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Joseph R. Peden, Publisher

Murray N. Rothbard, Editor

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The LP: Retrospect and Prospect

The 1976 campaign is a landmark for our country: for it established the fledgling, newly-born Libertarian Party as the biggest "third party" in America. The LP is here to stay and to grow; and it will have to be taken seriously by the politicians and the media as an important force in American political life. This is a remarkable achievement for any new party, but particularly a party as radical, as uncompromising, as anti-State as the LP; its great success demonstrates that those of us who wanted the party to "go national", to progress from isolated discussion circles to a real force in the country, were right.

At this writing, the detailed votes are fragmentary, but we know enough to assert that the MacBride-Bergland national total will be somewhere between 150,000 and 200,000 votes, in the process beating Lester Maddox's American Independent Party in the vote column. The media are already regretting their Election Day choice to report only the details for McCarthy and Maddox among the lesser tickets. Not only was our vote total third greatest, but in particular states we achieved that great aim of third parties: balance-of-power status between the major parties. We achieved it in the Ohio presidential race (i.e. MacBride received more votes than the difference between Carter and Ford) and almost achieved it in Hawaii. California, our largest state LP, achieved 60,000 votes for MacBride; while the highest percentage for the national ticket was, as predicted, in Alaska, which ran from 5 to 6% for MacBride-Bergland, with the ticket reaching its height in Fairbanks, with a vote of 10% of the total.

Some of the state-wide races brought the LP a higher percentage, as the closeness of the Ford-Carter race shifted many would-be LP voters into one of the major camps. The LP candidate for corporation commissioner in Arizona garnered 25% of the vote, while a state senatorial candidate in Idaho gained 30%. To deduce from this, as a few have done, that the LP should concentrate on local rather than presidential races is absurdly short-sighted: for it ignores the fact that it was precisely the Presidential campaign that energized these local LP races in numerous parts of the country. The two are complementary, not competitive.

Moreover, the LP is the biggest third party for another important reason: it managed, by heroic effort, to get on the ballot in 32 states, more than any other lesser party—more even than Eugene McCarthy (who was a one-man campaign rather than a spokesman for a party).

Even more remarkable than the vote totals was the campaign itself—a campaign that should go down in song and story. In the first place, this campaign was unadulterated, consistent, uncompromising libertarianism—the most explicitly libertarian campaign in over a century and perhaps in all of history. The hard-core libertarian message was beamed to over 70 million Americans: in tireless personal campaigning for fifteen solid months by Roger MacBride, crisscrossing the country many times; in numerous objective or favorable articles in

the local press throughout the land, and in numerous magazines and columns; and in several excellent, professionally done national TV spots. Roger MacBride's lucid and hard-hitting campaign book, *A New Dawn for America*, was distributed to tens of thousands; Young Libertarian Alliance chapters were established on approximately 200 college campuses; and many excellent position papers, as well as the great 1976 LP platform, were distributed far and wide. Here we can only mention a few of the outstanding position papers: by Joe Stromberg on foreign policy; by Roy Childs on Libertarianism; by Ralph Raico on civil liberties and on gay rights; by Walter Grinder on government and business.

Without engaging in invidious comparisons or attempting to enumerate all the people worthy of commendation, I cannot refrain from handing out thanks and accolades to a few of the outstanding people who made this campaign the great event that it was. First, of course, to Roger MacBride, whose tireless dedication and superhuman energy in carrying out a continuous fifteen-month campaign was truly a wonder. Roger MacBride has now been established as our libertarian leader in the political arena, our paladin of liberty. To Ed Crane, whose phenomenal organizing of the LP campaign as national chairman was an indispensable key to its success. To Bob Meier, field organizer extraordinaire, who was the spark plug in putting us on the state ballots. To Bill Evers, whose *LP News* was the model for all other state newsletters to follow, and who was research director and convention organizer for the campaign. To Ralph Raico, who edited the position papers, and who organized the Scholars for MacBride. To youth leader Tom Palmer, who built up the 200 campus chapters of the YLA. To Linda Webb, scheduler, organizer, and administrative assistant extraordinaire. And, not the least, to state party leaders throughout the country, and to the roving bands of heroic petition-gatherers.

