

## A Monthly Newsletter

THE

# Libertarian Forum

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### FLP Convenes:

## PRESENT AT THE CREATION

On the weekend of March 30-April 1, the Free Libertarian Party of New York held its first state convention at the Williams Club in Manhattan, in the process transforming itself from a temporary structure into a permanent, organized political party. Ever since the national Libertarian Party and its state affiliates had been founded a year ago, the editor of the Lib. Forum, while tempted, had held aloof. But to this old political warhorse, the firebell of a Convention proved too much to resist. As the time for the Convention drew near, I made my decision, propitiated the Spirit of Robert LeFevre, and took the plunge: I joined the Party.

As the weekend drew near, I admit to trepidation about what the convention would bring. In the first place, it has been my usual experience that when more than five libertarians (or five anyone-else, for that matter) gather together to meet, it is high time to look for the nearest exit. There is something about any Meeting, or Crowd, that seems either to deaden the spirit or to lead to endless hassles and emotional wrangling. And then there were all the stories one heard about goings-on in various outer reaches of the libertarian movement: "rational bestiality", for example. There were the memories of all the Crazies who had flooded into the first 1969 libertarian conference in New York. And, more concretely, there were stories of a severe and lengthy struggle over the FLP Platform, over attempts to ram an archist-Randian platform down the throats of the party, etc. When I opened this door of the libertarian arena on March 30, what joy and/or pain would this new turn bring?

To end the suspense, dear reader, I entered the Williams Club a hopeful skeptic and emerged, exhausted but enthusiastic, forty-eight hours later a celebrant. To my joyful surprise, here was a group of men and women almost all intelligent, dedicated, and knowledgeable about liberty. Here, despite a predictably wide spectrum of temperaments and ideologies, despite occasional emotional hassles, yes despite a twelve (or was it thirteen) hour session on amending the by-laws, here was a group of attractive and intelligent young people who almost literally exuded a spirit of warmth, love, and respect for each other and for the common cause. It was truly a sight to behold. At the risk of being maudlin, I affirm that it was indeed a privilege to be present at the creation of the Free Libertarian Party of New York.

As we shall see further below, the "instincts" of this rather large group of people (approximately 95) were remarkably sound: a blend of high libertarian principle and good common sense and mutual respect that is all too rare in or out of the Movement. And these were Real People; gone was the old predominance of hophead kids, stoned out of their minds and mumbling about "freedom". These were young people with feet on the ground, who do things, who work in the world: scholars, engineers, television people, advertising men, civil servants. I would say that the typical FLP member is an ex-Objectivist with none of the unfortunate personality traits of the latter, who has been moving rapidly into, or on the edge of, anarcho-capitalism. But both the anarcho-capitalists and the

sizable minority of limited archists (or "minarchists", to use the happy phrase of Sam Konkin), showed a happy willingness to work together for the large spectrum of common ends.

And then, wonder of wonders to a veteran of the New York movement, there was actually a sizable number of girls at the Convention, ranging moreover from attractive to ravishing (and if this be Male Chauvinism, then make the most of it!) It was also a standing wry joke in the New York movement that the proportion of females ranged from zero to somewhere around one per cent; surely this new quantum leap is a fine omen for the growth and success of the movement. Furthermore, I had personally met no more than a dozen of the delegates before — and this in a movement whose members for a long while barely spilled over the confines of a small living room!

Skipping over the endless by-law amendments, the first major act of the convention was to adopt a set of by-laws with the following admirable set of principles, principles to which all factions and trends in the party could enthusiastically adhere:

"The Free Libertarian Party is a political organization which has as its primary objective the extension of human freedom to its furthest limits.

"To that end the Party affirms the following principles:

1. That each individual possesses the inalienable right to life and liberty and to justly acquired property.
2. That no person or institution, public or private, has the right to initiate the use of physical force against another.
3. That all individuals are entitled to choose their own life styles as long as they do not forcibly impose their values on others.
4. That the only moral basis of politics is the preservation and protection of human rights.
5. That the voluntary exchange of goods and services is fundamental to any socio-economic system which provides for the harmonious integration of divergent value systems.

"In recognition of the fact that the initiation of force by government has been the chief instrument for the expropriation of individual rights and freedom, the Free Libertarian Party enters the political arena for the avowed purpose of eliminating the intervention of government in moral, social and economic affairs."

Bravo!

The first battle, and the first critical decision, of the Convention came on Saturday night, over the adoption of a state platform. By dint of various coincidences and circumstances, the first draft of a platform had been drawn up last summer by one Paul Hodgson, a Randian archist who

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## Tax Rebellion

April is the cruellest month, certainly for the long-suffering taxpayer. As protests against crippling taxation rise and spread throughout the country, we must honor the heroic forces of tax rebellion; the new element in tax rebellion this year is the lead increasingly taken by the nation's libertarians, the most knowledgeable and most dedicated of the tax rebels.

In its March 19 issue, *TIME* devoted a full page article (p.45), replete with pictures, of one of the most heroic groups of tax rebels, Henry "Hank" Hohenstein and the San Diego Ten. Remarkably, *TIME*'s account was fairly favorable to these libertarian rebels. What happened was that in May, 1972, the IRS presumed, dictatorially and without benefit of court order, to seize the building, trucks and office equipment of the small Heck Transfer and Storage Co. of San Diego, a moving and storage firm owned by John Heck, Jr. The seizure was for payment of some \$10,000 in back taxes and penalties which the IRS claimed that Mr. Heck "owed" to the federal government. A few days later, a group of some 80 protestors gathered with Mr. Heck outside his seized office, and Heck, in order to enter, threw a stone through his own door. When a corps of IRS agents tried to interfere, there was some scuffling in the crowd.

The IRS proceeded to bring charges in court against ten of the demonstrators, charging them with "conspiracy to rescue seized property" (Ye Gods! What a "crime"! ) and "conspiracy to assault or

impede a federal officer." The ten included libertarian real estate investor Hank Hohenstein, who had merely driven down to observe the proceedings.

