

A Monthly Newsletter

THE

Libertarian Forum

Joseph R. Peden, Publisher

Murray N. Rothbard, Editor

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NOTES ON WATERGATE

No doubt about it: we were dead wrong in pooh-pooing the political significance of Watergate (Nov. 1972). In our defense, however, Watergate remained a minor caper of piddling proportions until James W. McCord, Jr., under the hammer blows of Judge "Maximum John" Sirica, broke and began to implicate the higher-ups.

Sub specie aeternitatis, one set of politicians spying upon and sabotaging another is hardly of cosmic significance. But oh the deliciousness as the whole sleazy, robotic crew, even unto the highest reaches of the White House, gets its comeuppance! Every morning's news brings further revelations, further scandal, as the network of the corruption of power extends upward and outward. One by one they topple, as the President becomes so short-handed that some have to double up on jobs. One thing is certain: it couldn't have happened to a nicer or more deserving bunch of guys, or to a more deserving institution.

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There are many interesting and even neglected facets to Watergate. We see the White House staff as the epitome of the Organization Man: people with one thought and one loyalty — not to truth, or justice, or honor, or even country, but to The President. The President becomes a quasi-divine figure in whose service any and all means may be employed.

And yet what happens when the crust of loyalty is broken, when the pressure is on? Then, The President is forgotten and it's every man for himself, each rushing to try to clear himself and point the finger at his former colleagues. Truly an edifying spectacle of our rulers in action with their well-known devotion to the Public Interest and the Common Good. Come on, have at each other, fellows. Implicate, implicate!

Before the mad rush, of course, there was the Cover-Up. Here we see the inveterate instincts of the Bureaucracy to hush things up, to kick things under the rug, and never never let the long suffering citizen and taxpayer in on what is going on. So much for the "democratic process."

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And then there is all the wailing that Watergate is endangering the credibility, not merely of Mr. Nixon, but of "the office of the Presidency itself." Oh no, surely not that! Here is one of the great consequences of Watergate: the demythologizing, the desanctification of the office of the Presidency that has taken on an increasingly sacral character in recent decades.

In this connection, it is highly instructive that Bill Buckley has finally revealed his cloven hoof. Conservatives are, at the very least, supposed to revere the American Constitution, and if the Constitution says anything it is that the people, and not any branch of government, is sovereign. But let us forever note the reaction of America's leading Conservative to Watergate, and particularly to the increasing talk of impeaching Mr. Nixon. Said Buckley, perfectly seriously:

"In America, the President is the emperor in addition to being the prime minister. He is, no matter that his term as such is limited, the sovereign. When it is contemplated to execute the king, it is necessary to think first about the consequences on the people, rather than on the

judicial poetry of the sentence . . . If Nixon were impeached, the punishment would be visited primarily on the state . . . it is necessary to remind oneself that the sovereign is unique: that the punishment of the whole of the state is never justified." (New York Post, April 28).

There it is, brazen and blatant, from a man who sometimes likes to think of himself as a "libertarian." The President is the king, the sovereign; and the king is the state, and is therefore above retribution. Louis XIV could not have said it better. William F. Buckley has revealed the quintessential nature of the American Conservative movement; it is not Constitutionalist, but monarchist, and absolute-monarchist at that. Bill Buckley is far better suited as a theoretician for George III than he is as an American citizen.

Happily, our publisher, Professor Peden, wrote a letter printed in the Post (May 2) that called Buckley to task. Peden wrote: "When William Buckley baldly states that the President is sovereign, that to punish him for malfeasance of high crimes is to punish 'the whole of the state' . . . Mr. Buckley is guilty of culpable ignorance. He apparently believes that the American Republic is monarchical in its Constitution. As almost any legal authority or political scientist will attest, and even the layman can read in the Constitution's preamble, the American people are the sovereigns in this society . . . Neither the President, nor the Congress nor the Supreme Court are sovereign in any sense of the word. And it is either ignorance or dangerous mischief for Mr. Buckley to claim otherwise."

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"Impeachment"! What a glorious sound the word has! Until a few weeks ago, the very idea of impeaching the President, any President, would have been considered grotesque and absurd. It was only recently that former (another good word) Attorney-General Kleindienst arrogantly informed the Congress that if they didn't like the President's actions they could either vote down the budget or impeach him. Until a few weeks ago, impeachment was thinking the unthinkable; yet now, even such Establishment Congressmen as Rep. Moss, and Goldwater and Thurmond, are seriously contemplating such action. And the general Congressional reaction to current calls for impeachment are not that they are lunatic or absurd, but only that they are "premature." Use of such a word seems to imply that pretty soon the idea of impeachment may indeed mature.

And how many people really believe that Mr. Nixon knew nothing of the vast and extensive bugging-sabotage-espionage operations on the Democrats? When literally millions of dollars were being handed around under the table? And how many believe that he knew nothing of the gigantic and well-coordinated cover-up? Nixon, after all, is no boob like Grant or Harding; he has always been a shrewd and ruthless political operator, and he has always proclaimed the tightness of his political ship. Besides if he really takes "responsibility", isn't that enough to mete out proper punishment?

One of the demurrers on impeachment is that this would bring Spiro Agnew into the Presidency. Apart from the likelihood that Agnew would

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Notes On Watergate —

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resign as well, would he really be that much worse than Nixon? Enough worse to give up the magnificent precedent that the use of the impeachment power would set? The precedent that would put every future President, and every American as well, on notice that it is possible to topple him, that the President is not an absolute dictator for four years, that something can be done, legally and without violence, to remove him forthwith from office.

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And where are all the loud champions of "law and order" in all this? Not, it might be noted, with law and order. The President wistfully refers to the Watergate criminals as good men whose "zeal exceeded their judgement" in the righteous cause of getting him re-elected. Governor Reagan says that these men are not criminals because they were acting in a good cause (I thought it was only the bad old Communists who are always charged with believing that "the ends justify the means").

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One fascinating aspect of the Watergate has not been commented on in the media. It was the breaking of James W. McCord, Jr. that broke open the entire Watergate network. Crucial to McCord's sudden decision to talk, in addition to Judge Sirica's stiff sentencing, was the advice of his new lawyer, Bernard Fensterwald. But who is Mr. Fensterwald, who played such a critical role in the Watergate revelations? Old Kennedy Assassination Revisionists know Fensterwald well: for he is the dedicated head of the Committee to Investigate Assassinations, which for several years has been the major research organization investigating the critical political assassinations of our time: King, the two Kennedys, Malcolm X, etc. Undoubtedly, Fensterwald was intrigued by the Cuban emigre-CIA connections of most of the Watergate burglars, connections which also permeate the Oswald-JFK Assassination case. Perhaps he was hoping that blowing the lid off Watergate might also lead to further revelations on the assassination at Dallas. And who knows? maybe it will.

