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Hands Off The Middle East!

As this editorial is being written, the tinder box of the Middle East is threatening to burst into full-scale war. Whether this new scare fizzles or not, another round of warfare is someday inevitable, and another and another, until the fundamental deep-seated conflicts are at last resolved. The fundamental conflict is that the state of Israel has grabbed an enormous amount of Arab land and territory, in the process manufacturing over a million Palestinian refugees who live their lives in the destitution of refugee camps, and creating a subject population of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian Arabs on the west bank of the Jordan. Israel grabbed this land in two aggressive wars, in each case fueled by American arms and money, and backed by the implicit might of the United States in the wings: the UN partition edict and the ensuing war of 1948; and the war of 1967. (The Israeli attack of 1956 was forced back because, for once, Israel lacked American support.)

Whatever the strength of the Arab forces, they have at least one hand tied behind their backs because everyone with eyes to see knows darn well that, should the Israeli forces get into any sizable trouble, American troops, ships, and planes stand ready to bail them out. The reason is startlingly simple: there ain't no Arab votes in the United States, or Arab groups possessed of political or economic power.

Libertarians have, at last, pretty much agreed upon "isolationism" — on the refusal to intervene in foreign wars — as the proper libertarian foreign policy in a world in which nation-States continue to exist. This principle of isolationism, or "non-intervention", has been increasingly accepted in recent years, among liberals and the Left. And perhaps this concept is still not dead among the Old Right, the isolationists of two and three decades ago. With the Vietnamese and Cambodian conflicts still going on, though with less visible American support, the danger now looms that imperial war and foreign intervention is looming for the U.S. once again, with all their attendant evils of mass murder, increased taxes and militarism, and perhaps conscription as well. It is time for the anti-war, anti-intervention forces to have the courage to apply their principles to the Middle East, and not to let their vital principles be overridden by the temptations of ethnic chauvinism. It is time to call upon the United States to get completely out of Middle Eastern politics, to stop sending aid to either side, and to let the contending parties slug it out in any war that may arise without a hint of interference on our part. And not the least of the beneficial results of such rigorous non-intervention will be to avoid any possibility of becoming enmeshed in a disastrous global conflict. Hands off the Middle East!

Libertarians And Culture: A Challenge

By James D. Davidson

How many libertarians would it take to save America? There is a tricky question. I have no idea what the answer is, but I am sure that it is directly proportional to the quality of person involved. If every individual who now considers himself a "libertarian" were possessed of the brains, dedication, and winning personality of Professor Rothbard, then the task would long since have been complete. On the other hand, if libertarians were mostly an assortment of low-life bums, it would require about 150 million of them. I present this calculation to explain what might otherwise seem to be a gratuitous attack upon some of our friends who are "out of it" culturally.

Why be concerned with aspects of taste? Nothing is more basic to the libertarian credo than the right of any man to live like a slob if he does so peacefully. True enough. But as a question of strategy, even died-in-the-wool-slobs could be asked to forgo their immediate gratification as a short-term sacrifice. For example, if removing the plastic slipcovers from living room furniture would improve the rate of conversion in home meetings, then it might be worthwhile. When freedom is won, the plastic slipcovers could go back on, there to remain, day and night forever. The same is true of gaudy jewelry. No matter how fetching it seems to the

wearer, he might take it off to help the cause. I have personally encountered individuals who showed great potential as libertarians, but who fell away from libertarian circles out of fear their backs were not strong enough to sport the mandatory ten pound gilded dollar sign.

Too many libertarians turn off potential converts by demonstrating retarded cultural awareness. While the veracity of economic arguments is in no way affected by cultural taste, sociology tells us that the rules of assortive mating apply to all voluntary associations. Well educated people, as a rule, do not prefer to associate with folks who applaud between movements of a symphony or drink from a finger bowl. Such behavior has down-home populist appeal. But the down-home populists are not the opinion leaders and intellectuals who must be convinced before freedom is accepted in our present society. If the stereotyped libertarian is a cultural clod, then severe inhibitions against advocating libertarian ideas will slow the progress of the movement.

The noticeable craze for "science fiction" in libertarian circles provides a good case in point. One can hardly hand a copy of a libertarian journal to a sophisticated reader without apologizing for the imitation

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Heinlein drivel which too often accompanies sound economic, philosophic and historical analyses. The literature of fantasy has a place somewhere but it need not be incorporated as an integral part of libertarian thought. (It is as if all libertarians were involved fanatically in the sport of metal detection. If jabber about metal detectors and treasure hunts filled libertarian publications the result would be enhanced satisfaction of a few readers, with the permanent alienation of everyone else.) More telling still is the fact that science fiction appeals invariably to individuals who have never studied serious literature. These are emphatically not the opinion molders and influential intellectuals who must be reached.

One can make a case that much of what passes for received culture is ridiculous. And so it may be. But in order to make that case effectively, one must know what received culture is. A passing acquaintance with the major literary figures is essential to any convincing case against them. When libertarians reveal their literary ignorance, as many do, their other opinions are discounted as well.

Much of the blame for identification of libertarianism with schlock culture must be laid upon Ayn Rand, a woman of undoubted intellect who is nevertheless flamboyantly ignorant of many areas of human achievement. As Professor Rothbard has trenchantly noted, Miss Rand's cultural preferences, justified with elaborate mumbo-jumbo, boil down to nothing more than a fondness for the literature and music which were in vogue when she was growing up in Russia after the turn of the century. This is perfectly understandable nostalgia. But Ayn Rand's girlhood memories hardly provide the basis for discerning persons interested in literature and music. Russia, after all, was and is a cultural backwater. The 18th century never happened in Russia. The 17th century, a time of great achievement in English literature, was still the Middle Ages east of Germany.

Libertarians who depend upon Miss Rand's shaky cultural guidance, neglect the more plausible identity between libertarian principles and classical literature for an identification with the woolly excesses of Romanticism. The virtues of a John Milton, for example, a true libertarian, are downplayed on behalf of the sentimentalism of 19th Century French Romantics. This is in spite of the fact that almost all intellectual historians agree that the true significance of Romanticism was to further collectivism. Even conservative Romantics such as Joseph de Maistre, Chateaubriand, and de Bonald were enthusiastic advocates of absolute state authority and subordination of the individual. The irrational content common to all Romantic thinking has been thoroughly identified. Professor Stephen Tonsor, the eminent historian, has made the case that the philosophy of Karl Marx is best explained as an incorporation of typical Romantic attitudes. So why be blindly attached to Romanticism? Its philosophic appeal should be almost nil for a perceptive libertarian. Certainly, one ought not to feel that a consistent friend of freedom is obliged to like Romantic writers in order to keep his self-esteem intact.