Needless to say, Hank Hohenstein and the San Diego Ten did not receive the massive international publicity accorded only to Left civil libertarian causes. However, after the jury duly convicted, Judge Nielsen, worried about the murky status of conspiracy law, suspended the jail sentences of the Ten and declared a mistrial for Hohenstein. The latest news is that the government has dropped the charges against Hohenstein.

*TIME* summarizes the philosophy and outlook of some of the tax rebels: on Hohenstein: "who styles himself a fiscal conservative and strong civil libertarian, he claims to be acting in the tradition of Thoreau and Paine." The freeing of Hohenstein is a welcome victory for liberty.

In the meantime, the Libertarian Tax Rebellion Committee, headed by Kenneth W. Kalcheim, has been doing yeoman work for the tax rebellion cause. The LRTC sells a tax kit for \$10, which explains and supports their philosophy of tax rebellion; the LRTC proposal is to file the required April 15 return, but to fill it out, not with the taxpayer's income and expenditure data, but rather with a battery of constitutional arguments against the entire income tax procedure. The tax kit can be obtained from the Libertarian Tax Rebellion Committee, 349 East 65th St., Apt. 5C, New York, N. Y. 10021. □

## Present At The Creation —

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presented the early sessions of the platform committee with a full-scale Randian archist platform. It did not quite begin with "Existence exists", but there was definitely around the Hodgson draft the unmistakable aura of the philosophy club rather than the political platform. And in virtually every paragraph the Hodgson draft rubbed the anarchist noses in: "The proper function of government is . . . ." To offset the Hodgson forces, the anarchists on the split platform committee drew up a hastily composed "minority platform". In contrast to Hodgson and his colleagues, there was scarcely a single anarcho-capitalist in the FLP that desired to commit the party to an outright anarchist program, let alone to rule out of court any libertarians who were also Christians, utilitarians, pacifists, or even whim-worshippers. To a man, the anarchists, along with many of the minarchists, wanted an "umbrella" platform that would not drive any of the various tendencies out of the party. But while the Minority Platform was a decided improvement over the Hodgson Platform, it still left much to be desired; and both programs, for example, insisted on taking a stand on the theory of crime and punishment even though this is one of the most disputed and least firmly established aspects of libertarian doctrine.

As the day of the convention neared, then, sentiment in the party grew apace for scrapping the platform altogether. More and more party members began to see that there was no great rush for a state platform: we had the excellent statement of principles, we had, if need be, the national platform adopted last year. But, most interesting of all, sentiment grew, as best expressed by young Tom Avery of the Bronx, for avoiding any platform plank which could not — like the statement of principles — command unanimous consent from each party member. For, otherwise, party members would have to be represented by views and positions which they did not hold. More and more, the "minority" platform writers veered around to a no-platform position, while the few ultra-Randians abandoned the party in disgust.

On Saturday, the Hodgson platform was smashed, gathering only 4 votes (of which only two represented support for the draft in question), and the minority program received no greater shrift. The no-platform position won overwhelmingly. It was agreed, with great good — and libertarian — sense, that the various party candidates could only speak for themselves, for their own individual positions or for the special

committees formed on their behalf. There would be no "party literature" as such.

Sunday was the day for choosing party officers and candidates. The elected officers managed to comprise a worthy cross-section of party activists. Chairwoman of the party (or "Chairperson" as they insist on calling it) is the vivacious Andrea Millen, a TV producer and a leader of the FLP from its inception. The two Vice-Chairmen are Howard Rich, another party founder and a leader and candidate in Rockland County; and Raymond Strong, leader of the Brooklyn party and a Ph.D. in mathematics. Secretary is Mike Nichols and Treasurer is the former Chairman, and a leading party founder, Jerry Klasman. After a spirited and very close election for the three posts of State Committeemen-at-large, elected were: Gary Greenberg, attorney, and head of the New York Libertarian Association; the redoubtable Samuel Edward Konkin III, Canadian, graduate student in Theoretical Chemistry at New York University, editor of the ever-improving *New Libertarian Notes*, and head of the party's Radical Caucus; and Joe Castrovinci, graduate student in history at City College, CUNY, and early member of the Fordham Libertarian Alliance, the first libertarian student group on the Eastern seaboard.

Running for office is a remarkably full slate of determined candidates. For Mayor the party has nominated the lovely and articulate Francine Youngstein, instructor in sales for IBM; for President of the City Council, Bill Lawry of Queens; for Controller, Tom Avery of the Bronx. Also nominated are: Louis Sicilia for Borough President of Manhattan, Paul Streitz (who was given a good going over for his support of the school voucher scheme) for City Councilman-at-Large from Manhattan; Ray Goldfield for City Councilman from the Coney Island region of Brooklyn, and Spencer Pinney for City Councilman from Queens. Also, the dynamic young Sanford Cohen, of the Poughkeepsie region upstate, expressed his determination to begin running now for Rep. Fish's Congressional office in 1974. All candidates were determined to succeed at the very difficult task, in New York, of actually getting on the ballot in November.

The final act of the convention underlined the good sense and even wisdom of the party membership. A proposal was made for the party to endorse legalized abortion. But while a large majority of the Party favors abortion-freedom, it decided by a 2-to-1 majority to respect the deeply held beliefs of those party members who are convinced that abortion is murder — a position which, for any libertarian, is not self-evidently absurd. In short, the FLP decided not to take a position on the abortion issue.

I submit that the Free Libertarian Party is off to a sparkling start; health, happiness, and long life to the new offspring! □

# Personal 'Freedom'

Review of Harry Browne's *How I Found Freedom In An Unfree World*

(Macmillan, \$7.95)

By R. A. Childs, Jr.

