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## THE MAYORAL CIRCUS, II

At the time of writing, New York's wild and woolly mayoral extravaganza has just lurched to a new stage: the holding of the primary election. It is of no small importance to the meaning and the undercurrents of this election that the voting was held on a Monday, June 3 — for the first time in living memory violating the New York and the American tradition of holding all elections on a Tuesday. It is very possible that the underwhelming size of the vote (only 25% of those eligible in the Democratic primary) was partially due to the strange and disorienting displacement from Tuesday to Monday. In a fighting speech attacking the massive Establishment conspiracy against him (more later), Rep. Mario Biaggi, a conservative Italian-American populist from the East Bronx, referred darkly to the peculiarity of the Monday vote. Why the sudden change? Because Tuesday sundown begins the Jewish holiday of Shevuoth. It is no wonder that many New Yorkers feel outraged that a traditional election day should be changed simply to accommodate a third-rate religious holiday. Where is the much-vaunted separation of Church and State? The Monday vote was simply one more brick in the mounting edifice of ethnic conflict which is increasingly the essence of New York politics. (On the ethnic nature of New York politics see the highly perceptive work of Nathan Glazer and Daniel Moynihan, *Beyond the Melting Pot*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1970, particularly the Introduction to the 2nd Edition.)

In our previous installment of the New York saga (*Lib. Forum*, March, 1973), we saw a mayoral field crowded with a host of candidates. Since then, has come the inevitable shakeout. The weakest Democratic candidates went inevitably to the wall, withdrawing from the race with varying amounts of ill grace. The hopeless Jesse Gray bowed out, snarling at the lack of support by the bulk of the city's black politicians. The left-center proved unviable, ground down by the millstones of Left and Right-Center, and so out went Jerome Kretchmer, Ed Koch, Robert Postel, and Mario Cuomo, whose only hope was support from erratic Queens Democrat leader Matthew Troy, Jr., who opted instead — for a while — for the Biaggi camp. The maverick Postel doggedly dropped down to run for controller, while the other pitiful left-centrist Sanford Garelik settled by trying to run for re-election to his current post as President of the city council. This left the Big 4: Herman Badillo and Albert Blumenthal on the Left, Abraham Beame on the Right-Center, and Mario Biaggi on the Right.

Everyone has complained that the candidates themselves and their public appearances got totally drowned out by the two great dramas of the campaign: both bizarre events brought into being by the Rockefeller-upper class WASP establishment in working control of New York politics. On the other hand, not seeing this crew in daily action was scarcely a loss to the New York citizen. The two dramas, in rapid succession, were the Wagner Caper, and the Biaggi Affair.

The Wagner Caper was generated by the insufferably arrogant decision of Governor Rockefeller to shove down the throats of the citizens of New York the old re-tread, has-been, former Mayor Robert F. Wagner. "Mayah Wagnah" (in his Old New York accent which has now disappeared from all New Yorkers under the age of 60) is scarcely a

charismatic figure. His lengthy reign is remembered with no affection by New Yorkers, and furthermore he was whipped badly in his attempt at a comeback in the Democratic mayoral primary four years ago. The gall of Nelson Rockefeller was compounded by his decision to install this dilapidated Democrat-Liberal not as a Democrat but as a Republican-Liberal — despite his lengthy record of opposition to the Republican Party. The Liberal Party, a one-man fiefdom under the iron control of the powerful, aging Alex Rose, head of the Hatters Union, was delighted to go along with the scheme. After all, with the imminent departure of the universally reviled John Lindsay, Alex was about to lose his accustomed place at the public trough. The dark rumor was that the deal ran as follows: Rockefeller would pull all the stops to force the Republicans to nominate Wagner, in return for which Alex Rose would either endorse Rockefeller for governor next year or put up some patsy who would lose ingloriously and thereby not join with the Democrats in opposing Rocky.

While Wagner waited coyly in the wings, Rockefeller proceeded to try to ram his nomination down the throats of the Republican leaders. According to New York law, a majority of the executive committee of a city party has to give its approval to a non-party member's entering its primary. Except for Vince Albano, the quintessential opportunist hack who runs the Manhattan party, the outraged Republican leaders balked at going along with the deal. Finally, most were persuaded to go along, but they were blocked by the heroic refusal of the Brooklyn party, led by young George Clark who had long been deeply miffed by Rockefeller's long-standing playing footsy with powerful Brooklyn Democrat leader Meade Esposito. The stubborn refusal of the Brooklyn party, combined with the delightfully candid if imprudent expostulation by Bronx leader John Calandra that Wagner is a "moron", greatly angered the former Mayor, who had presumably expected an easy time of it in Republican ranks. Hence, Wagner angrily refused to fight, and walked out of the mayoral race. New York was saved from the Rockefeller-Rose-Wagner threat. The Liberal Party then selected left-liberal Democrat Albert Blumenthal as its mayoral choice.

The favorite for the Democratic nomination was now Mario Biaggi, who was also chosen by the Conservative Party as its mayoral candidate. There next ensued an unprecedented savage assault upon Biaggi by the entire New York establishment, an alliance of upper class WASPS and Jews, of "corporate liberalism" at its most strident. The liberal New York press, in alliance with upper class Rockefeller-WASP U. S. Attorney Whitney North Seymour, dug up old grand jury minutes, supposedly sacred in their privacy, which were leaked to the press to embarrass Biaggi. A tragi-comedy ensued in which the emotional lower-class populist Biaggi, who had never gone to school to learn "grace under pressure", was trapped into a series of lies and evasions. The result of this furious tempest in a teapot was a total discrediting of Biaggi, and the end of his chance to win the primary.

The assault on Biaggi was a reflection of the savage hatred and contempt for the Italian-American masses on the part of upper-class liberals. Of all the ethnic groups in New York and indeed in America, the

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## The Mayoral Circus, II —

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Italians had never Made It in American society. Precious little prestige, wealth, or political or intellectual posts have accrued to the Italians; even within the Catholic Church, they have seen all the power accrue to the Irish who had preceded them. And now that their "turn" as immigrants had come, they had seen themselves elbowed aside and oppressed by an unholy alliance of upper class WASPS and Jews, with black and Puerto Rican "ghetto militants." And yet, in contrast to many other groups that had never been particularly successful, the Italians did not react by destructiveness, violence, or the making of outrageous demands on the rest of society. Instead, they have worked hard, remained relatively poor, and have refused to go on welfare; all they ask of life is to preserve their neighborhoods, to walk safely in the streets, and to keep their taxes low. For this healthy "conservatism" they have only succeeded in being denounced by articulate comfortable upper class intellectuals as petty and "racist."