In this connection, President Nixon promises us that his investigation into Watergate will be "the most thorough investigation since the Warren Commission." To old Kennedy Assassination buffs, this is surely the grisliest joke of the year.

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Everyone, I suppose, has his own particular favorite among the

storehouse of goodies unearthed by the Watergate case. My own is the cretinous behavior of the head of the FBI, L. Patrick Gray, Jr., in dumping crucial documents unread into the "burn bag." Another happy result of Watergate, as well as the entire tenure of Gray, is the rapid desanctification of our national secret police. Surely, it will never be the same again.

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While we all chortle at Watergate and its ramifying consequences, we might also keep a wary eye on the future. A seminal article, "The World Behind Watergate", by Kirkpatrick Sale, has recently been published in the *New York Review of Books* (May 3). Here is an article which should be read by everyone interested in the men behind and around Watergate and in the politico-economic roots of the Nixon Administration. Mr. Sale traces the intricate and extensive connections between all the powers in and around the administration. Taking off from Carl Oglesby's trenchant distinction between the "cowboys" and the "yankees" among the power elite, Sale treats the Nixon (as well the Johnson) Administration as the embodiment of the relative accession to power of the *nouveau riche* "Southern rim" elite centered in Southern California, Texas, and Florida — as contrasted to the suaver, more sophisticated "older money" of the Eastern Establishment-corporate liberal elite. The Southern Rim tends to be blunter, more crass, more narrowly focussed and politically conservative, and more prone to short-range crookery; while the Eastern Establishment is smoother, more settled and cosmopolitan, more focussed on wider and long-range concerns, corporate-liberal, and more content to stay within the legal forms.

There is no question about the fact that the Watergate revelations are smashing the political power of the Southern rim clique, and perhaps that of their very own Southern Californian President along with it. But doesn't this forebode a re-accession to power of the Eastern Establishment, which while smoother and less crudely obnoxious is in the long run more dangerous? After all, Rockefeller's personal representative in government, Henry Kissinger, comes out smelling like a rose, as do Rockefeller-connected economic czars George Pratt Shultz and Arthur F. Burns. The suspicious observer may ask: is the Rockefeller-Eastern Establishment pushing the Watergate expose for its own ends? Is it connected with a possible Rockefeller run for the Presidency in 1976? Does the emergence of Boston Brahmin Eliot Richardson and New York liberal Leonard Garment embody a return to power of the Eastern Establishment? And is Texan John Connally riding in to head the Yankees off at the pass?

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For A New Liberty

Reviewed By J. Neil Schulman

The prime axiom of Human Action is that men employ means to gain ends. Mr. Libertarian, Murray N. Rothbard, has just given us one hell of a means toward one of our most treasured ends — the creation of a free society.

No longer must the libertarian point to a succession of formidable-looking tomes on a myriad of complex subjects to initiate the uninitiated to the many joys of his favorite subject. No longer must we suggest books that spend half their space on the subject of Ayn Rand — either praising or demolishing her — or supposedly "libertarian" books that while admittedly comprehensive in scope, are "weak" on this question or that one.

Dr. Rothbard's new book *For A New Liberty* is a work monumental in both scope of presentation and in the philosophical consistency of its content. It is complete without being verbose, and detailed without unnecessary complexity. Its every claim is based on easily verifiable truths, and it presents its case for human liberty starting with sound theoretical groundwork, proceeding to show concrete applications, and backing it all up with examples of historical precedent.

The book is divided into an introduction and three parts.

In his introduction, Dr. Rothbard gives a simple and beautifully-appealing history of the present libertarian movement — the "New Libertarianism," as he calls it — and introduces the non-aggression doctrine as the defining agreement among all libertarians.

In Part I, the theoretical base of libertarianism is presented with a thorough discussion of how both civil and economic liberties are inseparable because both are based on property rights, and we are treated to frequent examples to back up each point.

The lengthiest portion of the book, Part II, is devoted to a complete picture of the chaos caused by State interventionism, and Dr. Rothbard presents a marvelously rational analysis of how the free market and other purely voluntary institutions could throw oil on troubled waters (and yes: pollution is discussed). There are chapters on involuntary servitude, personal liberty, education, welfare, the public sector, conservation, and war, and throughout Dr. Rothbard is radicalizing us by demonstrating that the draft is slavery, taxation robbery, public schools thinly-disguised compulsory mind control, and war a euphemism for mass murder. To read the injustice done to us daily by the State in such rapid succession is so overpowering that if any of these chapters were ever read to a large audience, it would be enough to have the speaker thrown in jail on charges of "inciting to riot," an absurdity Dr. Rothbard also challenges in his discussion on freedom of speech. And it is also in this section that Dr. Rothbard's chapter on "Police, Law and the Courts" — already famous to readers of *Reason Magazine* — makes its first appearance in book form. It is the most persuasive case for natural law, private defense, and voluntary arbitration ever set to paper, and is

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Floyd Arthur 'Baldy' Harper, RIP

On the evening of Saturday, April 21, Dr. F. A. "Baldy" Harper died suddenly, of a heart attack, at the age of 68. To say that Baldy's death is an irreparable loss, personally and in every other way, to the libertarian movement, would be a masterpiece of understatement. Ever since he came to the Foundation for Economic Education in 1946 as its chief economist and theoretician, Baldy Harper, in a very real sense, has been the libertarian movement. For all these years, this gentle and lovable man, this wise and Socratic teacher, has been the heart and soul and nerve center of the libertarian cause.

I had the privilege of meeting Baldy in the winter of 1946-47, and from that first meeting, he became my first dear friend and mentor in the libertarian movement. And I was scarcely an isolated example. For years before and ever since, Baldy Harper carried on an enormous and inspiring correspondence, seeking out all promising libertarians, encouraging any signs of their productivity, by his wise teaching and example developing a large and devoted following of friends and students. The thought of never again receiving one of Baldy's famous cryptic and allusive hand-written notes is almost enough to move one to tears. The last letter I had received from him, a brief week or two before his death, was typical: a glowing note about his discovery of a brilliant young mathematics professor who is anxious to move into the field of Austrian economics and to refute the fallacies of orthodox mathematical economics.