(Editor's Note: I would add only two points to Roy Childs' excellent review of the new Browne book. One is the curious inner contradiction implicit in the book itself and in all the lectures that Harry Browne has been delivering on its major theme. And that is the fact that Browne keeps urging the rest of us **not** to care about the liberty of other persons: in short, that he is investing a considerable amount of personal energy and hence presumably cares deeply that we not care about others.

The second point is that it is considerably easier — if one is so inclined — to drop out of the State if one is, like Browne, a best-selling free lance author than if, like most of us, one must work in some regular and visible capacity.)

This is a very mixed book. In substance, if not in intention, this is Harry Browne's answer to Objectivism, his own personal philosophy of life. Like all books of that sort, it is a mixture of brilliant insights and shallow sophisms. At the outset, it should be stated that Browne is at his best giving certain types of concrete advice concerning what he calls "how you can be free": he is at his worst when he attempts to theorize about things, and to place them in a wide semi-theoretical context.

The book consists of five sections. The Prologue and Epilogue both concern themselves with "freedom in an unfree world," while the remainder of the book discusses "Why You are Not Free," "How You Can Be Free," and "A New Life." There are a number of valuable things in all sections, but the first part, as far as I am concerned, is so monstrously simplistic and wrong-headed that I can barely tolerate it. What Browne does is to discuss thirteen "traps" or reasons why one is not "free." First of all, his concept of freedom is unforgivable: "freedom is the opportunity to live your life as you want to live it." With that one phrase, Browne takes three steps backwards from the semantic advances of the key libertarian philosophers, notably Rand and Rothbard, and obscures a vitally important issue: the distinction between **freedom and ability or power**. By defining freedom in terms of "opportunity," Browne semantically enslaves all those who are struggling to get what they want, but who have not yet attained it, for it is precisely the concrete **opportunity** to get what they want that they are lacking. Unhappy? Perhaps. But **unfree**? Not true. Furthermore, are we to call the dictator and tyrant "free" if they have the opportunity to live **their** lives as they wish, i.e. in pursuit of power and control over others? Such a concept of "freedom" makes a free society impossible by definition, for people's whims and impulses will always clash. One person will want to live his life in a way that involves the involuntary participation of another, **ergo** he is not free if that other person is free to turn him down and spurn his desires.

But secondly, and more importantly, the thirteen "traps" are an amalgam of truth and absurdity wherein Browne takes two cognitive steps forward, and three back — and then reverses himself. Some of the traps are well put, such as the "Identity Trap" ("1. The belief that you should be someone other than yourself; and 2. the assumption that others will do things the way that you would."), the "Government Traps," "Unselfishness Trap," "Certainty Trap" and many others. Browne analyzes errors which prevent people from getting what they want, and (mostly later on in the book) shows them how to avoid such "traps." But while much of what he says is commonsensical and valid, the rest is completely confused and wrongheaded.

One of his mistakes is an attempt to avoid technical philosophy, even in discussing such issues as those of morality and rights, which obviously require a philosophical perspective. The reader will be interested to learn, for instance, that for Browne both morality and rights are "traps," and that "'free societies' are usually dreams in which the dreamer hopes to escape the simple prices required to live happily in the real world."

His chapter on morality is intellectually disgraceful. Browne sets up three paradigms: (1) absolute morality, (2) universal morality, and (3) personal morality, this last being his own position. "Absolute morality" is roughly equivalent to a deontological morality, which subordinates

happiness to duty. "Universal morality" is a morality based on objective principles which apply to all human beings. "Personal morality" Browne defines as "the attempt to consider all the relevant consequences of your actions," for whatever that is worth **qua** definition.

Let us dismiss "absolute morality" and concentrate on the other two. What is a "universal morality"? A code based on man's nature, which applies to all men. Browne maintains that there can be no such thing. Why? He isn't clear, but it has something to do with the fact that people are different. Unfortunately, however, no one has ever denied this, and no one advocating a "universal morality" has ever told people to ignore differences. The principles of a "universal morality" do not specify concretes, and are not intended to. The principles constitute a **code** of action, which is applied to widely varying concretes. Would Browne claim that mathematics is impossible, since all entities are concrete and different, making a relationship between mathematical principles and concrete quantities impossible? Only if one's approach to "morality" is concrete-bound can one make the claims that Browne does about "universal morality." Furthermore, Browne's position, a variant of subjectivism in ethics, is self-refuting in the context of the book, for what he does constantly is to make the general recommendation for thought and action that there can be no valid general recommendations for thought and action. Browne properly counsels independence in choosing values, but independence cannot entail subjectivism — in fact the value of independence is **derived from man's nature**. Browne also exhorts the reader to take his own feelings and values seriously; a good recommendation — but this too has nothing to do with his conclusions. Browne neither understands the function of morality as a normative integrator of evaluations and actions (performing normatively the same functions that logic and epistemology do cognitively), nor does he understand the relationship between principles and concretes. He almost makes it a principle to ignore principles in favor of concretes.

His view of natural rights is substantially the same as that of positivism. His claim here, in essence and spirit, is that since you cannot eat rights, and cannot use them to physically ward off criminals, that therefore they are useless. "Try forgetting about your rights," he says in the book. "They didn't bring you the good things you've achieved in your life. Why count on them in the future?" Similarly, he counsels political solipsism, claiming that political idealism is not practical, and that political issues and crises should never be dealt with on grounds of principled opposition, but rather on an individual level. His solipsism is even carried further when he claims (ignoring the fact that he earlier said that everything has a specific nature) "It's hard to realize that you live in a world of your own — bounded by your own knowledge, your own perception, your own ways of reasoning, your own set of standards." If this is true, then why is Browne bothering to give advice to other people, particularly since they live in a world of **their** own which is obviously not the same as his world?