And then there is the vexed question of "crime." To the lower-class Italian, as to the libertarian, "crime" means assault on person and property: mugging, theft, loot. But to the upper-class WASP (and now Jewish) Establishment Reformer, the really ugly crime, the crime that he tries ever to crack down on, is "organized crime", i.e. the entrepreneurial supplying of such goods and services as drugs, gambling, and prostitution (and formerly, liquor). The Italian sensibly sees nothing wrong with such "crimes" and therefore sees nothing wrong with paying politicians not to crack down upon such legitimate business activities. But the upper-class Reformer has, ever since the Progressive period and before, tried his best to outlaw and suppress these activities. Part of this is the Calvinist heritage of imposing one's own moral principles and customs on everyone else by force. Part of it, too, is aesthetic: the fact that the upper-class can afford to indulge in sex, drugs, gambling, and liquor in more luxurious, decorous, and affluent ways. Thus, among the attempts to outlaw pornography, invariably the government cracks down much more harshly on those activities which are cheaper and therefore more accessible to the working-class. But much of it, too, is political; thus, in the Progressive period, the essence of upper-class-induced Reform was to destroy the political power of the ethnic neighborhood, usually centered in the saloon, and by destroying the saloon to centralize municipal power in their own "efficient", decorous, and "businesslike" hands. (On organized crime and reform, see Mark H. Haller, "Urban Crime and Criminal Justice: The Chicago Case," *Journal of American History*, December 1970.) In the case of the Italians, the situation is particularly piquant because "organized crime" has provided virtually the only vehicle for Italians to rise and acquire at least a modicum of wealth, prestige, and political influence. And for their pains, they are subjected to a continuing national propaganda assault which they, lacking intellectual savvy or clout, are helpless to answer. And so even this route to success is being taken away from them.

Furthermore, the Italians see that while they are generally reviled by the Establishment and the media as "criminals", that real criminals — muggers, rapists, looters — are continually being coddled and "understood", by this same upper-class liberal elite, and these genuine crimes invariably blamed on the victims: "society." (See Glazer and Moynihan, p. lxvii.)

In the face of this systematic injustice, it is no wonder that the Italian masses of New York City are becoming restive, and moving toward insurgent "right-wing populism." The only wonder is that the awakening has taken so long. The upsurge in recent years of such conservative Italian lower-class populists as Vito Battista, Mario Proccaccino, and now Mario Biaggi is the reflection of this discontent. After he won the Democratic mayoral primary four years ago, the emotional Mario Proccaccino was laughed out of the race by the contemptuous liberal media. But Biaggi could not similarly be dismissed as a clown; he had to be savaged out of the race.

Particularly instructive is the reaction of the Conservative Party to the crucifixion of Biaggi. Since its inception a decade ago, the Conservative Party had been run as a virtual fief by the Buckley family and their political satraps, the brothers-in-law Kieran O'Doherty and Daniel Mahoney. The ideology has been straight *National Review*-conservatism, which means an upper-crust Establishment pro-statist that frowns on

any and all expressions of mass-oriented right-wing populism. Any insurgent populists were promptly isolated and expelled from the party. But with its growth in numbers and power, populism advanced, particularly within the ranks of the New York City party. Very reluctantly, the Conservative leaders were induced by their rank-and-file to go along with the nomination of Biaggi for mayor. But with the grand jury caper, the Buckley clique moved openly to try to withdraw the nomination from Biaggi. They were able to mobilize most of the "stars", the former Conservative candidates for state-wide office: including David Jaquith, Paul Adams, Ed Leonard, and Rosemary Gunning. But the second-rank party leaders stood firm, notably the Bronx leader Thomas F. Cronin (an aide on the Biaggi staff), Brooklyn leader Michael Long, and Manhattan leader Henry Mittendorf, and led by Conservative party vice-chairman Professor Henry Paolucci, political scientist from St. Johns University who once ran for Senate on the Conservative ticket. The Paolucci-led populists were able to resist the Buckleyite domination, and Mario Biaggi will run for mayor on the Conservative ticket in November. Not the least important result of this bizarre mayoral race is the coming of democracy to the Conservative Party of New York.

And so the primary: it was won by right-centrist Abe Beame, supported by his mass base in increasingly conservative lower-income Brooklyn and Queens Jewry, aided by a split-off of disoriented Biaggi supporters. But Beame got only 34% of the small vote, and the new rule is that a vote of less than 40% requires a runoff on June 26 with the runner-up. Biaggi actually came in a respectable third, with 21% of the vote. The surprise is the runner-up, the most left-wing candidate, the Puerto Rican Rep. Herman Badillo of the Bronx (29%), who managed to destroy the picked candidate of the left-liberal reformers of the NDC, Al Blumenthal, who came in last with a measly 16% of the vote. Particularly surprising was Badillo's beating out Blumenthal in the latter's home district of the upper-class left-liberal Jewish West Side of Manhattan. Badillo took leftish Manhattan (upper class WASP and Jewish, and lower-class Negro and Puerto Rican), shrewdly with the help of "ghetto" numbers runners who of all people have a firm base in the community and were able to pull an unprecedented total of blacks and Puerto Ricans to the polls. Badillo was also able to parlay an even split between Beame and Biaggi to add to his Puerto Rican base and win in the Bronx. Beame, as expected, swept lower-class Brooklyn and Queens, but again his margin was diminished by Biaggi support in Italian areas. There is little doubt that Badillo's strength over Blumenthal was due largely to his support by the powerful liberal press: the *New York Times* and the *New York Post*. Apparently, Blumenthal, in an attempt to broaden his base, had turned too hard on street crime for Establishment liberalism. There seems little doubt, also, that Beame, despite his advanced age, sobriety, and total lack of charisma, will pick up enough conservative Biaggi votes to defeat Badillo in the run-off.

What of the Republicans? With the Wagner scheme aborted, the Republicans turned to State Sen. John Marchi, of Staten Island, who had run for Mayor on the Republican and Conservative lines four years ago. The Buckley brothers' clique among the Conservatives, reacting against Biaggi, is now openly supporting Marchi for Mayor. But how does their support square with our "Italian populist" analysis, and why didn't the Conservatives back Marchi this year? Therein hangs a fascinating tale in the subtleties of ethnic politics. For Marchi, while thoughtful and intelligent, is not an "Italian" in the American ethnic sense. Whereas virtually all the Italian immigrants came from Southern Italy: Sicily and Calabria (as did, for example, the ancestors of Biaggi and Proccaccino), Marchi is of Northern Italian, Florestine descent. Not only are the Northern Italians anti-populist, it was the despotism of the Northern Italian government (differing culturally, economically, and racially), against which anti-governmental Southern Italian populism arose in the old country. True to his Establishment heritage, Marchi has been openly and bitterly anti-populist; his Conservatism has been statist and *National-Reviewish*, and hence the support of the Buckley clique is not an accident. The specific issue on which the mass of Conservatives broke with Marchi was his support — alone among Staten Island politicians — of the South Richmond Development Authority, a mammoth public housing project planned for Staten Island that would bulldoze countless homes and destroy the character of the area.

