the father's stick in an attempt to bully the nation's populace to support its criminal activities. For to take that which is not given freely, either by force or intimidation, is criminal. Likewise, support of any kind lent to that which cannot be legitimized is criminal as well.

The issue is blatantly obvious. Coercion is criminal. It is a criminal act for you to be forced to give up your money, goods, products, labor, time, or your life without voluntary consent. It is criminal for a single individual to force you, and just as criminal for a million people to force you! It is as criminal for a robber to force you as it is for a government to force you! It is criminal collusion to approve and endorse such heinous acts against one's neighbors. And it is equally repugnant and abominable to allow yourself to be cowed by the father's stick when wielded by a government which threatens you with it. ▢

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at Awatovi, in which men from the villages of Walpi, Shungopavi, and Oraibi attacked and destroyed the Christianized village of Awatovi in 1700, turned most Hopis' hearts against the use of violence. The Hopi are probably one of the few Indian tribes that have never fought a war against the United States government, nor promised to be subject to its jurisdiction. [Hennacy, 199]

Conflicts are usually resolved without bloodshed.

Faced by irreconcilable disagreements, Hopis prefer going their separate ways rather than fighting to the death. An example is the 1906 split at Oraibi between the traditionalists and the progressives. Yukiuma, the leader of the traditionalists, drew a line in the sand and stepped across it, saying that if the progressives could push him back over the line then the traditionalists would leave Oraibi, but that if they couldn't then the progressives would have to leave. Yukiuma's supporters lined up behind him, the progressives lined up behind their leader, and a shoving match ensued. Several hours later, Yukiuma was finally pushed over the line. True to his word, he and the other traditionalists promptly left Oraibi.

Concerning property, for centuries the Hopis have practiced a form of anarcho-communism. Lands were owned collectively by various clans, after having been partitioned and distributed by the Bear Clan. Unlike more virulent forms of communism, which regard the institution of private property as an inherent evil to be eradicated by any means necessary, the Hopis never attempted to impose their system upon anyone else. Unfortunately, their exemplary tolerance was not reciprocated.

In 1848, under the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, the U. S. government took control of the Hopi lands from the Mexican government. The Hopi Indian Reservation was established "forever" by a Presidential Executive Order in 1882. A few years later, in 1890, without consulting the Hopis, the U.S. Congress passed the Dawes Act, which allotted to each Hopi family 100 acres of land with title of ownership. Since there were only a few hundred Hopi families and allotment sizes were never increased, millions of left-over acres were sold to white settlers for a huge profit. In engineering this spectacular rip-off of the Hopis, Congress apparently forgot that legislation imposed without consent was the prime reason their ancestors declared their independence from Great Britain.

Shortly prior to the land allotment fiasco, the U.S. government had initiated a program of compulsory schooling that affected the Hopis. A number of Hopi parents were arrested, and even imprisoned, when they refused to comply with orders to send their children to government-run schools. Their children were then kidnapped and forced to attend Indian agency day and boarding schools where they were indoctrinated into Christianity and Anglo-American culture. The conflict between the traditional and progressive Hopis began at this time, when some Hopis refused to cooperate, while other Hopis adopted those of the white man's ways they deemed beneficial. The fundamental moral issue, however, was not whether certain aspects of white culture were beneficial, but whether any Hopi, traditionalist or progressive, should have been forced to adopt them. Certainly none of *us* would acquiesce to compulsory education by Martians visiting our planet, even if Martian cul-

ture were light years ahead of ours!

These depredations culminated in the 1934 government decision to hold a referendum among the Hopis to see if they would endorse a Tribal Council to represent the Tribe, and accept a tribal constitution, and by-laws. Much ink has been spilled over whether the minimum 30% of eligible Hopi voters necessary for the vote to be valid actually voted, with traditionalist sympathizers (e.g., Waters) arguing that only 29% voted and their progressive opponents (e.g., Page and Page) using lower total population estimates to counter that 48% voted. Such number crunching is beside the point. No people steeped in the voluntarism of Heremequaftewa would regard voting as a legitimate form of deciding any serious matter. Sadly, those willing to vote about whether to leave the traditional Hopi Way had already left it. "By staying away from the vote, most Hopis showed their disapproval of the entire process," even though a Tribal Council "was elected in 1935, and a formal constitution was adopted the following year." [Bonvillain, 85] In referring to the referendum, Thomas Banyacya, a Hopi traditionalist, noted that "A small percentage of the [Hopi] population voted in favor of it, a slightly larger percentage voted against it, but by far the largest percentage *didn't vote at all*. Yet it was forced upon us and its bitter fruits are being pushed down our throats even to this day." [1957]. [Yamada, 61]