But the response to all of these claims is the same in principle, and it amounts to a defense of philosophy in general, and of political philosophy and responsibility in particular: the reason why man needs political philosophy, a theory of rights, and political involvement is **because** men have the same basic natures and live in the same objective reality, the same world. He needs them **because** his life is not affected, for better or worse, by his own choices and actions alone, but by the society and political system in which he lives. Man needs to associate with other men in order to live and prosper, and he needs to choose and define the proper way of relating to men. Think of what Browne's view of robbery would do if everyone accepted this basic attitude: "To say that I would never steal someone's milk is to acknowledge that I'm different from many of the people in the world — and that I have my own way of trying to achieve happiness. But why should I expect someone else to use my way?" (p. 98) This means, by implication, that dictators and mass murderers merely have a difference of opinion with Browne, and that such a difference is on

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# The I.B.M. Case: A Comment

By Dr. D. T. Armentano

Associate Professor of Economics University of Hartford

Recently the IBM pretrial proceedings took a comic turn for the worse. Indeed, the situation was so sadly ludicrous that Ayn Rand might have written the scenario.

It seems that the government had again been the victim of the corporate paper shredder. Only this time instead of some trivial Dita Beard memos, what got vaporized was a valuable index to over 150,000 pages of IBM internal memoranda prepared for IBM's recently concluded antitrust scuffle with the Control Data Corporation. As part of its settlement with IBM, Control Data had agreed to put down all the weapons of war including, apparently, the quiet destruction of that IBM index. Which of course left the government holding the confetti bag, since they had been counting on employing that very index to expedite their own antitrust suit against IBM. Fuming that IBM was not cooperating fully enough in its own corporate destruction, the government attorneys were at last report attempting to obtain a court order to require the computer giant to prepare yet another index! Now that, of course, is Truth, Justice and the American Way.

Actually when the antitrust suit finally goes to court (the case was the final statist shot from the fellows that brought you the Great Society), three important economic issues will be paramount: IBM's market share, reported to be over 70 per cent; IBM's policy of offering substantial price discriminations to some customers; and IBM's attractively "high" rate of return on invested capital. To many economists and trustbusters, these three ingredients spell almost automatic illegal monopolization.

The government will allege — with much academic support, and enough court victories and corporate scalps to fill a substantial trophy case — that "competition" means competitively structured markets, that is, markets where no one firm has any significant market share. Indeed, the structure of a market is so overwhelmingly significant in antitrust cases today that a defeat on the market share issue could well doom the entire IBM defense. IBM is apparently aware of this, and is already prepared to demonstrate that the computer market is larger than the government contends, and that their share of that market is, accordingly, closer to 40% and declining. This sort of eco-legal strategy was used successfully in the last classic Sherman Act monopoly case, the DuPont Cellophane case of 1956, and IBM doesn't employ 110 lawyers for nothing.

Of course, market share ought to have nothing at all to do with illegal "monopolization". A high market share can just as easily be attributed — in a free market — to buyer acceptance (and, over time, to continued buyer acceptance) as to anything else. And if simple market share is so indicative of "resource misallocation", one wonders why prominent economists such as Samuelson and Friedman — who support antitrust — don't advocate the "busting up" of textbook "monopolies" enjoyed by certain university professors.

Price discrimination means that some users pay lower rates than others for similar services. Without getting into the impossible issue of what services are ever precisely the same — and, therefore, whether real price discrimination ever exists — it might suffice to note that no one ought to get uptight over lower prices (no one but the competition that can't match the prices, that is). To observe corporations being prosecuted for "restraint of trade" when they are lowering their prices always exposes the antitrust hoax in all its nakedness, though the Ralph Naders among us dare not peek.

No, the lower prices don't come at the expense of the higher ones. And, no again, the lower prices need not necessarily relate directly to costs; costs don't determine prices. Why should a firm have to automatically throw away profits from lower costs by lowering prices? Prices are lowered under certain circumstances because profits can be retained or increased under certain circumstances. Profit-oriented firms will always charge what the traffic will bear, and the traffic will always bear different prices in different situations. Corporations ought not, therefore,

to have to defend price discrimination. It is a normal, natural, and completely beneficial practice for buyers as well as sellers in a free market.

And, finally, what of IBM's "exorbitant" rate of return? Firstly, the concept of normal profits without consideration of risk is totally absurd. A 17 per cent rate of return on capital might actually be "low" considering the risks of investing that capital in the computer industry. And, secondly, in the absence of plutocratic restraints on competition, one can simply attribute the return to excellent products, aggressive marketing, and high sustained managerial competence. Does the present culture so abhor individual (corporate) achievement that it must attribute all "success" to everything but individual (corporate) productivity?

Now all this is not to say that there are not any sticky libertarian difficulties with corporations such as IBM; alas, all is not sweetness and light. Patents and government contracts — to name but two issues — will always cloud what might be a super-clean analysis in IBM's favor. Yet, and this is the point, the antitrust issues raised are unbridled nonsense, and it is to be hoped that these issues will be thoroughly discredited in open trial. □

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## Contra Psychological "Liberation"

For years now, I have been reading and hearing a mounting and cacophonous clamor for something called "psychological" or "personal" "liberation." The clamor has been rising from an increasing number of people, libertarians and non-libertarians alike. I confess that even after persistent and faithful reading of much of the Psy Lib literature and listening to a great deal of the caterwauling, I have still not been able to figure out what the shouting is all about. To paraphrase Mencken, even continuing diligence, stopping only for sleep and prayer, has not been enlightened me on what all this fuss is supposed to signify.

At last, however, I think I have it. I think I know at last what all these people are about: and it's not a pretty tale.

Let us take a useful paradigm: the beleaguered Scrabble player. Let us suppose that we have a man, Jim Jones, who is a devoted Scrabble player: but he finds that he is living in a community which hates and reviles Scrabble. If anyone should play Scrabble openly and thereby flaunt his detested desires, his neighbors will then cut him on the street, he won't get invited to the In parties, he might even lose his job. Confronted with this dilemma, what is Mr. Jones to do?