And so the November lineup will be: Beame or Badillo (Dem.), Marchi (Rep.), Blumenthal (Lib.), and Biaggi (Cons.) — almost a replay of the primary with a larger class of voters. And of course Youngstein (Free Libertarian.)

## Blockian Ethics

By Roy Halliday

In an article entitled "Heroes and Scapegoats", in the March 1973 issue of the *Libertarian Forum*, Professor Walter Block supplied his definition of libertarianism. According to the professor, there are two premises that define libertarianism:

- (1) "The basic premise of libertarianism is that it is illegitimate to engage in aggression against non-aggressors."
- (2) "... anything not involving the initiation of violence cannot be evil."

The first premise is widely accepted and Professor Block's explanation of it is very good. However, the second premise in this definition alienates all people who have any ethical principles beyond prohibition of crime. It estranges people of all religions and excludes non-religious people like Ayn Rand and Murray Rothbard who believes in an objective code of ethics. Can a definition of libertarianism that excludes Murray Rothbard be valid?

Why must libertarians refrain from making personal judgments beyond separating criminals and non-criminals? Couldn't a person accept the libertarian theory of justice and also be a Christian, Muslim, Objectivist, or Rothbardian? Despite what Professor Block may think, libertarianism is not a substitute for all religious and moral values. Libertarianism is not the alpha and the omega of life. It is simply the correct philosophy of justice and its only requirement should be the acceptance of Professor Block's first premise. His second premise defines a certain type of libertarian, a Blockian. We need not all be singleminded Blockians.

Being a libertarian means that we recognize everyone's right to be free from aggression. As individuals, we still may despise and regard as evil what some people do with their freedom. We do not have to approve all nonaggressive activities and pretend that mankind has learned nothing of life in all these centuries. Libertarianism does not mean that we must admire and regard as hero any social outcast who is not an aggressor. Only Blockian libertarians are so compelled.

Why has Professor Block chosen such a restrictive definition of libertarianism? It may be because he has misinterpreted or overextended the subjective theory of value. He has taken the subjective theory of value that explains how voluntary trade operates, and expanded its meaning to include that trade of any kind is morally good and objectively beneficial to society.

"Both parties must always feel they gain from a voluntary transaction. Given that they are free **not** to enter into the trade, the fact that they **do** decide to trade must prove to be a mutual benefit."

If trade is objectively good, regardless of what is traded, and regardless of the motives of the traders, then any person who overcomes great obstacles and takes unusual risks in order to complete a trade is automatically a hero. If someone engages in a socially disapproved form of trade (even if it is disapproved for good reasons) that social outcast is a hero. Blockian libertarians always must recognize as heroes precisely those social outcasts who are the most hated and reviled traders in society, even though the public may have good reason for disliking these non-criminals. If libertarians were all Blockians, the libertarian movement would be doomed to be as unpopular as the most despised "professions" in society.

Fortunately, most libertarians reject the premise that all trade is objectively good. Although, at the time of the trade both parties feel that they will benefit, they may be wrong. They may not both benefit from the transaction when it is judged from an objective point of view, or even from their own point of view reconsidered. The subjective theory of value operated smoothly in economic theory because economics is, and should be, a value free science. Professor Block makes the mistake of trying to treat ethics as a value free science instead of as the science of values. He assumes that people do not make mistakes in judgment and that their subjective values are objectively correct. Life is not so uncomplicated. Praxeology cannot take the place of ethics.

Professor Block dismisses charges that in real life his "heroes" actually do commit acts of aggression, by saying that though the charge may be true in any particular case, it is not necessarily true of the social outcasts' profession qua profession. Why, then, does he assume that

## Blockian Ethics — A Reply

By Walter Block

The main contention between Mr. Halliday and myself seems to concern the ethical status of certain acts which are disapproved by various segments in our society. Acts such as masturbation, drunkenness, scrabble playing, suicide, heroin addiction, atheism, religious beliefs, homosexuality as well as the acts of my list of scapegoats (see the March issue). We both believe, I think, that such non-aggressive acts, or "victimless crimes" should not be considered illegal, as contrasted with aggressive acts such as murder, rape, theft, trespass, which should be considered illegal. We disagree, however, over my contention that "... anything not involving the initiation of violence (such as these non-aggressive acts) cannot be evil!"

I don't know how to settle this controversy in such a limited space other than for me to say "Yes, yes" and for him to say "No, no." I reserve the word "evil" for acts of violence against other persons, and Mr. Halliday uses the word in a less restrictive way. What I would like to do instead in this reply is to indicate why I think that all the criticisms of my forthcoming book that Mr. Halliday deduces from this disagreement simply do not follow.

1. The charge of exclusion. The Blockian Philosophy (heh, heh) does not exclude from libertarianism religious people, atheists like Ayn Rand, nor people like Murray Rothbard who believe in an objective code of ethics. On the contrary, I believe that the two premises quoted by Mr. Halliday constitute an objective code of ethics that has my full support. As for restrictiveness, I include both the followers of Miss Rand (atheists) as well as religious people as libertarians. (Many in each of these two groups, however, insist upon excluding members of the other group from the ranks of libertarianism.)

2. The charge that we must approve of these scapegoat heroes. I do not approve of many of the non-aggressive actions under consideration.

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anyone who hates and maligns his heroes is *ipso facto* opposed to the nonaggressive nature of the hero's profession, and why does he assume that everyone who criticizes his heroes wants to initiate aggression against them? In short, why does Professor Block assume only the best about pimps, blackmailers, and dope peddlers while he assumes the worst about their critics? There is nothing intrinsically aggressive about criticizing, disapproving, maligning, not associating with, or even hating someone who is not a criminal.

Professor Block gives the false impression that libertarianism means approval of vice and blindness to all ethical considerations beyond the nonaggression principle. A person does not have to be morally obtuse to be a libertarian. One may be a libertarian not because he believes all values are subjective, but because he believes that objective human values can be achieved best in a free society.