A similar case could be made against Ayn Rand's taste in music. She is fond of Romantic music, which has many appealing qualities. But Rand's philosophizing about musicology is even more shaky than that of the Marxist critics who profess to identify bourgeois deviations on the basis of note intervals and sequences. The fact that the music which is popular in Communist Russia today is largely similar to that which Rand advances as ideal for libertarians ought to give one pause. For all but the most perceptive student of philosophy, music, has no literal meaning. Where scholars have attempted to demonstrate an objective content to music, as Deryck Cooke did in *The Language of Music*, the attempt in no way resembles Miss Rand's arguments. More persuasive than the ideological explanations is the fact that Miss Rand and Russia's present rulers grew up together, listening to more or less the same music.

The suggestion that it is any more rational to prefer Tchaikovsky to Bach is ludicrous. It is merely a preference. To dress it in pseudo-philosophic trappings is to invite ridicule. The spectacle of Randians drooling in unison over the same composers turns off disinterested observers. One could easily detest Chopin and admire Claude Gervaise,

Thomas Morely, John Dowland, and William Byrd. This delectation would provide no clue to philosophic understanding. No one who thinks otherwise among libertarians is sufficiently educated to make the case which would be necessary to sustain his position.

There are other idiosyncrasies among libertarians which tend to limit their effectiveness in spreading ideas among the intellectual and opinion-molding class. Many libertarians dress in poor taste. This defies the predisposition of most persons to like others who are most like them. When libertarians who dress like engineers try to persuade an editor of their position, they have two strikes against them at the outset. In order to be acceptable to opinion makers, libertarians should be indistinguishable, by appearance, from the people one would find normally in association with opinion makers. The suggestion here is not that one ape fashion trends, but merely be aware of the dress of those he intends to influence. Chances are that dressing sensitively is more important than a half a dozen syllogisms.

Many similar complaints about bad taste among libertarians could be extended. But it would be futile to elaborate the argument further. Most persons do not value freedom, and have never thought about anything. When someone is an exception to those unhappy generalizations it is probably too much to hope that he will also have a sense for public relations. Even more futile is the hope that the average libertarian, in addition to having a winning personality, will have the dedication and brains to elaborate libertarian theory on his own. Few persons will ever be philosophers. In spite of the pretensions of Randians that man is a rational animal, even most Randians have never had an original thought in their lives. Their rationality in solving proximate problems does not contradict this. It can be likened to the actions of a cat avoiding a car in the street. The fact that they act and act rationally promises nothing about their capacity for philosophy. The vast majority of men, libertarians no less than others, enjoy a free ride because of the mental efforts of a few individuals.

It is useless to develop arguments in epistemology for persons of normal intelligence, regardless of their dedication to freedom. All they will ever understand is the fleeting highlights; the conclusions which are enough. Let those who are not philosophers leave philosophy in peace. Observation of the proven principle of the division of labor would suggest that good thinkers do the thinking and those who are not, but interested in promoting freedom, provide whatever their skills and disposition allow. If that means hustling for converts, it could also include casting off the cheap, schlock dollar sign jewelry, buying some new clothes, burying the plastic slip covers; turning from Mickey Spilane to John Milton, listening to Bach, and otherwise conducting oneself as fittingly as one can to strike up contacts among persons it would be important to convert.

Hopefully (from the point of view of hastening the day of ultimate success) many of the libertarians scattered through America, even those with the worst of taste, are persons of genuine intellectual potential. For those who can understand a philosophic argument well enough to make something of it, I have a suggestion whereby they could stick with the element of fantasy which they love in science fiction, while reaching an important and neglected group of intellectuals. Throw away the science fiction magazines and subscribe to *The Journal of Theological Studies* (c/o the Clarendon Press, Oxford) and *The Harvard Theological Review*. This is absolutely the best way of purging residual Randism. Reading these two journals, both of which boast works of superb scholarship, you will notice an amazing thing. There is just as much libertarian content in some religions fantasy as there is in Heinlein. But it is far better for you. The arguments of the theologians are still drawn out with Thomistic rigor, and scholarly skill. Since it is common knowledge that most theologians don't believe in God, few of the arguments will be offensive to other than militant atheists. But even better than the fantasies of the science fiction writers, is the earnest and profound concern of the theologians for great issues: the well-being of the individual man in his ultimate geopolitical environment. This high moral concern is exactly what one needs to be a libertarian. The a priori mode of argument is a familiar one to those who have studied libertarian economics. The disposition, then, among theologians is not more unkind to the progress of libertarian thought than is the case among science fiction fans.

If more libertarians would fall in among theologians, the result could be a progress of pro-freedom arguments among that group with a still-considerable influence. And the theologians might do us the favor of introducing the narrowly educated libertarians to the broad outlines of Western culture. They might even hook a few Randians on Bach. ■

Send Money!

In the five years of existence of the **Lib. Forum**, we have not made a pitch for money for any cause or group, even for ourselves. But we now urge all libertarians or even quasi-libertarians to send as much money as they can spare, and right away, to the Youngstein for Mayor cause in New York City. For, by dint of heroic efforts and operating on a shoestring, the intrepid workers of the Free Libertarian Party managed to amass over 20,000 signatures (!!!) to put the entire mayoral slate on the ballot, including the Manhattan candidates headed by Gary Greenberg as the only opponent of the aging Frank Hogan for District Attorney.

This is it: this is what makes party activity worthwhile — the couple of months before Election Day when the party and its candidates can spread its message to an often willing electorate. An intelligent and lovely candidate, Fran Youngstein, has been waging a remarkably active campaign, and has won recognition and publicity on television, radio, in the press, and in public forums. Fran and the FLP already have earned at least recognition among broad masses of the public; so that many men-

in-the-street have heard the name and are at least vaguely familiar with our principles. There is no better time for a libertarian dollar to be contributed with more explosive effect. Furthermore, several outstanding advertising and other media people have joined the campaign, and they have already drafted a potential full-page ad in the prestigious *New York Times* which will be a knockout — if the campaign can raise the money, fast, to pay for the ad. We need \$11,600 to put this sockeroo of an ad in the *Times*. How about it, libertarians; how about investing some money in your ideals and your lives and liberties?