It seems to me that he has four alternatives open to him, each of them reasonable and viable, though some are admittedly more heroic than others.

1) He can be True to his Scrabble-Playing Self and choose to play Scrabble regardless of the consequences. He can say to the rest of the world: To hell with your narrow-minded prejudices, I shall not cater to them even at the price of loss of employment and social obloquy. He then plays Scrabble openly and he takes whatever consequences will follow. If any one may be said to be "psychologically liberated", then Jones (1) surely is.

2) Instead, he can be cool and prudential about the choices that face him. He can say to himself: To hell with it: is Scrabble really that important to me so as to lose my friends, jobs, and generally pleasant relations with the community? Answering No, he abandons Scrabble on behalf of other values that he deems to be far more important.

It seems to me that Jones (2) is, in his own way, also "liberated." Or, at the very least, he has weighed the choices that reality offered him, and made his decision in accordance with his most important values. He, too, has no particular call to belly-ache endlessly about the need for "psychological liberation". He could, after all, have chosen Route (1) but he judged the game not to be worth the candle. He has no grounds for continued caterwauling.

3) He can try to have it both ways: By **pretending** to give up or to abstain from Scrabble, thereby gaining the respect and affection of the community; while at the same time, in the dead of night, in the Closet, he secretly continues to play Scrabble. A Scrabble-Marrano.

What about Jones (3)? Is he justified in clamoring for "liberation"? Certainly not; he too could have chosen either the clear-cut paths of Routes (1) and (2); but he too made the conscious choice of trying to have his cake and eat it by paying the possible psychological price of secrecy. He is in the Closet by his own free choice: all he need do to Get Out of the Closet of his own making is to take Routes (1) and (2) (or, for that matter, Route 4). Let him set up no endless griping either; if he is unhappy with the Closet route, let him choose the others and shut up about it.

4) Finally, there is the fourth viable choice open to Jim Jones: to get the blazes out of this community which he finds oppressive, and to flee to some other more congenial community where Scrabble playing openly abounds. He, too, is certainly "liberated": by changing his locale, he manages to play Scrabble openly and to keep the respect and friendship of his neighbors.

The point, then, is that whichever of the four horns of the dilemma Jones chooses to grasp, the very act of choice gets him out of the dilemma and ends any need to bleat endlessly for liberation. Whichever route he takes, in accordance with his own temperament and values, he has made his choice and can and should then shut up about the whole business and proceed with the other business of life. It seems to me, then, that the caterwaulers are people who refuse to make any of these choices,

who confront the various paths and dither endlessly about adopting any of them. And then they inflict part of the price of that dithering on us by calling upon the rest of us to "liberate" them from their psychic bonds.

What they are trying to do, in short, is to gripe about the fact that reality, harshly and unfairly perhaps, presents them with this dilemma, or indeed with any dilemmas at all. Sure it would be nicer and more pleasant if the community in which Jones lives were more enthusiastic about Scrabble. But the fact is that they are **not**, and instead of haranguing and pestering them to admire and respect Scrabble or us to somehow make Jones' neighbors change their attitudes, it behooves our unliberated brethren to confront their four choices clearly and honestly, to make their choice and thereby to **liberate themselves**, and thereby to leave us and everyone else free of the eternal blather about "liberation." Let the unliberated proceed thus to quickly liberate themselves and go on to pursue more constructive concerns. □

## Jim Davidson And The Week That Was

On the week of April 2-6, the United States Senate took three notable libertarian actions. In the first place, by a vote of 68 to 23, the Senate, over determined opposition from the U. S. Treasury, voted to legalize the private ownership of gold for the first time in forty years. Since the vote was an amendment to the Administration-requested devaluation of the dollar to one-forty-second of a gold ounce, it is doubtful if the President will veto the entire bill should it pass the House.

Secondly, the Senate voted to prohibit governmental aid to North Vietnam without Congressional authorization. And third, the Senate passed a mandatory across-the-board budget-cut within an overall budget lower than the President's request.

Each of these noteworthy actions is eloquent testimony to the quiet but remarkably effective work done by our one-man libertarian Washington lobbyist, James Davidson of the National Taxpayers Union. At the beginning of 1973, Davidson listed ten modest but important libertarian legislative goals for the year; not only were the above three actions on Davidson's Ten Best list, but all of his other legislative objectives for the year are in good shape and none has been flatly rejected.

How does the young and handsome Davidson, operating with virtually no help and on a shoestring budget, do it? One way is by getting to know and influence key aides to key Senators, who in turn influence the rest of the Senate; and another of his crucial tactics is to do what the Marxists call "exploiting the contradictions within the ruling class." In other words, to push a piece of libertarian legislation or to block a particularly egregious bit of statism, Davidson finds out which interests within the Establishment, not ordinarily libertarian, can be developed as allies on this particular issue. Thus, on the issue of gold legalization, Davidson realized that he could forge a "left-right" alliance on the issue between: conservative gold standard advocates, senators from mining states in the West, and such left-liberal Democrat ideologues as Rep. Reuss (D., Wisc.) who favor the legalizing of gold as a symbol of treating gold as an ordinary non-monetary commodity like any other. Welding this alliance, and working with his eminent NTU colleague and thorn-in-the-side of the military-industrial complex, A. Ernest Fitzgerald, Davidson was able to convert the powerful Senator William Proxmire (D., Wisc.) to the cause of gold legalization. This conversion was aided by the fact of Fitzgerald's being an aide to Proxmire's Joint Economic Committee, which gives Congress its major cues on all economic legislation. With Proxmire on the right side, the Senate easily passed the amendment introduced by Senator McClure, conservative Republican from the mining state of

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# From The Halls Of Montezuma . . .