Free trade is not the answer to all of life's problems; instead, it is the framework within which we each can test ourselves against the inexorable forces of nature. If we defend the right of each to pursue peaceful activity, we have done our part. The natural consequences of vice will take their course. We do not have to regard drunkards, for example, as heroes. We must only defend their right to drink. We may still agree with William Graham Sumner that a drunkard lying in the gutter is exactly where he belongs.

In a stateless society, with no coercive means of enforcing mores, customs, propriety, and good taste, the role of social ostracism and other natural, voluntary means of keeping civilized values alive will become of paramount importance. Instead of joining the Blockians in defending the outcasts and dregs of society, the majority would disassociate themselves from despicable characters and, perhaps, even join the maligners of Professor Block's unsung heroes.

By portraying these people as heroes, Professor Block is wasting his talents on unworthy causes. He should be satisfied if he can prove that they are not criminals and that some of them are scapegoats. His book, thus far, does not represent the thinking of most libertarians and, if published in its present form, it will be a disservice to the libertarian cause. □

## Blockian Ethics, A Reply —

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Indeed, I abhor some. (Especially scrabble playing. This is especially distasteful to me. I agree with William Graham Sumner that "a scrabble player lying in the gutter is exactly where he belongs." — there is a slight misquote in Mr. Halliday's version).

But when these acts, however abhorrent, are prohibited by law, banned, and universally scorned, and when a practitioner of any of them insists upon his rights to do as he pleases without committing aggression against other people, I, for one, cannot help feeling a certain grudging admiration for him. (Although I admit that this is hard to do in the case of the scrabble player.) Even this low level of grudging admiration is not necessary to consider these non-aggressors as heroes, however. All that is necessary, I would contend, for an act to be heroic is that it not be intrinsically in violation of other peoples' rights, and that it be undertaken in an atmosphere of repression.

3. The subjective theory of value. I do not hold the view that all trade is "good". For example, trade among members of a pillaging band of criminals which enables the hoodlums to pillage at a more efficient rate can by no stretch of the imagination be considered a "good". I agree with Mr. Halliday that the subjective theory of value is beneficial in the sphere of value-free economics but not in the sphere of morality.

There is one thing though to object to in Mr. Halliday's statement concerning the praxeological view of trade: the necessary benefits of trade only occur in the *ex ante* sense, at the time of the trade according to this view. It is therefore an invalid objection to the praxeological view to say that both parties to a trade need not benefit from it "from their own point of view reconsidered". True, they need not. But the contrary was never asserted.

4. Mr. Halliday asserts that "There is nothing intrinsically aggressive about criticizing, disapproving, maligning, not associating with, or even hating someone who is not a criminal" (such as these non-aggressive "heroes") as if this is something that I would not agree with. But in the last issue of LF I stated:

"It is tempting to say that if there are any 'degenerate scum and social vermin' involved in this question, they are the people who cast aspersions on the economic heroes. Tempting, but incorrect. For we must remember that

people who maliciously cast false aspersions on others (libelers and slanderers) are heroes themselves, who are merely expressing their rights of free speech."

5. The stateless society. Mr. Halliday holds that in a stateless society my support of socially unacceptable behavior would be especially pernicious because without coercive means of enforcing mores, social ostracism would be called upon to bear a greater share in maintaining civilized views. Again, I agree with Mr. Halliday.

But in a stateless society there would be no prohibitions on the activities of those Mr. Halliday is pleased to call "dregs" and "despicable". And if there were no prohibitions on their acts, they could no longer be called heroes, according to my criteria! And if they were no longer heroes, and in need of protection from illegitimate prohibitions, there would no longer be any reason to defend them. After all, I have never, ever claimed that these acts are intrinsically heroic, or saintly. I have only claimed that these acts violate no libertarian codes of behavior, that they are prohibited nevertheless, that these people persevere under great duress, and that therefore they are heroic and ought to be defended.

The reactions of most libertarians to the series of "Scapegoats and Heroes" which have so far appeared in print have been most remarkable. They range from active acceptance to vigorous and sometimes even nasty rejection, with seemingly no middle ground. This is puzzling, to say the least. Also puzzling is that of Mr. Halliday's five criticisms of my paper, I have found myself in agreement with four of them. I agreed with him that 2) we need not approve of all the acts of the heroes; 3) not all trade is "good"; 4) there is nothing wrong with criticizing the heroes; and 5) there would be no need for defense of these scapegoats in a stateless (non-repressive) society. I only disagreed with his first point that I am overly exclusionary. Perhaps the disagreements are not as serious as they appear at first glance.

My usual reaction to criticism from people whose intelligence I admire which seems to me to be wide of the mark is to assume that there is a severe lack of communication, either on my part or on theirs, or on the part of both. And this must be my reaction in this case. Perhaps future publication of the articles, with criticism and rebuttal, will clear up the problem. Perhaps Mr. Halliday's reaction to this reply, and my reaction to his, may serve to clarify the situation. I am optimistic about this sort of outcome because, although in my own view all I am doing is tracing out the logical implications of libertarianism, I am fully aware that these deductions are taking some strange and new paths. Maybe all that is needed is time to get used to these new implications. □

## The Editor Comments

First, I would like to rise to a point of personal privilege and express my conviction that Mr. Halliday need not worry about my being read out of the libertarian movement by Professor Block. On the contrary, Walter Block's "basic premise" is firmly non-exclusionist: it encompasses as libertarians all people who have arrived at the axiom of non-aggression, regardless of whether they have arrived at it as Christians, objectivists, emotivists, utilitarians, whim-worshippers, or from any other route. I agree with Professor Block's non-exclusionism, although, I believe with Mr. Halliday in a wider system of objective ethics, and believe ultimately that libertarianism cannot be firmly established except as part of that wider ethic. Hence, I reserve the right to try to persuade other libertarians to that wider view.

How about Professor Block's second premise, that evil is only the initiation of violence? Here I think it is possible to partially reconcile the Block and Halliday positions. It is a question of *what context* we are dealing with. I would agree with Block that, *within* the context of libertarian theory, evil must be confined to the initiation of violence. On the other hand, when we proceed from libertarianism to the question of wider social and personal ethics, then I would agree with Halliday that there are many other actions which should be considered as evil: lying, for example, or deliberately failing to fulfill one's best potential. But these are not matters about which liberty — the problem of the proper scope of violence — has anything to say. In short, *qua* libertarian, there is nothing wrong or evil about breaking dates, being gratuitously nasty to one's associates, or generally behaving like a cad: here not only do I join

Professor Block, but I would expect Mr. Halliday and all other libertarians to do the same. On the other hand, *qua* general ethicist, I would join Mr. Halliday in denouncing such behavior, while Professor Block would not.