Send your contributions, please, to the:

Youngstein for Mayor Committee,
Free Libertarian Party,
Suite 201,
15 West 38th St.
New York, N. Y. 10018.

'The Libertarian': The Gospel According To LeFevre

Robert LeFevre has been silent — at least in print — for quite a while, and now he is back with a minibook, **The Libertarian**, which has been billed as a convenient and presumably objective introduction to libertarianism and the current libertarian movement. It is not; it is LeFevre riding his familiar hobby horses, with some further errors of fact thrown into the pot. Also added is the irritating habit of referring to his own views as "the moralist" position, so that he is the moralist and all the rest of us are, by implication, amoral pragmatists and sinners. Presumably, LeFevre has yet to learn that positions differing from his own may not only be within the dissident's right to hold, but may be perfectly moral as well.

LeFevre's peculiar variant of the libertarian position is that he holds defensive violence — the use of violence to defend one's person or property against violent attack — to be just as immoral as aggressive violence itself. Defense against force is, for LeFevre, equally as immoral as the initiation of force against another. In short, to LeFevre, it is violence *per se* that is immoral (indeed, virtually the only immorality), and not the use that is made of it. The entire LeFevrian political philosophy is a logical derivation from this basic moral axiom. But I submit that this axiom is simply balderdash, derivable from nothing in the nature of man or the universe, an *ad hoc* precept imported from God knows where. It is not an accident that most people, libertarians and non-libertarians alike, regard this ultra-pacifist axiom as balderdash as well.

It is not that LeFevre is opposed to the rights of private property. On the contrary, he upholds them and denounces aggression against them. Fine; except that he equally denounces the use of force to repel such aggression. To be more precise, he divides up the defense function into several parts: "protection", defense (in hot-encounters), retaliation, and punishment. The last three are all condemned by LeFevre as the immoral use of violence, which allows one only "protection", a most attenuated concept which boils down to installing "a good bolt lock" on one's door. For the rest, we are abjured to confine ourselves to attempting to reason with and persuade the aggressor as he is moving in on us. LeFevre on hot-encounters, e.g. being mugged on the street, reasons as follows:

"The pacifists and moralists (i.e. LeFevre), while admitting that they, too, might do anything at all under the pressure of expedience, contend that they should not violate the boundaries of an aggressor, and if they do in the excitement of the occasion, they would be in error and performing a wrongful act." (LeFevre, p. 42).

LeFevre's seeming concession about the pressure of the moment is, of course, irrelevant: the point is that he is condemning as evil and wrongful the "violation of the boundaries of an aggressor." As far as I am

concerned — and presumably this also holds for most other libertarians — I don't give a damn about violating an aggressor's "boundaries." In fact, the speedier and more effective such "violation" the better, in order to stop the aggression.

Conservatives often worry, and for good reason, about the "coddling of criminals" that goes on in our current society. But Robert LeFevre would elevate such coddling to the status of a high-flown axiom: beyond a stout lock and gentle persuasion, nothing can morally be done to stop a criminal in his aggression, to compel restitution or retribution for his crime, or to see to it that he doesn't commit aggression again.

If I were addicted to *ad hominem* arguments, I could point out that a stout lock might do well in the peaceful climes of Orange County, California, but that it would hardly suffice against the predatory muggers of New York City or Washington, D. C. And in a hot encounter with a mugger, LeFevre may be content to try to "remotivate the aggressor by peaceful means" on the spot, but most of us are scarcely willing to rely on what will be, in that situation, a flimsy reed indeed.

But what about the stout lock? I submit that LeFevre, so enamoured of "boundary" arguments, cannot sustain the boundaries of his definition of "protection" with any proper precision. If a stout lock is OK for LeFevre, I presume that a fence would be too. But what about an electrified fence? Our precious criminal, trying to get over such a fence, is going to have his "boundaries" very much violated. Or, if a mildly electrified fence is OK with LeFevre, how about a severely electrified fence, which might well send our criminal to Kingdom Come? Or, how about a fence which, if violated automatically discharges a bullet into the offender? Or, going the other way, if LeFevre would condemn an electrified fence as immoral, how about a simple barbed wire fence? After all, the barbed wire might tear at our criminal's bodily boundary. And even without the barbed wire, the poor criminal might hurt himself trying to climb the fence, or even in trying to pry open the lock.

The alternative, then, to LeFevre's curious moral axiom is to hold, not that all violence is immoral, but that only aggressive violence deserves the label, and that defensive violence is perfectly moral, proper, and legitimate. Those of us, then, who are not absolute pacifists are *not* amoral pragmatists or believers in "situational ethics", as LeFevre believes; it is simply that we hold a very different moral axiom for the libertarian creed.

In his anxiety to attack all defensive violence from whatever source, LeFevre goes so far as to make common cause with the statists in denying the workability of anarcho-capitalism, with its belief in private, competing defense agencies on the free market. Here he repeats the old statist canards about what would happen if A belongs to one agency and B another, and if A accuses B of a crime. Here his scenario, as usual,

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Gospel According To LeFevre —

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assumes that market defense agencies would be total fools ignorant of how arbitration and judicial service could be provided on the market or of how beneficial such agreed-upon services would be for their own profits. Here I would simply refer LeFevre to various accounts of how anarcho-capitalism could work that have been published in recent years: including my own, Wollstein, Perkins, and Friedman. Unfortunately, LeFevre writes as if none of this has been written or thought about.

Pressing on to attack the Libertarian Party or any political activity whatever among libertarians, LeFevre claims that the consistent libertarian must be "a-political". Why? Because, the politically active libertarian is demanding a society "closed" to any but libertarian concepts." In contrast, the "a-political" libertarian wants an "open" society in which anyone can believe anything he wishes. This is a curious position, since the "political" libertarian wants the same thing; but, asserts LeFevre, the "political" libertarian seeks to "impose his views (in support of liberty) upon others." (p. 56).

This of course is a distortion of the "political" libertarian position. What we want is not to impose any "views" on anyone, but to combat and repress aggression against person and property. But there we have it, because that, too, according to LeFevrian axioms, is just as immoral as aggression itself. The "politics" turns out to be simply trying to use force to prevent forcible aggression, and we are back philosophically to what we do with the mugger in the hot-encounter. But the implications of the LeFevrean position are even more bizarre. For what he is saying is that any use of the political process (i.e. force) is as immoral as any other, and that therefore, for example, while voting for the draft is admittedly evil and immoral, voting to repeal the draft is equally immoral. For, then, you see, the proponents of the criminal draft are being deprived of what they would like to be doing; in a basic sense, they are being forced to leave the rest of us alone.