By Joseph R. Peden

Not too long ago, in the wake of the President's visits to Peking and Moscow, and the winding down of the Vietnam war, political satirist Russell Baker reported a new crisis in the Pentagon — fear that America would soon suffer an "enemy gap". But after extensive research, the strategic master planners discovered a suitable enemy for the '70's — Denmark. While some Army officials were fearful of the morale effect upon the troops who would have to occupy vice-ridden Copenhagen, the missile men considered the challenge of dropping ICBM's on Denmark without splashing any part of Sweden, Norway and Germany to be a useful challenge to their skills. What tipped the scales, however, was the fact that so many Americans had visited Denmark, that the U. S. was filled with people who were "soft on Danes", thus providing the FBI, CIA and innumerable Congressional investigatory committees with years of profitable "work".

But political satire in our age tends to lose its point by being overtaken by reality. *National Review* also must have been concerned about the enemy gap. While never for a moment supposing that Leviathan (Russia) and Behemoth (China) had been defeated by Richard Nixon, they felt obliged to point to the rise of a new enemy in the field — the Arab republic of Libya — and proposed that the United States should invade, conquer and annex it.

I almost wish this proposal was another one of NR's spoofs, but there is every indication that in this instance they are not joking. In fact, from a certain point of view, it may be quite a reasonable suggestion.

First of all, as NR pointed out, Libya is an excellent base from which any imperial power can dominate the Middle East and Europe. The harbors at Tobruk and Tripoli are among the best along the north African coast; the climate is ideal for maintaining large military airbases; geographically Libya is at the center of the Mediterranean basin, and also has common frontiers with Egypt, Sudan, Algeria, Tunisia, Chad, and Niger. Traditionally, it has had intimate links with the Islamic peoples of west Africa, as well as with Egypt and Sudan to the East. And then, there is all that oil.

But is Libya a threat to the peace of the world? Is it under Communist tyranny? In what way hath it offended?

The Libyans greatest provocation is that they are not under the control of American or European imperialism. Unlike Egypt and Syria which have been forced into dependence upon the Soviet Union for military weapons to defend themselves against Israeli aggression, or Jordan which exists as a client state of the United States and its allies in the Arab world, Libya is geographically more remote from Israel and less subject to danger of invasion, and financially has been able through its enormous oil revenues to buy whatever military equipment it needs for cash. Thus, in its defenses, it is not dependent upon any one of the great powers for its survival. The independence, or arrogance as some would say, that such a situation creates was well illustrated recently when Libyan jet fighters tried to shoot down an American spy plane flying within a hundred miles of Tripoli over the high seas. The Libyans claim a 100 mile restricted zone around their capital city, and challenge any aircraft entering the zone without Libyan permission. When the United States protested this dastardly attack on an — you guessed it — unarmed C-130 transport plane, the Libyans ignored the American note for four days, and then coolly denied the incident had happened.

Nor is Libya ruled by Communists. Would that it were so. As Nixon has proven, you can always do business with Reds if you want to. But Libya is ruled by a small group of fanatic, zealous Moslems who despise infidels and are deeply humiliated by the present disunity in the Arab world, and the shame that has overtaken the Arab people at the hands of Israel and her European allies.

With much of the puritanical zeal of the century-old Senoussi order, a brotherhood dedicated to purifying Islam of all foreign influences and espousing a rigidly orthodox and mystical sense of Arab divine mission, the young military leaders who seized power and overthrew the pro-

western monarchy in 1969 have managed to create a formidable moral as well as political force in the Moslem world. Devoted admirers of Gamal Abdel Nasser, they may yet succeed to his almost mystical power over the Arab masses. They are certainly the most bitter and uncompromising enemies of Israel — and hence of all her friends. This means that they cannot easily be bribed or bought or even scared by the imperialist powers.

But the most disturbing aspect of the Libyan regime is that its power vis-a-vis the Western powers is formidable and growing greater. Libya is the third largest producer of petroleum — only Kuwait and Iran are greater. And her potential reserves have been confirmed at 25 billion and estimated to be possibly 100 billion barrels. Despite the development of fields in the North Sea or the North Alaskan slope, the United States and Europe are becoming more and more dependent upon foreign oil. The first signs of the "energy crisis" — particularly in the heavily populated northeastern United States — have forced Nixon to temporarily suspend some of the import restrictions of fuel oils. But increased imports are unacceptable to the American government for several reasons. The cheaper foreign oil would further undercut the profitability of domestic oil production, and thus increase dependence on foreign suppliers. But even more serious over the long run is the ever heavier drain on the balance of payments which can be expected as we become more dependent on foreign oil imports. A group of utility companies has recently combined to explore the continental shelf off the northeastern United States to locate possible natural gas supplies. Their motive: "Our country faces financial bankruptcy if we have to depend too heavily on imports of natural gas and petroleum."

The unfavorable balance of trade between the western industrial nations and the thinly populated Arab oil exporting states has already endangered the international monetary system. In the most recent monetary crisis, the gnomes of Zurich were replaced by the gnomes of Araby who began to dump billions of dollars into the European money markets — forcing them to close down for more than a week until the United States could be persuaded to devalue the dollar for the second time in six months. It is now clear that already the Arab states control sufficient reserves of European and American currency to create a monetary crisis whenever and wherever they choose. One suggestion has been to encourage the Arab states to invest directly in American industry, thus reducing their quickly convertible monetary reserves. But the vast amounts that are and will be available to the Arabs could produce a situation in which the Arabs would gain a significant control of some sectors of the American economy. Others are urging Washington to coordinate the energy policies of all the western powers to reduce the leverage of the Arab states in negotiating new oil concessions, and pricing and revenue demands. Arab spokesmen have rightly labeled this "common front" approach a "declaration of war". (It is not unreasonable to speculate that Nelson Rockefeller's recent trip to an informal conference of Atlantic statesmen meeting in Holland may have been motivated by these concerns.)