It was Baldy's burden, which he bore with his usual uncomplaining grace, that he was a member of a veritable "lost generation" from the libertarian point of view. In the late 1940's, there were some libertarians and free-market economists of the Ludwig von Mises generation or slightly younger: men then in their 60's, such as Mises, Fred Fairchild, Willford I. King. And there were a few of us youngsters coming up. But in

his vital "middle generation", there was only Baldy: all of the other intellectuals of his day were leftists and statist. And so Baldy simply set out, in his quiet and gentle way, to create a body of students and followers. In those early days at FEE, for example, almost every staff member had been brought into the movement by Baldy: W. M. Curtiss, Paul Poirot, Ivan Bierly, Ellis Lamborn, all students of Baldy at Cornell. Baldy was indeed a notable inspiration and guide for young people, and his followers are now everywhere in the libertarian world. There were scarcely any of us touched by his special magic who did not come to love Baldy as a mentor and a friend.

Baldy and I came to anarcho-capitalism from laissez-faire at about the same time, driven by inexorable logic, in what for us was the memorable winter of 1949-50. I vividly remember one time I was visiting him at FEE and he quietly pulled out a copy of Tolstoy's anarchist *Law of Love and the Law of Violence*, which he confided that "some of us are now reading with great interest."

Baldy in those days contributed some vital works to the libertarian literature; perhaps the most memorable was his great anti-war pamphlet, *In Search of Peace*, and his magnum opus, *Liberty: A Path to its Recovery*, which brought to libertarian theory an abiding concern for human variety and diversity which reflected Baldy's lifelong interest in the "hard" and the biological sciences. But Baldy's abiding passion was a deep concern for strategy, for the development of a strategic theory and practice for the libertarian cause. It was out of this concern for strategy that Baldy developed his lifelong dream, his vision of the course which libertarians must take for ultimate victory. He saw that the nub and the heart of libertarian strategy must be ideas and scholarship, that activism could never succeed unless informed by a body of ideas and research on the deepest and most advanced levels. Baldy's great vision was to guide and develop a body of libertarian scholarship and research.

In pursuit of this dream, Baldy Harper moved in 1958 to the William Volker Fund, of Burlingame, California, which had been engaged in the vital task of discovering and sponsoring libertarian and allied scholars in all related fields and disciplines, and in aiding and publishing their work as individuals, completely separate from their universities or from such Establishment-agencies as the Social Science Research Council. The Volker Fund concept: of discovering and aiding libertarian scholars, and of bringing them together in meetings and conferences, was an unsung task of enormous importance which developed and held together libertarian scholars during the lonely years of the 1940s and 50s. By the end of the 50s, Baldy saw the importance of establishing the Volker activities on a permanent, funded basis; and he moved to transfer the bulk of the Volker funds to a new Institute for Humane Studies, which would expand the Volker concept and would provide a permanent home for libertarian fellowships, scholarship, conferences, and publications. An endowed IHS would have been of inestimable and incalculable value for the libertarian cause, and the fulfillment of Baldy's lifelong dream. Then, in 1962, just at the point of consummating the new IHS, for various personal and ideological reasons the Volker Fund collapsed, and its funds were forever lost to the cause of libertarian scholarship.

Faced with this shattering blow, Baldy Harper never faltered; with unwavering and inspiring integrity, he determined to build the Institute for Humane Studies even without its promised endowment. Painfully, and at cost of great personal sacrifice, Baldy patiently, step by step, built up the Institute. After nearly a decade of this slow and painfully wrought development, he was able to bring the IHS to the point where it could sponsor conferences, publish books and pamphlets, grant fellowships, and begin to fulfill the Harper dream of a center for libertarian ideas and scholarship.

If, now, despite this grievous blow, we can continue to build the Institute and see that it flourishes, we can build a monument to Baldy which I am sure he would cherish more than any other. It cannot replace this wonderful friend and teacher of us all; but it would be of enormous and indispensable value to the cause of liberty which Baldy held so dear and to which he devoted his life.

For A New Liberty —

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perhaps the most important essay — in its own right — since Lysander Spooner's *No Treason: The Constitution of No Authority*.

In Part III, Dr. Rothbard wraps up with a brief discussion of strategy, how to get from our present coercive society to a free one. He discusses the need for both education and action, and stresses that we must keep our ultimate goal constantly in view even while working for reforms that may fall short of our hopes and expectations. It is a fitting dessert to a magnificently-prepared dinner, and any libertarians who dare disagree with Chef Rothbard's recipe are warned that they are pursuing a hazardous course indeed.

For A New Liberty is unlike Dr. Rothbard's previous major works in that it is not aimed at the scholar already familiar with his subject, but is directed to the casual reader, albeit one in full focus. In its successful attempt at comprehensiveness (I can think of no major topic left undiscussed, or common fallacy about our position left unrefuted), it has made no compromise with either detailed accuracy, or the climate of popular opinion at the present time.

If this view has so far sounded like a sales pitch . . . it is. *For A New Liberty* is "hard core" and, in my opinion, the single most important book on libertarianism ever published, judging from its potential for converting the general public to our cause. Read it yourself; it will clarify your concepts; and recommend it to anyone with any leanings towards freedom: if he has any intelligence and integrity at all, this book must convince him. If the public gives *For A New Liberty* even half the attention it so richly deserves, we will be well on our way to a free society.

But then we "New Libertarians" suspected that from the beginning, didn't we?

McGovern vs. Rothbard

On November 17, 1972, your editor published a blistering attack on the Quota System, the leftist doctrine that every identifiable group, ethnic, racial, sexual, or whatever, should have its proportionate, *pro rata* share of all of life's goodies, and that it is the function of the political arm to pressure or coerce that share into being. Our attack was in the form of a letter sent out by the Forum for Contemporary History (P. O. Box 127, Stearns Wharf, Santa Barbara, Calif. 93101), an organization that sends out bi-weekly four-page letters to its vast membership on controversial issues of the day. Recognizing its own built-in liberal leanings, by the way, the Forum is almost desperately eager to publish controversial non-liberal opinions, and libertarians will find a friendly reception from the staff of this new publication. Not only was yours truly invited to join the Forum's Editorial Review Committee, but it has already published letters from libertarians Ernest Fitzgerald and Robert LeFevre. Non-members will be able to read the Rothbard letter in its reprinted form in the February, 1973 issue of *Intellectual Digest*, there entitled: "The Quota System, In Short, Must Be Repudiated Immediately".