The important point here is that LeFevre's dogmatic hostility to libertarian political action has really nothing to do with the qualms that all of us have in associating with the State apparatus. It really has nothing to do with widespread worries about capitulating to a lust for power. It stems clearly and single-mindedly from LeFevre's basic axiom that defensive and aggressive force are equally evil and equally to be condemned. One can admire LeFevre for his consistency, but that cannot prevent us from a hard and critical look at the basic absurdity of his central axiom, an absurdity which makes the rest of his structure fall to the ground.

Given his political philosophy, there is little point in dwelling on the fact that LeFevre has no real strategy for the recovery of liberty and for the liquidation or even the whittling away of statism. Violent revolution, political action, anything that smacks of defensive force in any sense is equally condemned. All that leaves us with is to persuade the mugger, to persuade the State to resign and liquidate itself en masse. The rest of us can only wish LeFevre luck in this task, while also however employing other means (such as Libertarian Party activity) which we deem to be perfectly moral.

This brings me to LeFevre's errors of fact about myself in this booklet. Describing me, he writes: "Rothbard has not always been predictable. He began with conservative economic leanings, then moved into the establishment of the left, attracting followers as he went. Disenchanted with this flirtation, he backed away and returned to a relatively pure libertarian position as an economist." (p. 12) Sternly eschewing the temptation to delve into LeFevre's own past peccadilloes and lapses from "predictability", I must again state that this description of my activities is pure balderdash. My "conservative" or libertarian economic leanings — indeed my libertarian position as a whole, — have remained fixed and unchanging for approximately twenty-five years. My "flirtation" with some of the New Left in the 1960's was simply a recognition of many libertarian elements that then existed in that movement. Indeed, a little later on, LeFevre himself engages in such "flirtation" by commending the libertarian contributions of former New Left leader Carl Oglesby (p. 19). Apparently what is sauce for the LeFevrian goose is not sauce for the gander.

Furthermore, fruitful collaboration with the sensible and quasi-libertarian elements and remnants of the New Left continues to the present-day. And not only with Carl Oglesby. Myself and many other

Revolution In Chile

It looked like the theorists of the Left had it all worked about Revolutions. Revolutions were admirable events in which the People rose up, in a series of strikes against the oppressive bourgeois State, building pressure from below until the final moment when armed struggle was used to deliver the coup de grace to the State apparatus. After the victory, retribution was to be meted out to the remnants of the old ruling class enemy; and the retributive process, while admittedly stern, was treated as either (a) giving the old ruling class its just deserts as well as guarding against the threat of a counter-revolution; and/or (b) the regrettable but insignificant excesses attendant on any required historical change. You can't make an omelet, we were told long ago, without breaking some eggs. Furthermore, in a genuine revolution, organized women rise to the fore, rebelling thereby also against the super-exploitation meted out to their gender.

So then Revolution came to Chile. Acting against the oppression of Allende's attempt to impose Marxian socialism, against intensified nationalization, against an inflation that tripled the price level over the last year, against a price control structure that caused widespread shortages of food and other commodities, against armed hordes of Marxist workers who seized factories with Allendist consent, the people rose up. For make no mistake, Chile was not just another Latin-American military coup by the armed forces. The Chilean armed forces had had a long tradition of not interfering in national politics, however distasteful. What they faced was a genuine revolutionary process rising spontaneously from below — rising, not from "outside agitators" as counter-revolutionaries always charge, but from the deeply felt grievances against the regime suffered by the people themselves. The spark was set off by the nation's self-employed truckers, the heart of Chile's entire transportation system; the truckers went out on strike in protest against impending Allendist nationalization. After weeks of heroic strike activity by the truckers, the rest of the oppressed middle class also went on strike: the professionals, the small shopkeepers, etc. And the super-exploited women rose up too; organized anti-socialist women played a large part in the revolutionary pressure and demonstrations. Then, as in the Left Revolutionary script, armed force was used as the final smashing blow to the Allendist state apparatus, after which a process of revolutionary retribution has ensued.

So fine; did, then, our Leftist theorists hail the Chilean Revolution as a shining new example of revolutionary success? You can bet your sweet life they did not. Not in a long while have we seen such a mass orgy of

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libertarian scholars continue to have fruitful collaboration, for example, with such New Left historians and revisionists as Ronald Radosh, Lloyd Gardner, and Barton Bernstein, and New Left historian Gabriel Kolko's great works have been used to good effect by Gary Allen and other Birch Society writers. Also I and other libertarians interested in combatting public schooling and compulsory education continue to collaborate fruitfully with such New Left educational theorists as John Holt, Joel Spring, and Ivan Illich. Ron Radosh and myself recently co-edited a book, *A New History of Leviathan*, which contained articles critical of twentieth-century American statism by both libertarian and New Left historians.

As for the rest of the New Left, it disappeared in an orgy of Leninist sects and frenzied bomb-throwing, and few of us will mourn its demise.

But of course I do believe in the propriety (if not always the expediency) of defensive force against aggression, and therefore I seek always, as a "political activist", to find ways and means to whittle down State power in any given historical period, and to form whatever alliances are called for in particular historical circumstances to carry forth this task (e.g. alliance with the Left against conscription in one period, with the Right against income taxes in the same or another period, etc.) Hence, what LeFevre chooses to see as "unpredictability" is really the employment of strategy in attempting to whittle down State power and to expand the area of human liberty. So be it; but let it be noted that for LeFevre, any libertarian believing in defensive force and wishing to do something to improve the prospects for liberty will reap a similar complaint. Through it all, of course, Bob LeFevre remains all too predictable, hurling his anathemas at anyone who does not share his peculiar moral axioms. ■

Revolution In Chile —

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blubbing and hand-wringing as we have over the fallen Allendist collectivists. But fellows, how about the Inevitable Excesses of the Revolution? How about the necessity to prevent a counter-revolution? I guess it depends on whose ox is being gored. Because one vital lesson that the Left theorists of Revolution have failed to learn is that genuine grievances can and do occur under any State, including a Marxian State, and that therefore revolutions against Marxism can be just as genuine as revolutions on its behalf.

But what about all the weeping and wailing about the abolition of "Chilean democracy?" Well, in the first place, we all learned from the Revolutionaries about the use of the democratic form to camouflage the realities of State despotism. And we learned from Marcuse about the "repressive tolerance" in which democratic forms are used to fool the masses into accepting the State. And, furthermore, Allendism wasn't all that democratic. Allende was elected by one third of the electorate, and his voting support never rose above 40%. And so The People, restricted by the formalistic trappings of the legal structure, brushed aside petty legalism to cast aside Allendist oppression. (And besides, Allende, scion of a wealthy family, looked and acted like a "bourgeois", didn't he?)