In general, I join Walter Block in being surprised at the high resistance which has excellent series on "Economic Scapegoats" has been meeting among libertarians. Essentially, what he is doing is sharpening and heightening libertarian consciousness by saying: "Here is activity X; it is voluntary and therefore perfectly permissible for the libertarian, and yet it is scorned and outlawed in our society. And therefore, since a hero is defined as any man who proceeds with licit activity even in the face of scorn and coercion, the person doing X is a hero." What Block is simply doing is ringing the changes on this syllogism, applying it to the most shocking and seemingly outrageous cases he can find. And by doing so he drives home the essential libertarian lesson; considering the resistance he has been facing, even among dedicated libertarians, we see all the more the vital importance of Block's projected book.

One important point that Professor Block underlines but apparently needs to be emphasized once more: these scapegoats, by virtue of being outlawed for their licit activity, are heroes but they are not saints. Neither they nor their activity possess any intrinsic superior morality: they are only heroic because of the obstacles that government has placed in their path. Those who wish to remove the tag of hero from the pimp, the blackmailer, etc. should advocate the speedy legalizing of these activities. □

## Harry Browne Replies

To the Editor:

I was pleased to see so much space devoted in your April issue to my new book, *How I Found Freedom in an Unfree World*, through the medium of Roy Childs' review.

Naturally, your reviewer was quite upset with what he considers to be my "wrongheaded" philosophy. The world is full of people like Roy Childs. They come in all philosophical labels — Objectivist, Christian, astrologist, Libertarian, whatever. The one thing they have in common is the unshakeable conviction that each possesses the final, absolute answers to questions of philosophy, morality, and freedom — even if those answers are different from those held a year earlier. What the moralist once accepted as a way of life for himself, he now labels "immoral" and "irrational" when done by someone else.

The point of my book is simple: how to get the Roy Childs' of the world off your back. How to live as you want to — right now — with the knowledge you currently possess, without causing problems you may regret later when you acquire new knowledge. And without having to wait for the millenium in order to be free. I cite techniques for avoiding taxes, staying clear of the moralists, shaking off obligations and responsibilities that other people think you should have, making more money while working fewer hours, finding good relationships with like-minded people, and other related goals. Naturally, this won't appeal to someone whose future depends upon everyone else conforming to his philosophy.

In the introduction to the review, the editor suggests what he thinks is a contradiction in "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." It seems strange that I should have to explain to a "libertarian" journal that I trade ideas for money. In three months, the book has sold over 45,000 copies; isn't that a rather self-evident motivation for my interest in the subject?

The editor also suggests that it's easier to avoid the state if one is in my

position — that of a best-selling author. One of the points of my book is that you're not likely to make the kind of money I make until you free yourself of taxes, unproductive relationships, and stifling occupations. That certainly has been the case in my own life: I was broke and in debt until I followed my own advice.

Again, thank you for the interest and space devoted to my book.

— Harry Browne

## The Editor Rebutts

Mr. Browne's comment is a fascinating revelation of his motivation, his view of the world, and his philosophical ignorance. It is indeed a curious view of the world that finds the important goal in life to "get the Roy Childs' of the world" off our backs. I don't see Roy Childs oppressing anybody; and I feel no need to get him off my back. If I did, all I'd have to do is to stop reading his stuff. It is a strange inversion of reality that finds the State no problem at all while worrying about the oppression exerted upon us by Roy Childs.

As to Mr. Browne's philosophical ignorance: when he denounces "moralists", what he is ineluctably and implicitly saying is: "Moralists are bad; avoid them"; but when he says that "moralists are bad" he is trapped in an inner contradiction, because that itself is a moral judgment, a moral statement. And so his book lays itself open to Mr. Childs' acute moral analysis.

As for my suggested inner contradictions: that Mr. Browne cares deeply that we not care about the liberty of others, I of course had seen the way out — that Mr. Browne really doesn't give a hoot, and that therefore his motive was purely mercenary — but I was too polite to mention it. □

## Feds And Rebs

By Kenneth W. Kalcheim

Five days after he led a protest against the Infernal Robbery Service (sic), Karl J. Bray and two of his friends, Francis (Sam) Goeltz and Robert Wrey, all of Salt Lake City, Utah, were arrested and held in the Salt Lake County jail without being charged with any criminal offense.

At about 9:30 P. M. on April 19, 1973, Mr. Bray, owner of The Rocky Mountain Mint, left his office at 1381 South Main Street. As he was approaching his automobile he was confronted with two FBI agents and one IRS special agent. The three agents threw him against his car and searched him. They then handcuffed him, put foot shackles on him and put him in their automobile and proceeded to take him to the county jail. Bray asked several times why he was being arrested and the agents refused to tell him what the charges were. Instead they only told him that he was "being held for the U. S. Attorney". The agents did not have charges for his arrest, nor did they have a warrant. Bray asked repeatedly to know why he was being arrested and the agents failed to inform him of any charges.

The agents transported Bray to the county jail and he was booked. When Bray arrived at the jail he learned that two of his friends, who were at his office earlier that evening, had also been arrested and booked. His friends, Francis (Sam) Goeltz, an airlines flight engineer, and Robert Wrey, an accountant, had been arrested under similar circumstances and were being held without having any charges against them.

Mr. Bray said, "While being booked, the agents, who arrested me, along with about seven other IRS agents, took all of my belongings, including the keys to my office and automobile." After they had taken the keys, one of the agents was overheard saying something to the effect that, "Now we have his keys, let's go get the case." The case he referred to, said Bray "was a briefcase which contained my personal papers and records and also \$30,000 in cash."

Bray was allowed to make one phone call and called a friend to handle

some matters. One of these matters was to obtain the briefcase and secure the \$30,000 in cash. Bray had left the case locked in his car at the time of the arrest. His friend arrived at his office about 11:45 P. M., about fifteen minutes after Bray had called. This was about one hour after the agents had taken the keys. The friend had an extra set of keys and looked in the automobile first for the briefcase but was unable to find it. She then went into the office, which Bray had left locked, and continued to look further for the briefcase. She was still unable to locate it. She then left the office and went to the county jail to see Mr. Bray. About 2:00 A. M., the friend again returned to the office. At this time she found the briefcase in a very conspicuous place. A place she had looked for it earlier. The \$30,000 was gone.

The following morning, Mr. Bray's associate, Grey Greggson, went to the office as usual. When he opened the office, he was confronted by three men who identified themselves as IRS special agents. These men were armed with a search warrant from the U.S. District Court and signed by a U. S. Magistrate, Daniel Alsup. They searched the offices for about three hours and were unable to find anything illegal. According to the warrant, they were looking for forms which contained an "illegal Internal Revenue Service insignia". During their search they were unable to find any such forms.