The letter attacked both the theory of the quota system, and its selective leftist application to a few favored and allegedly "oppressed" "minority groups". Part of the attack was levelled against the McGovernite movement, and its insistence on overriding the freely elected choices of Democrats on behalf of imposing a non-elected but quotaly pure oligarchy of delegates at the Convention.

Interestingly enough, one of the comments sent to the Forum on the Rothbard letter was by none other than Senator McGovern himself. The most interesting aspect of the McGovern comment is that he explicitly agreed with my strictures — on all aspects of society and the economy except the political party structure! Senator McGovern wrote:

"The central thesis of Professor Rothbard's argument is that the quota system discriminates against people of ability. I accept that as a truism for most purposes . . . In sum, Professor Rothbard raises strong arguments against the quota system in general." (McGovern to the Forum for Contemporary History, December 7, 1972).

The Senator's attempt to exempt political parties from the argument was a specious and tortured one, based on the objective of widening "access to the voting booth." McGovern added:

"Our objective in a democracy is to have leaders who are representative of the population as a whole, not just of those who have superior talent, intelligence, or energy . . . Simple common sense suggests that when we are talking about the electoral process, in which all can and should participate, the relevant arguments differ greatly from those which apply when the subject is upward mobility in the economic system, the right to hold a job, or the practice of a profession."

Libertarian Forum readers might enjoy my reply, which follows in full:

"I am delighted to see that in his comment on my Forum letter, Senator McGovern joins me in repudiating the quota system for the entire economy and for our society, the only apparent exception being the political party structure. I venture to say that if the Senator had made his position explicit or better known to the electorate, he might well have garnered many more votes last November.

"Our only quarrel, then, seems to be over the electoral process. Senator McGovern is concerned about the widest possible participation in the electoral process; but surely, elections in America, both in primaries and in general elections, are now open to all Americans, regardless of race, sex, creed, color, or ethnic origin. In this concern, the Senator is pushing against an open door. But what of the fact that a few people often form slates of candidates? I fail to see anything wrong with that; the point is that any 'few' who wish can form slates and present them to the electorate; why should not Richard Daley have the same privilege in slate-forming as the Rev. Jesse Jackson? And if Mr. Daley had chosen to nominate only one-eyed

Arts And Movies

By Mr. First Nighter

Deliverance. dir. by John Boorman, written by James Dickey. With Burt Reynolds and Jon Voight.

Several libertarians have touted James Dickey's *Deliverance* as one of the great libertarian novels of our time, and the recently revived *New Banner* (Feb. 4-18) has devoted over three full pages to a hagiographical celebration of the movie. I haven't read the novel, but the central fact of the movie, written by Dickey himself, is that it is overwhelmingly boring. It is an attempted adventure movie so poisoned by the search for Significance that the adventure is only a few high spots in a morass of tedium. Boorman has adopted the oldest trick in the business: if you want a movie to seem Profound when you have nothing much to say, then draw out the action, make the camera dwell endlessly on each scene, and focus on the face of each actor as he struggles painfully to emit some inarticulate banality. In other words, if you make the film dull enough, it will trail clouds of Profundity for our gullible moviegoers — especially the gullible critics. Although this time it was not so much the critics but some of our libertarians and other intellectuals who were taken in.

The plot concerns four urban Southerners who set out for a weekend of "conquering nature" by canoeing down a river in the wild mountain country. They are goaded on by their surly macho leader, Burt Reynolds. The central theme of the movie, one that might have been interesting if developed properly, is that Reynolds' much vaunted "nature" is filled with danger and primitive human evil, and that our protagonists are happy to return, half dead, to the arms of urban civilization. And further that the true hero who gets the group through is not the macho Reynolds but the shnooky Voight. But Reynolds conks out with scarcely a struggle, and Voight is simply too shnooky to capture our interest, or to wind up as an authentic hero. Incidentally, none of the four seems to have bothered to chart the river in advance, so that every rapids comes as a shattering surprise. What sort of schlemiehls are these? Furthermore, the brutality is too gratuitous to serve as more than an unintegrated shock to the audience. Perhaps if one of the great classical adventure directors had done the movie, something could have been salvaged from the debris. Certainly it would have been more interesting.

Shamus. dir. by Buzz Kulik. With Burt Reynolds, Giorgio Tozzi, and Dyan Cannon.

Shamus is one of the best and most exciting tough-guy detective movies in some time. The emphasis is as it should be, on fast and vigorous action, sparkling with odd-ball characters and situations. Reynolds does very well in the central role, and Dyan Cannon is her usual sophisticated and sultry self. It is true that the plot tends to be incoherent at times, but in a movie like this, who cares? Giorgio Tozzi leaves the opera boards for an excellent performance as a silky Godfather-type.

The Poseidon Adventure. dir. by Ronald Neame. With Gene Hackman, Ernest Borgnine, and Shelley Winters.

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Scandinavian-Americans over 6 feet tall, why shouldn't he have had that privilege? The point is that all Democrats of Illinois had the right to participate in the choice of delegates; whom they selected should certainly be up to them. (In point of fact, convention delegates are usually nominated by leaders on the basis of interest and loyalty in party activity, virtues which were scarcely conspicuous in the Jackson delegation.) Overriding the free choice of the electorate by imposing ethnic, etc. guidelines upon them is precisely the anti-democratic quota system which Senator McGovern agrees is bad in every other area of American life.

"One argument of Senator McGovern's is a rather astounding one: that we should have leaders who are representative of the population as a whole, not just of those who have superior talent, intelligence or energy." Does he really mean to endorse Senator Hruska's famous assertion that the mediocre people are entitled to some of their own on the Supreme Court?"

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A gripping adventure tale, propelled along by its sparkling central theme: a mighty ocean-liner's capsizing in mid-sea, and the exciting efforts of a few of the passengers to escape by climbing upward to the bottom of the ship. Each step of the way is fraught with danger, and the movie well deserves its wide popularity at the box-office. The major problem with the film is the phony philosophy and the even more phony theology, all of which is emitted by the hero, the hip young priest Gene Hackman. The "philosophy" rests in indigested globules throughout the picture, capped by the insufferable "Christ-like" demise of Hackman at the end of the film. But the action is compelling enough to allow us to overlook the Message.