The traditional Hopi argue that the United States government has no authority over them because the Hopis never signed a treaty "acknowledging the U.S. Government's right of existence." Nor do they recognize the right of the U.S. government or Christian missionaries to pressure them to follow the white man's way of life. According to the traditionalists, the Hopi Tribal Council, which was brought into existence as a creature of the U.S. government, "has no authority beyond that granted by their politico-religious leaders," such as the Kikmongwis and the *mongwis*. [Clemmer, 190] During the late 1940s, these traditionalists refused to file any claims before the U.S. Government Lands Claim Commission "on the ground that 'they had already claimed the whole Western Hemisphere long before Columbus' great-great grandmother was born. We will not ask a white man, who came to us recently, for a piece of land that is already ours.'" Nor would they "assent to having a white man's court decide whether or not it belonged to them." [Waters 322, 324]

The traditional Hopi have always had an ingrained "trait of shying away from anything that smelled of government control." [Waters, 316] Their leaders have protested against Hopi acceptance of government welfare because they believed that the government would take away their land in return for government benefits, and that dependence upon the government would destroy "the faith of the Hopis in their own independence and reliance upon their

Creator." [Waters, 327] Throughout the years, traditionalist Hopi leaders have issued eloquent pleas for self-determination to U.S. presidents and other government officials. When Yukuma met President Taft in 1911, the message he delivered was that "all he wanted was that he and his people be left alone." [Miller, 112] Forty years later, Dan Katchongva, a son of Yukuma, was still delivering the same message:

Our people are a proud people. We have taken good care of ourselves and our land for thousands of years. We do not need any instruction from the Indian Bureau either in government or farming. If they want any instruction from us, we will give it to them without charge. [Yamada, 6].

We want a right to live as we please, as human beings. We want to have a right to worship as we please and have our own land. We don't want to have someone plan our lives for us, issue us rations, social security or other dole. [Yamada, 9]

Writing on behalf of the traditionalist leaders, George Yamada echoed these powerful sentiments:

Self-determination is sovereignty—self-rule. Self-determination means that a people have the sovereign right to determine and carry out their own destiny without any alien authority to say whether their acts are good for them or not. Under self-determination a people have a right to make their own mistakes and be accounted for them. The Indian Bureau cannot give self-determination to the Hopi. All it can do is get out of the way. For the truth is, the Hopi want to run their own lives, without a boss over them to restrict it. Nor do they want to boss anyone else around, ... [Yamada, 5].

In a Meeting of Religious Peoples, August 4-5, 1955, Hopi religious leaders noted that

The laws of the Great Spirit must be followed even though they might conflict with other [political] "laws." *All the various instructions of the Great Spirit came from "the seed of one basic instruction: 'You must not kill; you must love your neighbor as yourself.' From this one commandment to respect and reverence life, came all the other commandments:* To tell the truth, to share what we have, to live together so we can help each other out, to take care of our children and old people, the sick and the strangers, friends and enemies, to *not get drunk*, or commit adultery or lie or cheat, or steal, or covet, or get rich because all of these negative acts cause fights and troubles which divide the community into groups too small to support and carry on the life stream. [Yamada, 18]

In short, "the Hopis strive to live with their families

and neighbors according to these ideals of peace and cooperation. They believe that people should help one another, be generous and kind to those in need, and be friendly and good-natured to all." [Bonvillain, 14] One would be hard-pressed to find a better statement of basic voluntaryist principles.

It would be an exaggeration to say that pure voluntaryism flourishes everywhere on the Hopi mesas today, or that the Hopis are a perfect people. Clearly many Hopis have reached an accommodation with the Tribal Council, the state of Arizona, and the U.S. government. Yet a formidable remnant of Yukiama's traditionalist faction survives. More significantly, most Hopi progressives are members of the clans, which continue to oversee collective ownership of tribal lands, to maintain ceremonial life in a highly decentralized manner, and to control access to sacred roads and shrines. The most important decisions are made without voting, and violence is rejected as the solution to all conflicts. Though not voluntaryist in letter, Hopi culture is certainly voluntaryist in spirit. And in all likelihood it will remain so a thousand years hence. ▢

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[I would like to thank Carl Watner for helpful suggestions that improved this article.]