But weren't the workers and peasants solidly behind Allende? Not really. The peasants had soured on the Allende regime when its land reform failed to grant the promised land to the individual peasants, and instead tried to force the peasants onto State farms: a fate even worse than feudal landlordism. Also, food prices were kept far below the free market levels by severe price control, and this led to widespread distress on the farms as well as food shortages in the cities. It is true that the urban workers, coddled by subsidies and by compulsory makework imposed by the regime, supported Allende, but that was scarcely enough.

So it turns out that the Left is narrowly selective in its support of People's Revolutions; only Marxist People's Revolutions will do. There is no question about the fact that the Allendist Marxists had brought Chile to the brink of economic and social disaster; in addition to the ruinous inflation, price controls, and shortages, the nationalized industries could produce very little under Marxian management. The Chilean economy was grinding to a halt, and the Revolution has now lanced the boil; the Revolutionaries have a glorious opportunity to set Chile on the road to freedom.

What will they do with this opportunity? The issue is still in doubt. Apparently, most of the nationalized industries have been returned to their private owners, and the State farms have been granted to the peasants. Foreign investment is being welcomed once again. And the regime has hired a team of bright young U.S.-trained economists who advise a return to a free market and open competition. This would mean not only elimination of price controls and of the special measures artificially holding down the price of food, but the eradication of the high protective tariffs behind which inefficient domestic manufactures have long sprouted. If the economists' free market recommendations are heeded, that would be great, and prospects look favorable. But on the other hand, it looks certain that the Chilean State will hang on to its nationalized copper mines, with their drastic drop in output under State rule; and as long as they do that, how can the new regime claim to be pursuing a policy of free markets? And not only that, but the price controls still in effect are being upheld by the new regime's shooting of people who sell goods at "black market" prices. The new revolutionary Chile claims to be dedicated to the "extermination of Marxism" and to the "extirpation of the Marxist cancer." (What grand rhetoric! You don't get to hardly hear any of that no more!) But how can a regime "extirpate the Marxist cancer" when it shoots black marketeers and hangs on to its nationalized copper mines?

One interesting side effect of the Chilean Revolution: We have heard for years the Social Democrat myth that there's nothing wrong with Communism except the suppression of free elections, and that therefore no one would really object to a Communist regime if the Communists only eschewed violent revolution and stuck to "peaceful," democratic forms. A corollary Social Democratic myth is that Communists or Marxist-Leninists have never risen to power via free elections. But first there was tiny San Marino, which freely elected a Communist government, after which Italy, which totally surrounds San Marino, blockaded the little country until the Communist regime was deposed.

Friedman's Value-Free Value: Human Liberty

By Tibor R. Machan

In his exciting book *The Machinery of Freedom* — which deserves thorough study from those interested in how well a market system can solve problems most of us acknowledge require solution — David Friedman makes some by now familiar disclaimers about the usefulness of morality in political discourse and action. He tells us that "I have said almost nothing about rights, ethics, good and bad, right and wrong, although these are matters central to the ideas of most libertarians." He goes on to explain that he has "couched (the) argument throughout in terms of practicality."

Friedman expands on the decision to avoid moral questions by telling us that "I have found that it is much easier to persuade people with practical arguments than with ethical arguments." And he ends the section which contains these disclaimers — a single page long, entitled "Postscript for perfectionists" — with the observation: "I have never met a socialist who wanted the kind of society that I think socialism would produce." (p. 223)

For succinctness David Friedman must especially be commended. Of all the "value-free" defenses of human liberty — an odd notion right off — Friedman's is the least cumbersome as well as the most revealing. I will not attend to anything but these remarks of his, mainly because they pertain most directly to the kind of work I consider valuable in the protection and preservation of liberty. Indeed the sorts of matters Friedman would consider less likely to succeed in efforts to establish greater liberty are considered by me "central." Moreover, maybe due to my personal experiences that have been very different from Friedman's, I venture to say there are socialists who want the kind of society socialism produces. I lived in such a society and indeed many around me wanted it badly enough to wipe out those who preferred otherwise. But these matters may be the result of Friedman's not having met enough socialists.

To turn to this discussion by Friedman, let me say first that he does indeed say a lot about rights — he speaks of property rights throughout the book. And he says a great deal about good and bad, right and wrong — as when he tells us that "I have described what should be done, but not who should organize and control it." (p. 220) The "should" is here surely something like the "should" of morality — Friedman then is describing the right sort of actions to be taken by us. What he does not tell us is, indeed — and to some deficiency of his thesis — why these are the right things to do. Perhaps he would answer: Because they will produce liberty. But it still needs to be learned why that is good. And here Friedman says he has only "practical arguments" to offer. Such arguments usually take the form of "If one's purpose or goal is X, then, by reason of our familiarity with the better and worse ways to achieve X, one should do such and such." Thus to become free, we should give up government or the state. Since the argument is conditional, one who does not have as his purpose to become free has the logical right to reject the advice offered.

Friedman may be right, to think that most people want to be free but just don't know how to do it. So not a political treatise but a manual for liberty will achieve enough to establish the required case. But then the case serves only those who already want freedom. The case for freedom is assumed, the audience is taken to have bought it prior to coming to Friedman's advisory bureau.

That is why Friedman must spend some time persuading the reader that there are no socialists who really (deep in their hearts) want what

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And then there was the freely elected Popular Front government of Guatemala, overthrown by an armed invasion fueled by the CIA. But now we have the clincher: a freely elected Marxist-Leninist government overthrown by popular armed struggle. The strategic possibility of a peaceful, democratic road to Marxism turns out to be virtually nil. And the real menace of Marxism is clearly not the kind of route it adopts to try to gain power, whether violent or democratic; the real menace is the kind of State it imposes once it gets there.

Friedman's Value-Free Value —

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socialism amounts to, lack of freedom, or slavery. But his efforts here are indeed meager to the task. They seem, although perhaps only facetiously to rest on Friedman's having met a select class of socialists — those who don't want socialism.