The Getaway. dir. by Sam Peckinpah. With Steve McQueen and Ali McGraw.

Sam Peckinpah is one of the most interesting directors functioning today. Most of his work is deeply flawed; one senses that he is trying to direct in the classic tradition of Hollywood adventure movies, but that he cannot arrive at a consistent style or point of view. Hence the erratic, unstable, and flawed nature of his oeuvre. And yet Peckinpah at his worst is still better than most of the directors active today. And his handling of violence is consistently brilliant, as even his worst detractors concede. **The Wild Bunch** was one of the great Westerns of all time; **Straw Dogs** was marred by the slowness of the buildup and the total miscasting of Dustin Hoffman; in a far different vein, **The Ballad of Cable Hogue**, starring Jason Robards, was a beautiful and lyrical evocation of the individualism of the Old West. It is, indeed, Peckinpah's uncompromising individualism, and the readiness of his heroes to use violence to defend themselves against attack, that sticks in the craw of the left-intelligentsia.

The Getaway, unfortunately, is not one of Peckinpah's better efforts. Its central theme — the caper-plus-getaway — is a fine one, and Peckinpah gets down to it well after an unsatisfactory beginning marred by fashionable avant-garde camera jumps in time and space. The scenes of violence are predictably excellent, especially the scene when the cornered McQueen shoots his way out with a shotgun purchased on the spot. But the film is fundamentally flawed by the grievous miscasting of the central protagonists. Once again, Peckinpah has fallen victim to faulty casting. Furthermore, Peckinpah does not have the ability of the great directors to wring superior performances from shoddy and third-rate actors; on the contrary, a poor actor will perform far worse under Peckinpah than he will with most directors. Steve McQueen has always been one of our poorest actors; his expression ranges from surly-and-quizzical to surly-and-quizzical. In **Getaway**, McQueen is given his head, and he drags down the picture with a stumbling, leaden, inarticulate, surly-quizzical performance.

Ali McGraw completes the acting debacle. Miss McGraw has never been able to act; but her previous directors have been able to enhance her beauty in a rosy glow and to wring at least a passable performance from her. Here, Miss McGraw is a disaster; her acting is abysmal, and she is leaden, chalk white, dead to the core. Peckinpah has never been good with women; his female characters have never been more than dumb and fickle tramps. Faced with the McGraw character as someone closer to heroine status, Peckinpah simply cannot handle the situation; hence her corpse-like quality. Furthermore, McQueen and McGraw are supposed to be in love, and romantic love is the one emotion that Peckinpah is least equipped to portray. Sado-masochistic sex he handles quite well, as in the minor sex interest of **Getaway**; but the two central "lovers" are stumbling, inarticulate, moribund, and totally unbelievable.

Noel Coward, RIP. The death of the great Noel Coward, almost the living embodiment of the best of the Old Culture, leaves a gap that cannot be filled. Coward's genius as a playwright, composer and actor managed to forge a blend of unabashed and moving romanticism with high and sparkling wit. A difficult feat at best, the great Coward leaves an aching void in a culture and a world from which both romance and wit have virtually disappeared. The only thing those of us left behind can do is to Keep the Faith, to keep the torch of elegant wit and romance burning until a nobler and better time. But this is hardly a difficult task; for shall we ever be able to forget the great play **Private Lives**? (For a moving

theatrical experience, rush out, buy, and listen to the Coward-Gertrude Lawrence recording of this play.) And can we ever forget such marvelously romantic songs as "I'll See You Again"? Bless you, Noel Coward, and rest in peace. We shall not see you like again.

The Jockey Club Stakes. A play by William Douglas Home. With Wilfred Hyde White, Robert Coote, and Geoffrey Sumner. Broadway this season saw what can only characterize as assassination-by-criticism. The **Jockey Club Stakes** came to Broadway, a frothy, delightful, beautifully acted comedy in the wittiest British tradition. The witty spoof on the mores and maneuverings of the British Establishment was acted superbly by a trio of consummate artists who should be familiar to us from British movies, with Mr. Hyde White the central star. And yet this comedy was blasted off the boards by the venomous attacks of such leftists, *serioso* critics as Julius Novick in the **Village Voice** and John Simon in the **New York Times**; Simon lost his cool so far as to seriously call this play the embodiment of the "loss of the British Empire." What incensed the Left was the obvious fact that the playwright, the brother of the former Tory Prime Minister of England, was delighted with the sly maneuverings of his Tory Establishment characters. All of a sudden, our critics, who hail every exercise in morbidity and degeneracy in the name of separating morality from art, forget all about art-for-art's-sake when their own goose is O so elegantly cooked!

It is, unfortunately, not surprising that the Left was able to insure a brief run for this frothy and delightful comedy. The only humor that seems to succeed in these days of Broadway decay is the heavy-handed, New York-oriented ethnic schlock of Neil Simon. More's the pity.

Fear Is the Key. Directed by Martin Tuchner, with Barry Newman. For years, Alastair MacLean has provided us with an exciting and tingling series of adventure-spy novels, novels more consistently gripping than the delightful James Bond series. The MacLean movies, while certainly to be recommended, have not done full justice to the author: though **The Guns of Navarone** was excellent and **Puppet On A Chain** had chilling and exciting moments. **Fear Is the Key** has the unmistakable stamp of low-budget tawdriness and the plot is often incoherent; but still and all, this is by far the most exciting movie of the season. And Barry Newman is magnificently tough in the central role.

Blaxploitation. One of the most important movie phenomena of the last few years has been what the Left-liberal and Establishment critics bitterly deride as "blaxploitation" movies. These are exciting, often delightful films where black private eyes and black gunmen star in black versions of this familiar white style of motion pictures. Of varying quality, such films as **Shaft**, **Trouble Man**, and **Cotton Comes to Harlem** almost all convey a sense of drama and a keen appreciation of black argot and ghetto "street smarts." They are all, in short, fun pictures, and it is typical of the insufferably *serioso* left-critics to get on their neo-Puritan high horse and condemn them as "exploiting" black people by . . . what? By giving them pictures which they intensely enjoy. Anyone who has seen a blaxploitation film will attest to the enjoyment and enthusiasm for these pictures by the virtually all-black audience. The audience identifies with the characters, shouts at the screen, applauds and hisses.