At about 11:00 A. M. on April 20, 1973, Bray, Goeltz, and Wrey were transported to the Federal Building in Salt Lake City for a bail hearing. It was at this hearing that they first heard the charges for which they were being held. They were charged with illegal possession of an Internal Revenue Service insignia. This charge is a misdemeanor. After being charged, they were released on their own recognizance and the leg irons and chains were taken off.

Mr. Bray indicated that it was strange that all this should happen to  
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# The Need For A Movement And A Party

(Ed. Note: The following is the gist of an address delivered by the editor of the *Lib. Forum* to the opening session of the first convention of the Free Libertarian Party of New York, March 30.)

I want to deal tonight with three interrelated questions which confront us: (1) Why keep on as libertarians? Isn't the cause of liberty hopeless? (2) Even if the cause of liberty is not hopeless, why have a "movement" anyway? Why not simply let libertarian ideas infiltrate and gradually permeate the culture? And (3) Even if a movement is necessary, why have a libertarian political party? Why engage in political action? Can't the job be done with informal or formal groups, and ad hoc organizations; in other words, can't we continue with the same sort of libertarian movement that we had before the formation of the Libertarian Party in 1972?

**I. Reasons for Optimism.** It would, in my view, be tragic to abandon the libertarian cause now, just when, at long last, the movement is beginning to grow apace.

In the first place, the libertarian movement has accelerated greatly in the last four years. Until recently, there couldn't have been a libertarian party; there were few libertarians, no magazines, and no ad hoc organizations. When I first began as a libertarian, twenty-five years ago, there were scarcely more than one or two libertarians in the entire New York City area. Obviously, the enormous growth of libertarian ideas and of the movement since then should in itself be great cause for optimism for the future.

But may not such growth be a flash in the pan? Is there an objective historical groundwork and basis for the flowering of libertarianism in the current historical epoch? I contend that such sturdy objective grounds for the growth of the movement do indeed exist; and, in fact, what the Marxists call the "objective conditions" for the growth of the movement have developed even faster than the libertarian movement itself.

The current development of these objective conditions for the victory of liberty were discerned and foreseen by Ludwig von Mises, with his usual prescience, in *Human Action* (1949). Mises called such conditions the "exhaustion of the reserve fund", and we would do well to ponder and interpret such "exhaustion" in the broadest possible way. To put it concisely, Mises saw that statism, interventionism, and socialism cannot work in the industrial era, that statist measures and policies lead inevitably, in accordance with the ineluctable laws of cause and effect, to bad and disastrous consequences that are increasingly seen as disastrous by the general public. The problem for all these dark decades of statism is that these laws take time, decades, to work themselves out fully; to put it one way, it takes time for the consequences of statist looting and

repression to wreck the economy and the living standards that relatively free-market capitalism had brought to us in the nineteenth century. What has happened in recent years is that the Effect has increasingly caught up with the cause, and that the consequences of modern liberalism and the corporate state have become increasingly evident to more and more people in our society.

In area after area, modern liberalism and statism has "exhausted its capital", and hence has come increasingly into grave crisis, a crisis recognized at every hand. More and more, the American public, for example, is rebelling against high and crippling taxation, and galloping inflation; more and more we see the breakdown of statism in market dislocations, aggravated inefficiency of government activities and programs, in urban street crime and housing blight, in the crisis of the welfare system and compulsory racial integration. And we have seen the breakdown of liberalism in foreign affairs as well: from the grim failure of collective security liberalism in Vietnam to the growing revulsion against foreign aid and the military-industrial complex. In short, liberalism, the dominant ideology and institution in America during the twentieth century, is in a crisis of aggravated breakdown, and this breakdown is bound to intensify in the months and years ahead.

Outside of the United States, there is a similar exhaustion of the reserve fund. A particularly heartening development has taken place in the Communist countries of Eastern Europe, where, as the economies industrialized, socialist central planning broke down and collapsed; as a result of these increasingly evident failures, Eastern Europe, led by Yugoslavia, has been moving rapidly and inexorably from central planning to an ever freer market economy. And while Yugoslavia has led the process, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland have been following in its wake. And so the Law of Cause and Effect is catching up with socialism in the Communist countries as well.

But, if the breakdown of statism is inevitable and accelerating as I maintain, why was statism able to endure for thousands of years? Why was it the norm in most ancient civilizations? Couldn't we in fact say that freedom has just been an interlude among centuries of state despotism? No, the reason for optimism here is that a qualitative and virtually irreversible leap occurred in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that changes the entire historical picture: the Industrial Revolution. For statism, while no less evil, can unfortunately last indefinitely in an agricultural, pre-industrial society. For in such a society, the hapless peasants can be exploited by the State, which can expropriate all of their surplus production above the bare subsistence level. But the advent of industrialism changes the story. For, as Mises and other free-market economists have shown since the time of Charles Dunoyer and Charles Comte in the early nineteenth century, statism cannot work, cannot for long operate an industrial system. Virtually all groups and factions in society are now committed to maintaining an industrial economy, and given that commitment, the Law of Cause and Effect and the exhaustion of the reserve fund must do its irrefutable work. It is therefore the irreversible, universal commitment to industrialism that makes the breakdown of statism and hence the victory of liberty "inevitable."

Victory, then, shall be ours. We should therefore adopt a firm policy of long-run optimism. Or, let's put it this way: most of us have always believed it naive to hold that we will win simply because we are right. Why would truth necessarily win out in the "marketplace of ideas"? I say it will win out because of the Law of Cause and Effect. Because we are in tune with the deep structure, the ontological structure, of reality. And the Effect is now catching up with the Cause.

And finally, even if our cause is not hopeless, even if there are great grounds for optimism, why should we be concerned at all? Why should we bother? Why struggle in a long-range cause, even if we can make small short-term gains? Isn't this being naively or wrongly "altruistic"? To get personal for a moment, when I became a libertarian, approximately twenty-five years ago, the thrill of discovery of this hidden truth, a truth as vital to mankind as the nature of liberty and justice, was so great that it was impossible for me to conceive — and still difficult for me to understand — how anyone, once perceiving this great truth, could possibly defect from or abandon it. There is great joy and satisfaction in committing oneself to such true and vitally important goals and

## Feds And Rebs —

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him so soon after he had led a group of protesters in a peaceful demonstration against the IRS. Bray also had learned that a certain IRS agent who he preferred not to name at this time had been heard to say in a public meeting that he was personally "out to get that Karl Bray." The only thing Bray could figure out about the \$30,000 was that someone, who had his keys after his arrest, must have illegally entered his office and automobile between the time he was arrested and the time his friend went to the office, and then must have returned the briefcase before his friend returned at 2:00 A. M. Bray also said that one of the jailers at the county jail had told him that his keys had been taken.