But this may not be fair. Don't all people want freedom? In a sense most, at least, do — for themselves (although you will find hosts of them defending taxation, laws prohibiting hundreds of sorts of activities on their part). Taking it that most people want freedom, this usually amounts to wanting others off one's back in areas of activities one wants to perform. But not in those one cares little about. So most people want a type of freedom that does not quite amount to the political liberty Friedman and other libertarians want: the freedom to do what they consider the right things, the freedom to act as one should act. But not the freedom to do what one should not do — never mind that these doings may have nothing to do with hurting others, enslaving them or the like. The kind of liberty, then, that most people want (implicitly — for few of them expound on it fully rationally) is what Professor John O. Nelson has called the continental conception (Hegelian or neo-Hegelian/Marxist type) of freedom. (Two sources should suffice to get one clear on this matter: Nelson's own essay in my forthcoming anthology *The Libertarian Alternative: Essays in Social and Political Philosophy*, to be out from Nelson-Hall Co., Chicago, in November 1973, and Andrew McLaughlin's essay "Freedom versus Capitalism" in Dorothy James *Outside Looking In*, out from Harper and Row Publishers in Spring 1972.) Its basic feature is that freedom is the power to do the right thing, while slavery is the weakness or impotence that leads to doing wrong.

Surely Friedman does not have this sort of liberty in mind. Yet this is what most people want — judging by their actions and acquiescence concerning political and legal practices today. The unproven but assumed premise Friedman's practical arguments require is not the one Friedman has succeeded in finding even among those socialists he has met. Their meaning of the concept "freedom" is totally alien to what I take to be Friedman's.

None of this shows that the practical arguments have no value, only that they do not do the work Friedman asks of them — to show how we should get where "almost everyone" wants to get, to a free society. Nor does Friedman fail to give support to liberty with his able delineation of how its absence has produced all sorts of misery for people. What he hasn't shown is why it is **wrong** to produce such misery. And do not say — well that is obvious. The lover of freedom is not hostile to the misery of those who would obstruct it. After all, thieves and murderers should be miserable in consequences of what they have done. A clear identification of why misery, through the absence of liberty in the lives of those who have not murdered and stolen, should not obtain is, then, not provided by Friedman.

Let me now touch on a very practical problem that arises by "couching arguments in terms of practicality." Ralph Nader and David Friedman both agree that the Fed's regulatory agents have done more harm than good for us all. But Nader advises that therefore we should make them more efficient, install better people, expand the powers of these people, etc., while David Friedman — as well as Milton Friedman and the entire Chicago crew — counsels that therefore we should get rid of these people, fire them, and leave people free to run their business in voluntary cooperation.

The source of the discrepancy in the face of such clear agreement should interest the value-free folks. **Ralph Nader has values!** Oh, he may be unable to demonstrate their validity, to justify them. But we might say that "these values are widely held by people." They include a safe toy, harmless drug, lack of soot in the air, low prices, protection from nasty businessmen, the reduction of racial prejudice, etc., etc. These are the values Nader has in mind securing by way of improving the quality of regulation, by electing and appointing virtuous statisticians. These are the goods that he accepts, the ethical purposes for which he asks for the statist measures we all know well.

Without benefit of ethics Friedman can respond to Nader only by citing cost/efficiency data. But Nader says: wait until I get the right folks in the driver's seat, see if we cannot have the service for the cost and the efficiency of the performance to attain our goals. But, says Friedman, history speaks against that. Nader can then say: history hasn't heard of

Technology Forever *

By Jerome Tuccille

Technology and revolution. At first glance the words do not sit well together, and yet our "dehumanizing" technology may transform the dream of an open-ended, mass-market, "people's" paradise into a living reality. Technology may well be the factor that brings the revolution to a close.

This is ironic, in a way, since the people with the greatest vested interest in revolutionary change have been the most vocal opponents of the new technology. The "professional" revolutionists among us have been strutting around the countryside wailing against our "love affair with machines," our "obsession with growth and progress," conjuring apocalyptic visions of a Doomsday Society over-peopled, over-polluted, over-mechanized, visions of a gutless humanity with the heart and

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*A Chapter from Tuccille's forthcoming book, *Paradise Found: A Nonfiction Romance*.

me — and anyway, is there nothing new under the sun? Might it not happen this time? As a good empiricist, Friedman cannot resort to his kind of logic here. For indeed, as the high prince of empiricism, Hume, has told us, anything might happen so far as reason is concerned.


Yet this again might sound unfair. So, OK. Strict deductive logic does not prove the impossibility of Nader's success. Surely good common sense militates against it, and that should be enough.

Unfortunately here Friedmanesque arguments cannot match the ethical ones. The plain fact is that where moral matters are involved we often do and should ignore cost and efficiency. Bad swimmers in expensive suits will jump to save drowning friends — the goal is so important that risk of failure and ultimate injury to self simply have no significance. Nader, then, would simply admit that, granted it isn't likely that the Feds will do much to solve our problems, to achieve our values, our morally respectable — even commendable — goals, these are too important to give up in the face of minor matters such as cost and impending failure. So the drowning person may not be saved — it looks very unlikely from here that we can do much for the chap. But, dammit, trying itself is better than nothing, even at great risks. (You think up your own examples — there are lots.)

In short, in the face of values that have even the appearance of moral validity, efficiency, practicality and the host of so called value-free considerations are impotent. Yes, in the practical task of persuading people, just what Friedman is after!

To fight the argument that Nader and Co. offer one has to produce a moral argument that shows that doing what the Feds do — even cheaply and efficiently, not as they have done it thus far — is **wrong**. We need not even bother to show that what Nader wants to achieve is itself wrong — quite the contrary, we may have to accept that unsafe toys are bad, that dangerous drugs and vicious businessmen are all bad. The issue is whether it is good to deprive others of their liberty to prevent the occurrence of these bad things; not whether we at times — even most of the time — fail to achieve the goals Nader has in mind without incredible cost and inefficiency. That is to be expected when great things are at stake. No, we are concerned with whether Nader's suggested cures, even when perfectly administered, at low cost, are not in fact worse for us than what he aims to avert with them.

Thus: imprisoning people because they might engage in "monopolistic" practices — is that not a violation of their human rights; does it not violate the principle "innocent until proven guilty" (not: proven capable of guilt); does forcing toymakers to produce this instead of that kind of toy because the latter might harm some child presume guilt before proof? Should people be deprived of honest earnings and acquisitions just so others' safety and pleasure be achieved? In short, should force be used to achieve some admittedly admirable goals? And unless a moral argument can be produced, one that can stand the test of scrutiny, the Naders of our land have the better side of the argument — morality versus value-free liberty. (Just consider: valued purposes and goals versus value-free purposes and goals — how can they miss?)