Also alarming to Washington must be the increasing evidence that the Libyans are using their oil revenues to intervene in the affairs of other nations. The Libyans were the chief bankrollers and arms suppliers to the Islamic rebels in French-dominated Chad. De Gaulle had to send in French troops to help the non-Moslem government of Chad to survive a widespread uprising. Reportedly, the Libyans withdrew their support only after France agreed to sell them 100 French Mirage jets. The jets, paid for in cash, created a formidable air power, remote enough from Israel for safety, yet close enough to serve as a strategic reserve for the Egyptians.

The assassination of the American Ambassador to the Sudan and his aide was widely reported as having been financed by Libya which is also a generous supporter of the Palestinian Liberation Movement. The Libyans

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## Monthly Index Of Liberty

In an off-the-record briefing for Congressmen, assistant secretary for Far Eastern Affairs, William Sullivan, asked to cite the constitutional authority for the President's continued bombing of Cambodia, replied smilingly, "For now I'd just say the justification is the re-election of President Nixon". Of course. *Vox populi, vox Dei*.

• • •  
America's Asian allies — those staunch defenders of freedom and democracy — are at it still. In the Philippines, where the Marcos regime is faced with a full-fledged guerrilla uprising among the Moslems of Mindanao and the Sulu islands, the army has a new "secret weapon" — Mosquitos. The rebel area is ridden by malaria. So the government has stopped spraying. "Sooner or later the rebels will be too weak to fight". And presumably Marcos will have won the hearts and minds of the people. Meanwhile, in Cambodia, Marshal Lon Nol has arrested and jailed 55 of the nation's top astrologers. It seems they were unanimous in predicting that his regime would not survive the end of April. We await the first of May with interest.

### Halls Of Montezuma —

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also showed unseemly, and as it developed unwarranted haste in cheering the aborted assassination of King Hassan of Morocco, and it was assumed that the Libyans may have had something to do with the attempted coup. An unsuccessful coup in the Sudan a year ago may also have been instigated by the Libyans, and the present Sudanese government has failed to participate in the new federal Arab republic engineered by the Libyans and Egyptians.

In Uganda, President Amin was believed to have expelled the Israeli military and civilian advisors from his country, not only because he couldn't pay his debts, but because Libyan political and financial support was promised. The Libyans have been most aggressively establishing financial aid links with black African states who show themselves "loyal" on the Israeli question in the United Nations and elsewhere. Recently, in the midst of a firm refusal of Britain to pay higher rental fees for her naval bases in Malta, the Maltese Prime Minister coolly announced that Libya had offered to make up any financial losses Malta might suffer, if Malta permanently excluded all NATO forces from its soil. Negotiations renewed shortly after, and the Maltese got most of what they wanted. The New York Times has even reported that Philippine army officers are convinced that the Moslem rebels in Mindanao and the Sulu Islands have received arms and money through Libyan sources! One would not be surprised if the federal marshals found a burnoose and water-pipe left behind at Wounded Knee.

What then are the implications of Libya's new found power? Clearly the Libyans can create all sorts of mischief.

With far fewer resources, the Barbary pirates, ancestors of the modern Libyans, held all the states of Europe under tribute to ensure the safe passage of their ships through the Mediterranean Sea during the 16th through early 19th centuries. Even the United States paid almost a million dollars before sending a fleet to punish the pirates of Tripoli. When the Italians invaded the country in 1911 they suffered another of their humiliating military disasters until the collapse of the Turkish empire in 1918, and internal divisions among the Libyans, opened the way for an uneasy Italian occupation. The Libyans have shown themselves to be brave, cunning and formidable enemies, and there is no reason to suppose that they are less so now.

With their immense oil reserves and the revenues that continue to pile up, the less than two million Libyans cast a large shadow in future world affairs. Their trump card is the enormous need for their oil by the western powers — cheap and convenient to the European or American markets. In this kind of situation, Israel might find itself with less sympathy and support in the West: especially if a monetary crisis were added to a cut off of fuel supplies. If there is still another Arab-Israeli war, it would not be surprising to read of a landing and occupation of Tobruk or Benghazi or Sirte by Israeli forces. In fact there might be some people in Washington who would be very pleased with such an operation. It might save them the trouble. □

Libertarians have been among the few Americans who have taken a principled stand against the law of eminent domain — that relic of the English common law that views all landed property as belonging ultimately to the Crown. New Yorkers are watching with interest the confiscation of the homes of 90 families, all white working-class ethnics, by the City of New York. The reason? A private manufacturing corporation has threatened to leave the city unless it can expand its present plant facilities. The city government — to save some 500 jobs — has driven 90 families from their homes by confiscation under the law of eminent domain, and plans to turn the property over to the manufacturer.

Nor is this outrage surprising. Two years ago a consultant to the New York City planning commission urged the seizure of the 89 acre Holy Cross Catholic Cemetery in Brooklyn. Why? There is no nearby park facility with "a woodland at least sufficiently deep to camouflage lovers with no other alternatives for privacy". While most citizens gagged on the notion of sexual rumbles on the graves of their loved ones, the ecologists and planners jumped in to urge the necessity of "doing something" about the selfish individuals who preferred to maintain their right to the proverbial plot of landed property which even the poorest American eventually thinks his due. The 4000 or so acres presently owned by New Yorkers as burial plots were depriving 200,000 living persons of decent housing sites, charged an outraged planner. At the very least the "tax-exempt" cemeteries might be put to "multiple uses" — as playgrounds, dog walks, or perhaps even garbage dumps. Of course the government might solve the problem by requiring cremation or dumping at sea instead of inhumation. But that would only arouse the environmental pollution nuts! In India, the Parsees expose the dead on tall stone towers where nature and the vultures harmoniously keep a natural ecological cycle and eliminate all problems of pollution. Come to think of it, do the city fathers realize the amount of space presently wasted, and untaxed, on the thousands of rooftops of New York's skyscrapers?