Bray feels that the motive for this type of harassment is that the IRS is just trying to scare the citizens of the United States into submitting to the tyranny of the IRS. He said he "will resist tyrannical government wherever it is."

Bray said he will file criminal charges and civil suits against certain government agents on four charges. He said that he has firm evidence that he was arrested illegally and without a warrant, that his office and automobile were illegally searched and that personal property was taken, and that the IRS has violated a restraining order that was issued by Federal District Judge Willis W. Ritter that ordered the IRS to refrain from harassing Mr. Bray. □

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## Need For Movement, Party —

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principles. Being a committed libertarian is fun, a great and "happifying" activity.

II. **Reasons for a Movement.** OK, so even if the objective conditions are ripe, even if victory for libertarianism is inevitable, and even if we should bother, why have a movement? Why can't libertarianism simply win its way in the world without a libertarian movement to propel it?

The answer is, that, as the Marxists would say, victory requires the fulfillment not only of the "objective" but also of the "subjective" conditions. By subjective conditions, they mean a dedicated self-conscious and aware group of people to carry the ideas forward. No idea, including liberty, can advance itself, as it were in a vacuum. To advance libertarian ideas, we need libertarians to do the advancing. As Thomas Kuhn has pointed out, in the history of science and scientific ideas, a bad, unworkable theory is never abandoned until a better one is offered. People have to have some ruling ideology. Or, in the words of the adage, "you can't beat somebody with nobody." Therefore, in order to administer the coup de grace to statism, we have to have people, libertarians, offering a better alternative.

All right, assuming that we need libertarians, why must we have an organized movement? Why can't we just write and speak as individuals? The answer is that if we concede the need for people to spread ideas, self-conscious, dedicated, enthusiastic, knowledgeable libertarians to spread the idea of liberty, then we are already implying the need for a movement. For what is a "movement" anyway? A movement is libertarians finding each other, talking to and influencing each other, developing theory, checking each other's errors, helping each other, placing each other in positions of influence, helping one another spread the word, etc. In short, a movement is a "cadre" of dedicated, "hard core" libertarians.

No ideas, whether ideological or scientific, in the history of mankind have spread by themselves in a vacuum; they have all needed dedicated "cadre" to spread them and to become influential and apply them in the world. Where would physics now be, for example, without physicists — not isolated but a dedicated group of interacting persons, communicating with each other, learning from each other, refuting errors, raising ideas, and helping each other's work? Liberty needs a movement in the same sense that physics, or chess, or religions, or any ideas need a movement.

III. **Reasons for a Party.** All right, so libertarians must have a movement. But why a party? Why can't we continue in the same informal, ad hoc, manner as we did before 1972?

The standard reason for the existence of a "third" party is that the public only listens to political ideas in the context of an electoral campaign, and that therefore a political campaign is a great educational device for the American public. This is true, but is only one among many reasons for the importance of a political party. For it is historically true, certainly for the United States, that a political party is the only viable form of organizing adults, certainly adults in the middle-class; in fact the only viable form of organizing anyone off the college campuses. Even the New Left in its heyday in the late 60's, could never, try as it might, organize anyone outside the campuses; it could not even organize recent graduates. Ad hoc, single-issue, or even multi-issue, groups, have never had more than a very limited success. Until the advent of the Libertarian Party the Society for Individual Liberty was the only successful organization, and that remains confined to the college campuses. The rapid growth in the Libertarian Party throughout the country, even since the Presidential election, is effective testimony to this vital fact of reality.

A Libertarian Party, furthermore, provides a marvellous and indispensable way for libertarians, generally isolated in their own community, to find each other, to interact and learn from each other. It provides, moreover, a viable form of activity for libertarians. For a long time, innumerable people, once seeing the great truth of libertarianism, have asked me: "OK, I'm converted, what do I do now? What can I do to advance liberty?" This has always been a vital problem for libertarians. Only a few people, after all, will write treatises, or engage in libertarian scholarship. Until the Libertarian Party, there has been nothing, no activity, for most libertarians to undertake. I am convinced that this has been a major reason for the hopelessness that has led to defections from the libertarian cause. But now, with the Libertarian Party, we have a

## Rothbardiana

Rothbard's *For A New Liberty* has now been published (Macmillan), and has garnered favorable reviews from Walter Grinder (*Books for Libertarians*), Roy Childs (BFL, and a forthcoming *Reason*), and Sharon Presley (Laissez-Faire Bookstore). Also favorable reviews in the general press from Richard Wilson (Cowles Pubs.), Victor Wilson (Newhouse Press), and two superb columns by Nicholas von Hoffman (Washington Post syndicate). The von Hoffman columns are "Back to Basics" (April 13), and "What if they Gave A Revolution and Nobody Came?" (April 16). Reason magazine included Rothbard's anarchist chapter on "Free Market Police, Courts, and Law" in its March issue, followed by a debate between Rothbard and Hospers on that chapter ("Will Rothbard's Free-Market Justice Suffice?") in Reason's May issue. Also, Rothbard plugged the book on the NBC-TV "Today" show, and on John Wingate's all-night talk show on WOR-Radio in New York. Penthouse magazine is planning an article on "The New Libertarians", featuring the libertarian books by

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viable, continuing form of activity for all libertarians to participate in. Furthermore, as the FLP has shown, a libertarian party can also serve as a center, a nucleus, for special ancillary libertarian activity in specific party clubs.

OK, granted the need for a Libertarian Party, why must it run candidates? The answer is that it has to, because otherwise it would not be a party, but would devolve into another ad hoc organization. Losing a major reason for its existence, it would no longer be a political party, and would hence shortly disappear.

A political party, as everyone concedes, can educate a public who will only listen to political ideas during an electoral campaign; and it will be aided in this by the equal time that the media grant to political candidates. But public education is only one of the vital functions that a Libertarian Party can perform. It can, eventually, have real political influence, and even elect people to office. Only one or two Congressmen, for example, could have great political influence and leverage by serving as a ginger group, a vanguard for the repeal of oppressive legislation, the whittling down of crippling taxes, and for the general rollback of the State apparatus. We can organize mass public pressure from below against State tyranny.

For we must ask ourselves the vital question: how else can we roll back the oppressive State apparatus? How else can we repeal despotic laws and crippling taxes? How else than by pressuring the legislature to repeal them, and what better way than by electing persons dedicated to such repeal? To pressure Congress from below, to lobby, is fine, but scarcely enough. What better organizer of State-rollback than people who are part of a functioning, growing, and dedicated Libertarian Party?