But enough. Friedman's moral advice against offering moral advice lacks what much of his competent book lacks — moral justification. Yet the machinery of freedom needs just that. 

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brains bred out of it, capable only of stumbling trance-like into the future, hurtling mindlessly toward certain oblivion. By and large, our Doomsayers have been clamoring for a return to an idyllic past which never existed in reality, a green, halcyon, agricultural fairyland where everyone can play flutes under the trees, swim in rivers of May wine strewn with strawberries, and grab each other's buttocks as they roll naked among the wildflowers. Strangely enough, these seventeenth-century wonderlands are always devoid of such tacky annoyances as red ants, poison ivy, snapping turtles, and coldspells. Nature is always kind, the month is always May, and the weather is always balmy in Dreamland. Somehow feudalism, poverty, disease, and hunger — all of which were rampant in the pre-industrial economy — have vanished into the Ether.

Well all this is very pretty, very romantic, and very unrealistic. If we are going to have our paradise on earth it will only be by harnessing our technology, by controlling it totally and making it subservient to our own desires — not by abandoning it to the Wasteland of history. For it is only technology which can tidy up the mess we have already made, provide us with the clean environment we all want, free us of the tyrannies of hunger, poverty, disease, and death, and deliver a genuine paradise on earth. Also, it is only technology that can remove one of the final barriers between us and the anarchic or democratic ideal: the tyranny of isolation, alienation, and provincialism.

Perhaps the greatest enemy of a universal utopia is the distrust and intolerance of our fellow man bred by provincialism. Throughout history the human race has been sectioned off in hamlets, villages, towns, and nation-states. We have lived in little pockets of ignorance, each one surrounded by an iron wall of stupidity, suspicion, and superstition. Human ostriches, we buried our heads in the sterile sands of fear and security, and regarded everything different as a threat to our existence. Foreigners, communists, atheists, easterners, dwarfs, and one-eyed lepers were all prime candidates for the gas chamber. Better dead than red — or queer, or short, or swarthy — has been the warcry of every narrow-minded hick from the olive fields of ancient Greece to the flat and dreary cornfields of middle America.

And yes, nationalism is nothing more than provincialism run amuck.

My flag is brighter than yours, my skin lighter than yours, my God stronger than yours, my President nobler than yours, my town cleaner than yours, my tribe more sacred than yours, my country/town/village/tribe right or wrong. God, of course, is always on my side. The Old Fool is on everyone's side — the Germans, Italians, Americans, Japanese, Outer Mongolians, and Tanzanians — even as they hack each other's arms off and bomb an industrious citizenry somewhere back to the Stone Age.

(While behind the scenes of history the Billy Grahams of the world give the whole fiasco their blessings, tossing fuel onto an already raging inferno. How nice to snuggle warmly in the White House praying for the safety of one American emperor after another. It is much more sensible to prance about in double-knit suits and diamond pinky rings than to share a jailcell with a claqué of unwashed subversives.)

("So it goes," said Kurt Vonnegut when he saw what was happening.)

Provincialism (nationalism on a smaller scale) is synonymous with ignorance, and the most dangerous thing about ignorance is that the damned condition is contagious. It breeds more fear, suspicion, petty (if not cowardly) heroics, and all this inevitably results in violence. Get them — hippies, commies, freaks, and un-Americans — before they get us. Before they sneak in our homes at night and rape our daughters, poison our sons with drugs and loud music, chop us up in our beds, and desecrate the American flag. Before they piss on the American dream. Hunter Thompson, Ken Kesey, and Fidel Castro all belong on the torture rack. Crucifixion is too good for them.

As long as this infectious condition exists (and it is a global disease; the American strain is only a bit more pronounced because of a certain native flamboyance), paradise will remain at best a distant dream; at worst we will usher in the Apocalypse instead, replete with man-made volcanos, faster-than-light warships, and a race of human gargoyles manufactured on demand in genetic engineering laboratories throughout the solar system.

But how to fight provincialism, isolation, and ignorance? Certainly not

with guru chants, May wine, and love beads. And not by turning the earth into a global village, notwithstanding the worthy exhortations of Messers. McLuhan, Fuller, and Company. Herman Kahn is more on target when he speaks in terms of a global metropolis. In the past it has been in the cities where the civilized life has flourished, where the pristine hillbilly has been miraculously transformed into a tolerant, urbane, sophisticated, and cosmopolitan World Citizen. It is in the cities where provincialism (and ignorance) are beaten down and drummed out of existence. It is in the cities where music, literature, art, civility — all the worthwhile things of life — have found their voice, come into their own, and been rendered into magic.

How to end provincialism? By destroying the provinces and, with them, the provincial mentality. By making the earth a global city, a world metropolis, a universal seedbed of the civilized life, a paradise, a region of supreme felicity and delight.

A city is a state of consciousness, a condition of life. No proclamation or political act can make a village into a city — except on paper. A city is a state of mind, and this is where technology comes in.

The cement that holds the city together, that gives it its status and identity, is the technology of communications. As this technology evolved from hand-scrawled, hand-delivered letters to the printing press, the telephone, the telegraph, radio and television, and now to global satellites, the cities also grew up, grew more efficient and sophisticated, and finally reached a point where they are ready to burst through their boundaries, explode and self-destruct with uncontrollable energy.

They can no longer be contained but, rather, need room to expand and flesh out the universe.

For the first time in human history we have the technology at hand to create our global metropolis, obliterate the provinces, and deliver paradise to the entire world. For something like six dollars and seventy-five cents on weekends and after eight o'clock in the evening, the most isolated rube in South Dakota can pick up his telephone and contact his counterpart in Samoa, Mozambique, and the Australian outback. There is still a language barrier, to be sure, and there will be for quite some time to come, but at least the physical barriers isolating one community from another (the westside of Manhattan from Ringoes, New Jersey for that matter) have been overcome.

These relatively inexpensive round-the-world telephone calls are possible only if the telephones are working in the first place. Vandalism has transmogrified most of our public telephone booths — especially in the larger cities — into little more than urban outhouses, but Mother Bell is reportedly working on a system to change all that. In the near future we will be carrying portable telephones around with us. The phones will be activated when we step inside circular electromagnetic fields created by the telephone company, and the calls will be billed to credit cards or our home telephone numbers.

Hopefully the electromagnetic "phone booths" will continue to function no matter how many times they are urinated on.