Not the least of the accomplishments of the MacBride campaign was to fulfill the *Lib. Forum* prediction of fifteen months ago—the eradication of the left sectarian forces within the libertarian movement: both the anti-party cliques outside the LP and the left opposition from within. As the LP campaign grew and burgeoned, as its success became increasingly evident, the left sectarians within the party faded away into well-deserved oblivion, while the outside anti-party cliques saw their influence disappearing within the libertarian movement. The left sectarians are finished, kaput; they have missed the bus: they have managed to sweep themselves into the dustbin of history.

As the campaign proceeded, the "real people" poured into the campaign and the left sectarians faded out; and as they faded, their disgruntled thrashings about became increasingly shrill and ugly. In a sense, the only thing that left sectarians can ever accomplish in the real

(Continued On Page 2)

The LP: — (Continued From Page 1)

world is to hurl accusations of "immorality" at everyone else, and to wrap the cloak of "morality" around themselves as the parade passes them by. And that is what they did more and more; as the campaign progressed, the smears and calumny, the personal vilification by the sectarians grew ever louder and more fanatical in pitch. But these rabid personal smears merely turned more libertarians off, and increased and made permanent their isolation. The left sectarians are finished.

In a sense, the conquest over the left sectarians was inevitable. The earliest phase of any radical ideological movement is always that of small, local discussion groups, brought together by personal affinity—the "circles". Circles are indispensable in this early phase; but as a movement grows in quantity, quality, and effectiveness, those who wish to put their ideals into practice—to change the real world in the direction of the ideal—begin to organize effectively across the country. It is this national, effective, coherent organization that the MacBride campaign determined to bring to the Libertarian Party, and it has succeeded. For those stuck in the affinity group—circle phase, resistance is inevitable, but in any healthy movement, it will be overcome. And it has.

At the root of the dissension between the left sectarians (any sectarians in any movement, not just the LP) and what we might call the "centrist" or "party building" approach, is a fundamental and basic difference in goals. What the centrists want, simply, is victory, the triumph of liberty in American political life. Refining the pure libertarian principles is great and indispensable; but it is not enough. For precisely because of the beauty and nobility of the libertarian goal, the centrists burn to bring about the victory of liberty in the real world as rapidly as humanly possible. That is our (the centrists') strategic goal. The left sectarians, however, are not interested in victory (whether they think it is hopeless or for some other reason); rather, they are interested in bearing moral witness to their own alleged "purity", and to bear equivalent witness in denouncing everyone else for their alleged "immorality". To put it bluntly, the left sectarians get their kicks out of boasting of their own moral superiority to all others; whereas the centrists get theirs by working to achieve victory as rapidly as possible in the real world. It is no wonder that the sectarians are strategically doomed, and that sectarian dominance would drag down the libertarian (or any other) cause to permanent defeat and despair. Breaking out of the circle mentality and into a professionally run national campaign, then, was the way to slough off the incubus of sectarianism, and that is precisely what happened.

With the left sectarians routed, what are the prospects of the Libertarian Party in the coming historical period? They are excellent. The LP is here; we have a strong national base, in public attention, in media coverage, in party strength, and in a growing and optimistic party cadre. We can all look forward happily to strength, growth, and influence in the coming years. But the movement strategist's work is never done, and a new menace now looms as a possible threat to libertarian success. This is the threat of that opposing deviation from correct centrist policy that has aptly been called "right opportunism." Again, just as sectarianism was an inevitable product of the early "circle mentality", so right opportunism is an inevitable product of the growing success of an ideological movement. When a movement is small and unknown, there is no room for an opportunist to play in, and so it is rare for this heresy to be a problem at that beginning stage. It is growing success that breeds the opportunist, the person who, in search of quick short-run gains, is willing to hide or scrap basic libertarian principle, the very libertarian goal itself, that is the heart, the glory, and the meaning of the libertarian movement (or whatever is the equivalent for any other ideological movement.)