The vital point is that our anti-Party libertarians can offer no alternative solution to the problem of repealing and rolling back the State. Libertarian education is great, but scarcely enough; we cannot place any strategic reliance on our rulers reading our books and pamphlets and then saying: "By God, they're right. I resign." Violent revolution, as the New Left demonstrated, is absurd in the American context. Mass civil disobedience, as in the case of Prohibition, is great, but is historically only sporadic and fitful; besides, even repeal of Prohibition required Congressmen willing to vote to end the horrors of Prohibition — a vote that would have been greatly speeded up by some Libertarians in their midst.

The point is that none of us libertarians sought out Politics. Politics has been thrust upon us by the State apparatus, and it is absurd for us not to use the political choices we are allowed to have, to help in the rollback and the eventual abolition of politics and political intervention in our lives.

The final charge of the anti-Party libertarians is that the Libertarian Party may eventually sell out to Power. Of course it may, and so might we all, whether in or out of a political Party. As long as we have free will, any of us might choose to sell out. So what? These are the ineluctable risks of life. As the old adage has it, the cure for this problem is eternal vigilance, the inevitable price of liberty. And even if the Party, after many successes, does sell out, we will be no worse off, and considerably better off, than we are now. The future, as I have tried to show, is with us. We have nothing to lose but our chains; we have a world to win. And we will win. □

# Rothbardiana —

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Macmillan published this season by Rothbard, Harry Browne, and Robert Love on how to set up your own private school. The article will be by veteran libertarian writer Sam Blumenfeld.

Rothbard's mini-book on the contributions of Ludwig von Mises and the Austrian School is now out: *The Essential Von Mises* (available from Oakley Bramble, Box 836, Basing, Michigan 48904, for \$1.00). It is also an intellectual biography and tribute to Mises; Henry Hazlitt will be reviewing it for the *Freeman*.

Rothbard has also published the following this Spring:

A reprint of *What Has Government Done to Our Money?* as an article in a new scholarly journal published by students at The Commerce School of Washington & Lee University, the *Washington & Lee Commerce Review* (Winter, 1973). This publication, and particularly the Rothbard article, has thrown the W&L Commerce Faculty into conniption fits; they don't want the fair name of the school associated with such an "unscholarly" publication. One of Baldy Harper's last deeds on earth was to recommend the piece to the W&L students, and thus to stir up this healthy hornet's nest in "truth-seeking" academe.

"The Future of Capitalism", an article in James Weaver, ed., *Modern Political Economy* (Allyn & Bacon, paper). This was a debate with a rather unintelligent (to put a very kindly face on it) chairman of the economics department at Smith College, Robert Averitt. The rest of this purported text is a slough of leftism, with the exception of a few articles here and there.

Rothbard is a co-author of a new book in the American Forum series, *Herbert Hoover and the Crisis of American Capitalism* (Schenckman, paper). Rothbard's article on "Herbert Hoover and the Myth of Laissez-Faire," is a reprint of his article in *A New History of Leviathan*, but the book is interesting for its four views on Hoover (including the pro-Hoover Robert Himmelberg, the orthodox Liberal Gerald Nash, and the slightly revisionist Liberal Ellis Hawley), and for the rebuttal section where each of the authors gives a critique of the others. The rebuttal section gave Rothbard a chance to expose Hoover's political-Machiavellian use of food in Europe during 1919 — one of the unloveliest aspects of the unfortunate Hoover record.

Rothbard's article, "The Great Society: A Libertarian Critique" is reprinted once again, this time in R. Carson, J. Ingles, and D. McLaud, eds., *Government in the American Economy* (Lex, Mass.: D. C. Heath, paper). The rest of the book, however, is largely a morass of leftism.

"Value Implications of Economic Theory," *The American Economist* (Spring, 1973), is an article by Rothbard attacking various value-loaded pronouncements by economists in the guise of "value-freedom", and maintaining that value-judgments, if made, require an ethical system.

Rothbard enters *Human Events*: a review of Henry Hazlitt's new *Conquest of Poverty* (May 19), and a movie review of "Billy Jack" (April

28). The dark secret of the identity of "Mr. First Nighter" is thereby implicitly revealed!

Also: the *Journal of the Forum for Contemporary History* (May 7), has Rothbard's reply to Senator McGovern's comment of the former's Forum letter on the Quota System.

"Libertarian Strategy: Reply to Mr. Katz", *New Libertarian Notes* (May) is a discussion of strategy, left-right, alliances, etc.

On April 28, there was a highly successful testimonial dinner for Rothbard at the Barbizon-Plaza Hotel. About 125 people attended the affair, which was marked by speeches by Leonard Liggio, Walter Block, and Walter Grinder, deft MC-ing by Jim Davidson, a presentation of a surprise gift to Rothbard of the complete reprinted set of Tucker's *Liberty*, the reading of messages from well-wishers, and a speech in reply by Rothbard. The entire proceedings are available on two cassette tapes from Audio-Forum, 422 First St., S.E., Washington, D. C. 20003; and they sell as No. 194 for \$13.95. (106 minutes of goodies!) ■

# The Old Curmudgeon

The Sixties Is Over Dept. John Lennon and Yoko Ono have moved from their Greenwich Village pad to The Dakota, an uptown luxurious and rambling old apartment house much beloved by the Hollywood glamour set. Welcome Home, babes.

Alliance With Left-Wing Anarchists? From time to time, and particularly during the bizarrerie of the late 60s, libertarians have linked themselves with left-wing, or communist anarchists. This has been the guiding principle of the Hunter College Libertarian Conferences of the last two years, as it was with the now defunct magazine *Libertarian Analysis*. The theory was: if we should ally ourselves with the New Left, why not with Communist Anarchists who are totally opposed to the State? This idea totally misconceives the theory of alliance for libertarians. The idea of alliance, whether with Left or with Right, is on ground of tactics rather than principle. We acquire multiple social leverage by allying ourselves on specific issues with differing groups with whom we agree on those particular issues: with Leftists opposed to the draft, or with Rightists opposed to the income tax, for example. But the danger always is thinking of these as principled, permanent linkages. If we look at left-wing anarchists, their absurd ideology and social philosophy, combined with their bizarre and dropout life style, makes their social leverage not only nil but negative. What can we possibly gain, either in theoretical understanding or in social effectiveness, by linking ourselves with the kooky Kropotkinites? No group, in content or in form, is better calculated to turn off middle-class Americans, and with good reason, than the left-wing anarchists. I can think of no group with whom an alliance, at any time, would be less fruitful. ■

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