Fantastic as this concept sounds, it is only the next step in a long string of advances Bell has in store for us. Also in the planning stage are cassette telephones for sending messages to many people simultaneously; self-dialing telephones that respond to a voice command; wristwatch telephones which will bring us another step beyond the Dick Tracy two-way wrist radio; home sentinel telephones which will inform us of fires, burglaries, and other extraordinary occurrences while we are away; picture phones, already being used commercially, for the home (the more advanced models will supply printed pictures of the screen image); credit phones allowing the caller to order merchandise and pay bills without leaving bed; and the list grows longer and longer even as we pause a moment to catch our breath. What all this translates into is the fact that instantaneous global communication grows more and more commonplace as time goes on; provincial barriers (and, hopefully, attitudes) are broken down as the world becomes a single, dynamic, interrelating community. Words such as *foreign*, *alien*, *strange*, *different*, and *enemy* lose their meaning when we are all citizens of the same global society.

Notwithstanding the dire predictions of Marshall McLuhan, the printed word is destined to play an even more important role in the Electronic Society than it does today. The book publishing industry will be modernized and wrenched out of the nineteenth century where it has been wallowing for the past one hundred and seventy-plus years. Through microfiche, more than a hundred books can be imposed on a four-by-six

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inch plastic card. Instead of visiting mammoth bookstores with sturdy volumes toppling off the shelves — bookstores incapable of storing the forty-thousand books published in the United States alone each year — we will go to microfiching libraries capable of storing any number of printed words in a comparatively small area. If you want a certain book you simply visit the nearest library or "bookstore," and computerized machines will print it out and bind it for you in minutes. This will save the publisher a boodle in production costs since he will no longer have to manufacture and distribute thousands of books beforehand (and worry about remainders afterward), and it relieves the bookseller of the guesswork regarding which book should be ordered and kept in stock.

(The only casualties under this system will be the authors, themselves, who glory at the sight of their own books prominently displayed near the cash register when they walk into Brentano's. Perhaps advertising posters will provide the same balm for ruptured egos.)

Super phones and instant books. What else will our global cosmopolitan paradise have to offer? Well electronic newspapers are also on the horizon. Gone forever is (or will be soon) the sweaty romanticism of the Runyonesque reporter, his filthy fedora jauntily angled on the back of his head, the constant cigarette working in the corner of his mouth as he taps out an "exclusive" on a typewriter built during the early years of the Middle Ages. Yes, Jimmy Breslin could be the last of a dying breed while the Tom Wolfes of the profession neatly make the transition into the razzle-dazzle kaleidoscopic future. Video typewriters transmitting news stories directly to production via computerized phototypesetting equipment. Features written and edited electronically and transformed into newsprint without once having been tainted by human hands. The whole industry streamlined beyond recognition as newsrooms lose their cluttered hustle-bustle atmosphere and assume the aspects of a tile and chrome-plated, self-service cafeteria.

(Ah, nostalgia! You prick the psyche with guilt-inducing memories. You fill the dismal past with romanticized fantasy. You distort reality. To hell with nostalgia! We are determined to plunge guiltlessly and ruthlessly into the future.)

Our paradise of instantaneous universal communications (hence, of the constant Here and Now; of the ubiquitous unifying Media) will also offer copier equipment, courtesy of Xerox, 3M, Hitachi, et al, designed to transcend even the time zones. Yes, Time the Tyrant may soon be emasculated and disemboweled as the newest telecopiers enable us to send printed matter, including photographs, around the earth by telephone in a matter of seconds. In living color yet!

The boob tube also promises to make communications easier with juke box or cable cassette TV bringing dozens — eventually hundreds — of programs into the home simply by dialing a number. Or, if you can't wait until you get home, you will be able to tune in Lawrence Welk on a wrist TV set, now technologically feasible with the development of tiny silicone circuit "picture tubes."

(A nightmare filled with legions of lobotomized robots parading

through the streets, their eyes forever glued to the image of the Beverly Hillbillies sparkling on their wrists? Or a paradise of peace, erudition, and urbanity through the magic of universal communication? A tricky dilemma. And a copout for this author who hypocritically lampoons the herd even as he urges it on toward the plastic, silicone, kandy-colored, tangerine-flake future.)

Yes I, too, will benefit in a paradise of talking textbooks. How comfortable to do one's research from home by dialing the local library and having a computer read selected pages of books and magazines, and to store all sorts of irrelevant material in lithium niobate "filing cabinets" the size of a sugar cube. No more overflowing metal cabinets which threaten to drive the researcher from his apartment.

And so we humble ourselves before the altar of technology. Almighty Technology, deliver us from our sins and bring us to the Promised Land. Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. On earth. Live and reign among us, in paradise on earth, forever and ever, amen. ■

Arts And Movies

By Mr. First Nighter

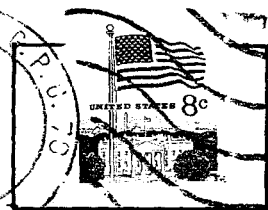
Badge 373, dir. by Howard W. Koch, with Robert Duvall; written by Pete Hamill.

Badge 373 is a rough, exciting touch-cop picture, which could easily be named *Son of French Connection*. It is far inferior to its brilliantly directed, suspenseful ancestor, and is simply a minor sequel in the saga of touch narco cop Eddie Egan. The picture is chiefly remarkable for the attempts at censorship which have come down on its head, including picketing by the Puerto Rican Action Council because the villains happen to be part of a Puerto Rican political cum criminal gang. The Egan character is no more of an "ethnacist" than he was in *French Connection*, which called forth no protests from professional defenders of the clans. But for some reason *Badge 373* has done it, as the world gets increasingly less tolerant about allowing any depiction whatever of sins committed by various ethnic groups. The whole hullabaloo is absurd and even dangerous; are we to arrive at a day when gangsters will have to have only WASP names in order to remain safe from the would-be censors? And if organized WASPS also start getting into the act, the criminals and villains in our movies won't be allowed to have any names at all! The important thing is that the movie producers and exhibitors have the guts to say a quick and firm NO to the ethnic pests and pressure groups who are trying to keep us from seeing movies which they don't like. Television is of course plagued with similar problems, as organized Jewish groups managed to help eliminate the harmless *Bridget Loves Bernie* series (does anyone remember the very similar play, *Abie's Irish Rose*, which ran for years on Broadway with no protest whatever?), and organized Catholics tried to suppress two *Maude* episodes in which the leading actress decided to have an abortion. Again, guts are required in an increasingly gutless media. ■

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