But, you see, according to our left-liberals, blacks must somehow be shielded from the supposedly "degrading" nature of street-private eye-police culture. Black audiences have to be fed "ennobling", if depressing and boring movies such as **Souther**. How insufferably elitist can one get?

(On the humorless Neo-Puritanism of our current Left, see the interesting article by George H. Douglas, "The New Puritanism of the Youth Culture," **Modern Age** (Spring, 1973).

High Plains Drifter. Dir. by and starring Clint Eastwood. Say it ain't so, Clint. Are you being seduced by the avant-garde? Do you, too, yearn to be "significant"? Actually, **High Plains Drifter** is not that bad. Mostly, it is still in the great Eastwood tradition. Clint is magnificently tough, the action is fast, and the bad guys get their comeuppance (and how!) The problem is the pretentious suggestion that **The Drifter** is somehow the ghost of a town marshal who had been killed by the bad guys, and now comes back to wreak revenge. He is a peculiar kind of ghost, since he apparently does not resemble the martyred marshal, and he quasi-rapes several of the available females in a decidedly non-ghostly manner. But

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there is that annoying "symbolism", with Eastwood painting the houses red, naming the town "Hell", and killing the bad guys while the flames leap upward. The alert viewer can smell a rat at the very first sequence, when Clint rides slowly into town with the lighting so adjusted that we can't see his face. Let's hope that next time Clint drops the mystical symbolism and Comes Home.

John Koch Retrospective. John Koch is unquestionably, and far and away, the greatest painter the twentieth century has produced. A recent Koch retrospective at the New York City Cultural Center was a breathtaking delight. There were a few of the impressionist works from Koch's early period (circa 1940) that fully matched the delightful works of Renoir. But the glory of John Koch was his mature and magnificent classicism, which was fully represented on two floors of the Cultural Center. At the last Koch show, Emily Genauer of the New York Post wrote that Koch was the greatest painter of this century, and the full equal of the old masters. There is no doubt about it. The precision and elegance of Koch's classical realism, the incredible use of light that fully matches Vermeer, the play on perspectives that is the equal of Velasquez, the still lifes, the portraits, the genre scenes, one could go on and on.

Given Koch's evident greatness, why O why has he been systematically ignored by the Art Establishment? Why do the critics patently dislike his work even as they grudgingly concede his "technical perfection"? The ugly explanation is all too clear in their writings. It is because John Koch is not only a realist, he is a painter, not of "ashcan" scenes, not of depressing pessimism, nor of ugliness, but of the elegant life that he clearly loves so well: himself, his friends, his beautifully furnished duplex on Central Park West. Every painting of John Koch rubs his critics' noses in his decidedly unfashionable, aristocratic and optimistic view of life and the world. Andrew Wyeth, though a realistic artist far inferior to Koch, can be forgiven for his pessimism and near-despair; Koch's elegant optimism cannot.

Anti-Tax Demonstration

By Kenneth W. Kalcheim

New York, April 14 — The Libertarian Alliance put on its first successful, major demonstration to exhibit its conviction that the power to tax is the power to destroy. There were about 25 individuals involved in the demonstration. The groups represented were the Free Libertarian Party radical caucus, the Libertarian Tax Rebellion Committee, the Student Libertarian Action Movement, the New York Libertarian Association, and the Free Libertarian Party Liberty Amendment Committee. It was a totally peaceful demonstration as one of the main principles of libertarianism is the non-initiation of force. The highlight of the demonstration took place at noon when Kenneth W. Kalcheim of the Libertarian Tax Rebellion Committee burned his IRS Summons (which he refused to answer or appear on), all his tax records, and his social security card as he also believes that social security is a fraudulent, confiscatory, coercive tax. After the burning, he set up a table with tax rebellion literature inside the front entrance of the building. He was told by a U. S. Treasury Agent to leave the building. He refused as he said he had as much right to be there as anybody else. When the police asked to see his identification, particularly his draft card, he refused to comply.

Meanwhile, outside, the demonstration was still going quite strong. The demonstrators continued to march up and back in front of the entrance to the building. They did not block the entrance or prevent anyone from entering the building. There were no arrests but it was touch and go for awhile. Four individuals were immediately singled by the police as troublemakers. They were Sam Konkin, J. Neil Schulman, John Pachak and Ken Kalcheim. The police advised Kalcheim that he had violated at least three of their laws but they never proceeded any further. Konkin and Schulman were advised that if they continued to "obstruct access to the entrance of the building" they would be arrested. They neither blocked the entrance nor prevented anyone from entering the building.

Subsequently, they were arrested. However due to the intervention of "radical minarchist" Howie Katz they were finally released. Considering that there was a large press turnout representing the major media in New York City, there seemingly was political pressure or censorship to bury the news item as nothing was reported by the press. Only WNEW, a minor, independent TV station, gave us about 15 seconds of reporting. Anything the government considers too radical, they immediately fear. As taxation is a major issue and there is mass dissatisfaction with it around the country, this is the issue the government most fears. This weekend again proves that we are losing more and more of our freedoms day by day. There is very little freedom of the press left, if any at all. The public, media and government might be interested in knowing that there is still a small number of free press left. The demonstration will be covered in many libertarian and leftist publications and newspapers. It will also be reported in these publications that the media has seemingly submitted to government coercion and therefore helped the government destroy our freedoms.

Hospers On Rothbard's Rebuttal

The trouble with writing a letter responding to an author who is also editor of the same journal is that the editor always has the last word. Nevertheless, I welcome the opportunity to air the exchange of views; so I shall address a few remarks to the *Libertarian Forum* once again, much more briefly this time. If my last letter was a catalyst for getting Dr. Rothbard's views on foreign policy on paper, it has been worth-while for that reason alone.

I. I admit at the outset that I am not a historian. I have read extensively (and written) in the areas of aesthetics, epistemology and ethics, but not history. And since the issue between us is admittedly an empirical one, about what happened and to whom, I cannot claim to a competence in it based on personal research. The fact is that I am not very happy about writings that give interpretations of historical events: some people find interpretation A more plausible and attack interpretation B; some find B more plausible or utterly convincing and attack A. And whether a person opts for A or for B seems in 99 cases out of 100, to depend on which one he wants to opt for, and which one conforms to his pre-existing prejudices. This leaves me in rather a state of mental paralysis when it comes to making a decision between two specialists who disagree with one another, each of whom has a greater knowledge of the field than I have. For example, I have read not only Quigley but Kolko; as far as my knowledge of the facts is concerned, either of them may be right; and thus far I am no more convinced by the one than by the other.