[[Editor's Note: The anarchistic nature of Hopi society was first brought to my attention by my reading of Ammon Hennacy's *THE BOOK OF AMMON* in early 2005. When I mentioned this to the author of this article, he stated that he was already aware of their native voluntaryism, had actually visited the three Hopi mesas, and had read extensively about them. I encouraged him to write an article about the Hopis: this being the result. According to Patrick Coy in his chapter on Hennacy in *A REVOLUTION OF THE HEART* (1988): "Few white people knew more of the Hopi way of life than Hennacy; even fewer were held in higher esteem by the traditional Hopi. They counted him a brother. He ... championed the traditional Hopi because they were his living model of a

pacifist, anarchist society. ... His respect [for them] ran deep enough to consider them 'the spiritual conscience of America'." [pp. 157-158].]

An "Open Letter on Taxes"

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communists names and linking up with the despots, Tito, Chiang, and Franco, we are not fooling the starving millions of Asia. If all the communists were dead we would still have the problem of capitalist overproduction causing depressions and wars. Truman, MacArthur, Stalin, Churchill all vie in calling for peace while preparing for war. Hitler and Mussolini said "Peace" too - again this is THE BIG LIE. Without the income taxes, paid grudgingly by most people, THE BIG LIE of the capitalist imperialists who dominate our lives today would endure but for a moment. For one person to refuse to pay taxes will not stop war but it may start a person here and there to question the whole setup of exploitation and the fallacies of THE BIG LIE, which consist of:

1. The assertion that preparedness prevents war — The fact is that those countries which have had the greatest armies and greatest preparations for war have gone down in defeat. Sparta, Rome, the Great Spanish Empire, Germany, Japan, and now the British Empire is on the skids. This country has become penurious at times because of the cost of armaments but its spirit has still been larceny minded. Accordingly after wars it has relaxed somewhat but has kept up the economic imperialism and diplomatic trickery which led right into another war. Today we are spending untold billions in upholding French and Dutch imperialism in the Far East and our war in Korea has been a farce no matter which way you may look at it. And we are making more bombs and getting into war deeper and deeper.

2. The assertion that the majority is always right — Benjamin Tucker anarchist editor of *LIBERTY* half a century ago, gave the answer to this illusion in unalterable logic: "If one man robs another, as does a highwayman, that is theft and is wrong. If one man robs all other men, as does a despot, that is wrong. But if all other men rob one man, as by the instrument of the ballot and majority rule, that also is wrong." In any moral issue the majority have always been wrong. When the matter is no longer in dispute the majority will corrupt the good by their sheer weight of complacency and orthodoxy, as William James has told us in his incomparable *VARIETIES OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE*. The strongest man in the world is not the dictator, but as Ibsen said, "he who stands most alone." Thoreau put it, "that one on the side of God is a majority."

3. The illusion that there has always been a state and that it is necessary — This final installment of THE BIG LIE is so old that most people will die for it in the mistaken idea that they are helping them-

selves. In the Bible it tells us that, "in those days there were no kings in Israel for each man did what was right in his own heart. "[sic] But the people wanted a king and asked Samuel for one. God told Samuel to tell them that a king would make their sons soldiers. "[sic] All the best of your lands and vineyards and oliveyards he will take away ... you will be his slaves and when you cry out for redress against the king you have chosen for yourselves, the Lord will not listen to you: you asked for a king."

If we were not demoralized by the gadgets of our materialistic civilization and mesmerized by our chant of The American Way of Life we might be quiet for a minute and know that unless our fears and covetousness were not organized in a state they would never amount to more than a McCoy Hatfield feud. It takes a state with taxes from Christians to make A Bombs. It takes a state with politicians seeking to keep in power to make wars. It takes a state giving fat contracts and big wages to make munitions for war. When this Moloch devours our children in the next war we need not cry to God for mercy, for we asked for it. We have been warned and would not listen.

If, Mr. Stuart, after your thought on these matters for the several years I have been refusing to pay taxes here in Phoenix, you come to the point where you realize that "all is vanity and vexation of spirit" in this mad world, you may see fit to renounce your post as tax collector and join me in my exhortation to those who may not be able to live one more day as a prop to this dying system. Did you know that Ernest Crosby, who was Judge of the International Court of Claims in Cairo, Egypt, resigned his job as jurist after reading Tolstoy's THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU, for which he was welcomed by Tolstoy, himself? Therefore for those of us who can take it[,] it is time to break away from THE BIG LIE. Take the first step in refusing to make munitions; in refusing to register for war or military training; in refusing to buy government bonds which are truly slave bonds; and when you can get around to it, refuse to pay income taxes. No matter what we have done toward living the ideal we should remember the words of St. Augustine: "As who says that he has done enough already has perished." ▮

P.S. I earned \$1,701.91 in 1951. I sent my younger daughter at university \$1,200; spent \$225 on living expense; and the remainder on propaganda. I owe \$192 in taxes, and you may rest assured that I as an anarchist, Mr. Stuart, will simply refuse to pay the tax and not resort to political influence to avoid payment.