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Then there is that AP dispatch from London: Police arrested a young man prowling about London's Highgate Cemetery with a flashlight, a crucifix, and a sharp wooden stake. The culprit told the magistrate that he was hunting vampires. The judge found hunting vampires to be within the law and dismissed the case. It's comforting to know that Englishmen still enjoy some liberties. □

### Jim Davidson —

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Idaho. Another accomplishment of Davidson's in this battle was to surprise and perturb the Nixon Administration by single-handedly inducing the Republican platform committee to include a call for gold legalization in the 1972 platform.

It is unfortunate in a way that the path of the successful lobbyist in Washington must be a quiet rather than a noisy one, for as a result Jim Davidson's remarkable achievements for the cause have gone unsung within the libertarian movement. It was Davidson, who by converting Senator Harry Byrd (D., Va.) to the cause, managed to tip the scales against the SST. It was Davidson who, more than anyone else and working through Proxmire's aides, managed to convince Senator Long (D., La.) to go all-out to block and thereby defeat the disastrous Family Assistance Plan — a plan which the President has now fortunately abandoned.

It behooves all libertarians to get behind Jim Davidson and the NTU in their lonely battle. Davidson reports, for example, that Congressmen receive remarkably little mail on any given issue, and therefore that a coordinated and well-timed letter-writing campaign by the nation's libertarians could block or promote important pieces of legislation. One way to help Davidson's efforts is to join the National Taxpayers Union and thus to receive his periodical newsletter *Dollars and Sense* (NTU, 319 5th St., S. E., Washington, D. C. 20003). By doing so, you will also be receiving important political information; for example, *Dollars and Sense* last fall predicted a 40% rise in meat prices this winter! The basis for Jim's prediction was the new federal regulations banning the use of hormones in meat. Thus, by joining NTU you will not only be helping the cause but will help yourself find out more of what is really going on at the seat of government. □

## Recommended Reading

By Mr. First Nighter

### Rent Controls.

Despite its importance, rent controls and their consequences have been little studied by economists. Now, the Swedish free-market economist Sven Rydenfelt expands his excellent critique of the unfortunate effects of post-World War II rent controls in Sweden, an early version of which he had published in the Mises Festschrift volume, *Toward Liberty*. See Rydenfelt, "Swedish Housing Policy, 1942-1972: History and Analysis", *Skandinaviska Enskilda Banken Quarterly Review* (1972, No. 3).

### Urban Renewal.

Martin Anderson's classic dissection of urban renewal, *The Federal Bulldozer*, had a blockbuster effect in bringing about disillusionment with the program, among Left and Right alike. But Anderson's work is almost ten years old (1964), and there has long been a crying need for bringing it up to date. Now this task has been accomplished by the young Friedmanite economist, Prof. John Weicher, in his new booklet, *Urban Renewal* (Washington: American Enterprise Institute, Dec. 1972, \$3.00). A fine contribution to the new "Evaluative Studies" series of the AEI, engaging in critical analysis of various government programs, and edited by Yale Brozen of the University of Chicago.

### World War II Revisionism.

While Cold War Revisionism has flourished in recent years, World War II Revisionism has had to make its way against more deeply entrenched opposition. Yet it is growing, and now a leading young political scientist, with impeccable credentials in orthodox academic circles, has written an excellent brief summary of the Revisionist position. In scarcely more than 100 pages, Professor Russett lays both the "Hitler threat" and the "Japanese threat" to American security at rest once and for all. Probably the best brief introduction to World War II Revisionism.

Bruce M. Russett, *No Clear and Present Danger: A Skeptical View of the U. S. Entry into World War II* (Harper Torchbooks, paper, \$1.95).

Those younger libertarians who have not yet broken free of the official mythology in American foreign policy can scarcely do better in beginning their re-education than to read the Russett book. As Russett says: "Participation in the war against Hitler remains almost wholly sacrosanct, nearly in the realm of theology." While Russett's work does not presume to tell the entire story, it succeeds in the necessary task of desanctifying World War II.

## Personal 'Freedom' —

(Continued From Page 3)

the same level as other differences between men. Nothing could be further from the truth. But all of this shows the flaws in Browne's approach: man's need of principles in the political realm is greater than in most other areas, for a political system has a lot to do with the choices and options open to one, across the span of a lifetime, and the scope of political error or evil is much greater than in other areas.

No one has ever said that rights are enough to make anyone happy: they are rather a necessary but not sufficient condition for individual happiness and well being. And neither is the alternative either-or as Browne implies, i.e. either we rely on rights or we rely on insurance and individual action for protection, for instance. No advocate of natural rights has ever attacked the idea of insurance against theft, and for good reason: the two things are completely different, and have different purposes. Why then does Browne, the symbolic insurance man, have a need to attack natural rights? Obviously they do not defend or help people in the same way, but so what?

Finally, there are an enormous number of concrete suggestions and bits

of advice here, some bad, most fairly good-to-excellent. A large part of this has been said before, but it is good to have such a diversity of things under one cover. The distinguishing characteristic of *HOW I FOUND FREEDOM* is twofold: (a) Browne has more advice about more subjects, and (b) he attempts to put it into a theoretical framework. In the first respect, he is successful, in the latter, he is a dismal failure. I respect Browne's intention, and many will claim that the theoretical aspects of the book are not its primary purpose or function. Fine — but then why aren't they left out all together? Anyone who discusses the theoretical issues which Browne does in this book has certain epistemic obligations: namely, to make sense, to think his position out as far as his intelligence will take him, to resolve contradictions and, finally, to present a position which is true. In this respect, Browne's book is a tragic failure. He gives advice while evading the responsibilities of giving such advice, that large-scale consistency and integration which philosophy alone makes possible. Browne has attempted not to supplement philosophy with concrete, journalistic advice, but to replace it with such advice.

There is nothing wrong with such advice, except when it does attempt to substitute itself for philosophy. Then the advice-giver must learn the truth of Thomist philosopher Etienne Gilson's quip: "PHILOSOPHY ALWAYS Buries ITS UNDERTAKERS."

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