The historian I am most impressed by, and who has researched some aspects of the issue more than anyone I know, is Professor Anthony Sutton, whose three-volume work *American Technology and Soviet Economic Development* is a masterpiece of detailed research. Professor Sutton's new book, *Our National Suicide*, will be published in a few months by Arlington House. Its main thesis is that the United States in the last half century has given, lent, or leased to Soviet Russia the technology which she did not have and would not have had without American help; that this technology, though classified as non-military (e.g., truck factories, ball-bearing plants), has enabled the Soviet Union to achieve the degree of military expertise which it now possesses — e.g., our ball bearings have made their missiles accurate any time they choose to use them on an American city. In other words, the United States as part of its own official policy has caused the Soviet Union to grow into a military giant, and kept that giant alive and in a position to attack us. According to this view, the Soviet Union does represent a military danger to the United States because of the United States' own policy. Dr. Rothbard will be pleased to find data further blackening his least-favorite president, Woodrow Wilson; for it was Wilson who, at the behest of the power-behind-the-throne, Colonel House, attempted to keep all criticism of the Bolshevik regime out of the American press. (I have myself seen a microfilm copy of House's urgent memo to Wilson to this effect, and he did what he could to "win over" the Bolsheviks.) Since that time, the history of United States-Soviet relations has been principally that of the

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self-defeating and perhaps suicidal policy of the nation A raising nation B into a position of strength from which B could threaten A. And yet, Dr. Rothbard says that B is no threat. Possibly: but if so, it is not for lack of attempt on the part of A to make it one. (See Prof. Sutton's article in the Sept. 9, 1972, issue of *Human Events*, pp. 12-13.)

2. But on to non-historical matters. Dr. Rothbard wonders why I would be more worried about a Soviet attack immediately after the depoliticalization of the United States than now. For a plain economic reason: once the United States economy was freed, and it devoted all its efforts to expanding its economy, every nation in the world would be threatened — not militarily, but ideologically. There would be a brain-drain of such dimensions as would dwarf anything that has occurred in

the past, with every enterprising person from every country wanting to get to the place where he could now make it on his own without the ball-and-chain of political control over his efforts. This would be such a threat to every statist nation, and particularly to the totally statist Soviet Union, that rather than risk the dramatic demonstration of the absurdity of their socialist ideas, they might well decide to attack the United States (or what was formerly the United States) while they still had the American technology with which to do it, especially now that there was no longer a nuclear defense against them.

3. I do believe that those libertarians who advocate total American disarmament would (if their efforts were successful) be leaving the inhabitants of this country open to any aggressor in any country that cared to throw a few nuclear missiles our way. I believe I would be less safe if these libertarians had their way. But of course, I am aware that those very same libertarians believe that I am advocating policies (preservation of national defense) which are dangerous to them. What is the way out of this impasse? Dr. Rothbard suggests that those who wish

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Recommended Reading

Anti-Trust.

The economic literature on anti-trust and industrial organization has long been in sad shape indeed, since all factions have been committed to the evils of anti-trust policy. Now, Professor Armentano has written the first book on anti-trust from an Austrian, and therefore from a pure *laissez-faire*, perspective. Armentano's *The Myths of Antitrust* (Arlington House, \$11.95) is a breath of fresh air in the industrial organization quagmire. Armentano concentrates on the major antitrust cases, from the E. C. Knight Case (1895) to the present. Excellent and readable.

The Minerva Caper.

Peter C. Du Bois, "Utopia on the Rocks", *Barrons* (March 26) is a thorough and entertaining history of the ill-fated Minerva venture, the attempt of libertarian and quasi-libertarian retreatists to found their own "republic" on a submerged coral reef in the far Pacific. The Minerva will o' the wisp could be regarded as sheer farce, were it not for the tragic fact that libertarian capitalists sunk hundreds of thousands of dollars into this wild and woolly scheme. This is a tragic waste of precious libertarian resources that we can ill afford. When will our libertarian capitalists invest their resources on behalf of liberty at home, and abandon the kooky quest for a libertarian Shangri-la?

Medical Freedom.

The most recent interview with the scintillating libertarian psychoanalyst, Dr. Thomas Szasz ("Medicine and the State: the First Amendment Violated", *The Humanist*, March-April 1973) is Szasz at his sharp and charismatic best. Szasz here deals not only with his familiar opposition to involuntary commitment, but with the full range of medical despotism in this country. The entire interview is a gem, but here is Szasz, after a blistering attack on monopolistic medical licensing, and after the editor asks: But doesn't the public "need protection from incompetent medical practitioners?" Szasz answers: "Oh, I agree that people need protection — but not only from bad, stupid, inept, greedy, evil doctors; they also need protection from bad parents and children, husbands and wives, mothers-in-law, bureaucrats, teachers, politicians — the list is endless. And, then, of course, they'll need protection from the protectors! So the question of how people should be protected from incompetent medical practitioners is really a part of the larger question of how they should be protected from the countless hazards of life . . . The first line of protection for the public lies, I would say, in self-protection. People must grow up and learn to protect themselves — or suffer the conse-

quences. There can be no freedom without risk and responsibility."

Rothbardiana.

Rothbardiana continues apace. In the last couple of months, Rothbard has come out with the following: a Letter on the Quota System, by the Forum for Contemporary History (Nov. 17), reprinted in the *Intellectual Digest* (February, 1973); a two-part interview in the *Gold and Silver Newsletter* of the Pacific Coast Coin Exchange (Nov. 30 & Dec. 31); a joint interview with Leonard Liggio on "The New Isolationism" in *Reason* (February), which has already drawn considerable blood from the Cold Warriors; a chapter on "Free Market Police, Courts, and Law" in *Reason* (March) taken from his forthcoming "the book" on Liberty; an article on "Libertarianism" for the 1972 edition of the *Encyclopedia Americana*; and the "Introduction" to the Garland Press reprint of Sidney Rogerson's *Propaganda for the Next War*. Also articles for *Outlook*, and book reviews for *Choice*.

And coming very soon: Rothbard's booklet, "The Essential Von Mises" for the revived "minibook" series, published by Oakley Bramble's Constitutional Alliance.