"[T]he main hope of saving our country really boils down to home education."

—Robert J. Ringer, RESTORING THE AMERICAN DREAM (NY: QED, 1979), Chap. 9, p. 302.

Remarks on the Graduation of William Watner,

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read his TEACH YOUR OWN in 1982. In looking over my copy of that book, just last month, one passage that I had highlighted almost 25 years ago jumped out at me. John Holt wrote that "We can sum up very quickly what people need to teach their own children."

First of all, they have to *like* them, enjoy their company, their physical presence, their energy, foolishness, and passion. They have to enjoy all their talk and questions, and enjoy equally trying to answer those questions. They have to think of their children as friends, indeed very close friends, have to feel happier when they are near and miss them when they are away. They have to trust them as people, respect their fragile dignity, treat them with courtesy, take them seriously. They have to feel in their own hearts some of their children's wonder, curiosity, and excitement about the world. And they have to have enough confidence in themselves, skepticism about the experts, and willingness to be different from most people, to take on themselves the responsibility for their children's learning. [p. 57]

I think that passage speaks eloquently about the relationship Julie and I have had with William and our other children, and it highlights our enjoyment and passion for homeschooling them. Homeschooling has allowed us to follow our consciences, and instill all of the ideals and principles we think to be of highest importance without having them torn down or attacked by someone else. To us, that is the real beauty of John Holt's idea to "teach your own."

Shortly after William was born at home I wrote an article titled "It's Only Just a Beginning": Reflections on Being A New Father" (see THE VOLUNTARYIST No. 26, June 1987). William, as I present you with your homeschool graduation diploma this afternoon, I know you realize you are moving onward in life. In that article I observed that it was my hope that you would learn to think independently and logically, and above all, to act honestly and with integrity. I believe you have accomplished that and I am proud of that accomplishment and everything else you have achieved in your first 18 years of life. In homeschooling you, your mother and I have done our best to arm you with the truth because the truth is the most powerful thing in the world. As I give you this diploma I hope you always cling to the truth and remember that one word of truth outweighs the world. Congratulations William, and keep up the good work! ▮

Remarks on the Graduation of William Watner, Homeschooler - June 4, 2005

By Carl Watner

I'd like to begin my remarks this afternoon by talking a little bit about responsibility. Our responsibility as parents is something we sometimes may not want, but it is a charge that Nature places upon us. We may try to shed accountability but ultimately we are responsible for ourselves, our families, and our children. For me, homeschooling has been my way of responding to the obligation I have to educate my children.

We often forget that parents were (and still are) directly responsible for the education of their children. This was the norm throughout most of American history. In the days before mass public schooling, a large percentage of this country's children were educated at home, or in private or religiously-affiliated schools chosen and paid for by their parents. The right to homeschool, to engage a private instructor, or to send a child to a private school all stemmed from the parents' responsibility to care for and teach their children. The idea that anyone could interfere in the fulfillment of that obligation would have incensed most parents during most of our country's history.

My own interest in homeschooling came about long before I was married. I attended 11 years of public schools in Maryland and intuitively thought there had to be a better way to learn than mass public schooling. Not only were the schools I attended run by the government and paid for by compulsory taxes, but I came to realize that I was being indoctrinated in collectivist and statist ideas. Unfortunately, I encountered the same ideas in college. After much mature reflection, I came to the conclusion that government-directed schooling was (and is) a moral and practical failure.

Homeschooling, on the other hand, has been a huge success for our family. It has taught each child that the price of accomplishment is hard work. They have seen their mother, Julie, with her nose to the grindstone: preparing lesson plans, editing papers, and doing all the other myriad tasks that have gone into their schooling and unschooling programs. Although we are here to celebrate student graduation, let us not forget that homeschooling demands the dedication of the parents, especially the mothers. Julie, would you please come up to the podium. Both William and I want to share with you our thanks for your integral part in the homeschooling process. We want you to know how grateful we are for your part in it. Everybody, let's give Julie a round of applause.

My first exposure to the idea of homeschooling was probably through the books of John Holt. I first

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