Contra Utilitarianism.

There is nothing like a brutal, genocidal war to lead one to question the validity of the utilitarian approach to ethics, with its cool totting up of "social costs" and "social benefits" from policies imposing various "megadeaths" on society. The Vietnam War has come as a shock to the highest circles of modern philosophy, and is leading to a fundamental re-thinking, and a welcome shift, at long last, away from utilitarian amorality. One important development is the recent, highly-touted book by John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, which levels a vigorous critique of the collectivism inherent in the presumption to add and subtract "social costs" and "social benefits". Rawls' positive contribution, however, is an unsatisfactory return to a new form of Hobbesian "contract" theory. Now, the distinguished British philosopher Stuart Hampshire signals his break with utilitarianism in an excellent critique, "Morality and Pessimism", *New York Review of Books* (Jan. 25, 1973). Hampshire charges that utilitarianism can simply not defend the individual's overriding right to life, regardless of the alleged social benefits that may ensue from his murder. And, *mirabile dictu*, Hampshire declares that we must get back to "ancient philosophy," to Aristotle and the theory of natural law, to arrive at an ethic that will be grounded in the right to life. This can be a truly significant breakthrough on the philosophic front, and may make the formidable task of our budding young neo-objectivist philosophers that much easier. ■

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to defend their lives and property should do so, and those who do not wish to should not. And this is indeed a lovely libertarian precept, and I would accept it in a minute if I thought it would work.

Suppose that I place some machine-guns and even some anti-aircraft weapons in my back yard, and that you, my nextdoor neighbor, fear no foreign enemy and install no defense at all. And suppose that at this point some half-crazed leader of a new Arab or African dictatorship decides to put the fear of God into us by sending some missiles into our midst from an Atlantic submarine. Does anyone think for a moment that the missiles would be so aimed as to strike me rather than you, or vice versa? That's the trouble with modern warfare: just as "the rain falls on the just as on the unjust," so bombs and missiles would fall on those who tried individually to defend themselves as well as on those who did not. Weapons of modern war destroy miles of property and do not distinguish between back yards.

A nuclear offense, or offensive danger, requires a nuclear defense; and there is no way I know of for those who would pay for their own defense against nuclear powers to do so without defending everyone else at the same time (the problem of freeloaders again); and, what is far worse, there is no way for those who would not defend themselves from increasing danger to everyone else by thinning their defense efforts and jeopardizing the success of the defense. If I saw a satisfactory alternative to collective action in the matter of defense against nuclear weapons, I would be enormously grateful. Perhaps such an alternative has been thought of — a practical one, not one conceived in the heads of theorists who care nothing about practical applications — but if so, I would be most indebted to the Editor if he would explain to me what it is and how it works.

— John Hospers

The Editor's Final Rebuttal

I am going to spare the reader in this last of a series of rounds (Dec. 1972-Feb. 1973) by being mercifully brief.

1. I am sorry to see Dr. Hospers adopting the position of historiographical nihilism. If two historians differ, how can the reader come to a judgment? In basically the same way as when two economists differ, or two philosophers differ: by learning and reading more about the discipline of history and about the concrete areas under discussion. On the philosophy of history, in my view the most developed position is that of Ludwig von Mises' grievously neglected *Theory and History*, with the proviso that I would add the moral dimension of the great Lord Acton. On the concrete, space requires me to be simply arbitrary and say here that there are good and sufficient reasons, totally apart from their political conclusions, why Gabriel Kolko is deeply respected as a scholar in the historical profession and Carroll Quigley is not. As for me personally, I did not begin with an emotional preference for the Kolko thesis; I began,

many years ago, by adopting the Cold War historical mythology, and it was by learning more that I some years later changed my position.

2. I have not read Professor Sutton's book, but from the reviews of its admirers I would conclude that his thesis is correct but trivial in importance. Not just the Soviet Union, but all late-developing countries borrow technology from the existing industrialized countries. In the nineteenth century, the United States borrowed technology, often illegally, from Great Britain. So what? The important point for economic development is not technology anyway, but the saving and investment of capital.

3. I'm afraid I cannot be pleased with Dr. Hospers' interpretation of the Wilson policy or of the U. S. policy in general in the past half-century. As Arno J. Mayer has demonstrated in his monumental two-volume work (*Political Origins of the New Diplomacy* and *The Politics and Diplomacy of Peacemaking*), crucial to Wilsonian imperialism was the coercive suppression of Bolshevism in Russia and in Eastern and Central Europe — the latter largely succeeding with the aid of the Social Democrats. As for Russia itself, Woodrow Wilson sent American troops to the Soviet Union and kept them there for several years, along with troops of the Allies, to try to crush Bolshevism in the bud. This is a "suicidal" buildup of Bolshevism?

4. Here I stand on my previous article: that what the Russians are frightened of are our missiles and nuclear weapons as employed by the American Leviathan State; they are not worried about our free-market ideology, because they are Marxist-Leninists and as such they are convinced (wrongly, of course) that their ideological victory is assured by the ineluctable laws of history. They consider us libertarians as harmless reactionary throwbacks to a "pre-imperialist form of capitalism", and far less dangerous to them because we do not endorse or employ State imperialism.

5. I consider it immoral and criminal to force someone else to pay for my own defense. Period. I frankly don't give a damn about the Friedmanite worries about the "free rider" and "external economies". If it costs me more to defend myself because my neighbor is either a pacifist or a blind fool it is just too bad; I should either pay the resulting full cost of my defense or shut up about it.

As for Dr. Hospers' complaint about modern warfare, that is precisely my position, and that is why I oppose any and all use of modern weapons that make it impossible for the rain to fall only on the unjust. As for nuclear weapons, for the present and the foreseeable future there is no defense against them: hence the very practical importance of getting rid of them altogether. A practical way of doing this was the American disarmament proposal which we withdrew as soon as the Russians finally accepted it, on May 10, 1955. The essence of the Russian proposal since that date has been for all nations to scrap all of their nuclear weapons, and then to allow any and all groups, private as well as public, to inspect all sites to see that this agreement is being carried out. Right now, of course, the existence of satellites makes the inspection problem an easy one to solve, so that world disarmament of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction is now more feasible than ever before. (Those interested in the Russians and May 10, 1955 should read the excellent account in Philip Noel-Baker's paperback, *The Arms Race*.)

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