Robert Poole's Reason editorial, aptly criticized by Tom Palmer in these pages, might well be the opening gun of a new opportunist campaign that looms ahead. The idea is to "get elected", not to get elected as libertarians. Predictably, there will be determined attempts by right-opportunists at next July's LP convention to water down the hard-core 1976 platform, to make it allegedly palatable for diffuse blocs of voters. The watchword of opportunists ready to jettison our libertarian goals is "gradualism", a gradual or "Fabian" approach to liberty. First, what the opportunists forget is that Fabianism worked fine when going with the

State, by infiltrating the political parties and the bureaucracies and giving them a discreet push in the direction in which they wanted to go anyway: toward statism. A movement for liberty is necessarily anti-State, and therefore must uphold the basic principles loud and clear. Gradual whittling away of the State will probably have to be accepted in practice, for want of any other course; but it must never be embraced as part of libertarian principle, which must always be radical and uncompromising. For, as the great libertarian abolitionist of slavery William Lloyd Garrison brilliantly warned: "Gradualism in theory is perpetuity in practice." We must always be radical in theory, accept gradual advances grudgingly, and always press on as rapidly as possible toward ultimate victory. But that cannot and will not be done unless that ultimate goal is always held aloft by libertarians loud and clear. Otherwise, opportunism leads to surrender, and the opportunist course becomes just as fully self-defeating as the sectarian. For, each in his different way—the sectarian and the opportunist—abandons what should be the great and overriding goal of libertarian victory. Each abandons part of this vital concept: the sectarian abandons victory while the opportunist scraps libertarianism.

Garrison set the difference in wise words which cannot be overstressed: "Urge immediate abolition as earnestly as we may, it will, alas! be gradual abolition in the end (in fact, abolition would be sudden.) We have never said that slavery would be overthrown by a single blow; that it ought to be, we shall always contend."

Ironically enough, opportunism is often self-defeating even for making short-run gains—the great goal of the opportunist. For, even in the Realpolitik terms explicitly invoked by Mr. Poole, why in the world should a "gradual" Libertarian Party receive any media attention, corral any votes, or have any political influence? For a gradual party (e.g. cut taxes by 3%, weaken a few regulations, limit the future growth of government) will sound very much—to myself, let alone to the media or the public—as simply Reaganite Republicanism, and if that is the case, why in blazes should anyone vote for the new, untried LP when they could vote Reaganite Republican to begin with? In short, an LP that adopts the counsels of our right-wing opportunists will simply become an appendage of right-wing Republicanism, and fade rapidly into the woodwork. Neither the media nor the public nor the politicians will or should express any interest in a tiny appendage of the conservative movement or of Reagan Republicanism. Hence, even in Realpolitik terms, let alone on the basis of moral principle, opportunism is a counsel of rapid, cataclysmic defeat.

Continuing in Realpolitik terms, it is well-known in the business world that a new firm or brand must strive to differentiate its product from existing brands, to offer something new, different, and exciting. Consistent libertarianism, as offered so far by the LP, offers precisely this sort of new and exciting creed, different from all others, "extreme right" on some issues, "extreme left" on others, and yet consistent. Hence, the interest of media, intellectuals, and voters. Opportunism is not only thoroughly destructive of moral principle, it also fails, in our context, even to be successful as opportunism, that is, it fails even on the opportunists' own terms. We already have an example in the brief history of the Libertarian Party. The FLP Tuccille campaign for governor of New York in 1974 followed, with high hopes, after the stunningly successful Youngstein campaign for mayor of New York City in 1973. Yet the Tuccille campaign got only 2,000 more votes statewide than Youngstein had gained the previous year within New York City. Surely, one basic reason was, that in contrast to the "hard-core" libertarian Youngstein campaign, the Tuccille campaign, by accident rather than design, came across as opportunist. That is, its major focus was that "taxes should be cut." Since both major candidates also talked vaguely about the need for some sort of tax cut, the FLP failed to become significantly more libertarian that year than the two major parties—and that in a time of growing hostility to crippling taxation. This should serve as a lesson to all future LP campaigns, and to any who wish to take us down the debilitating road to opportunism.

Fortunately, we have at hand a superb means—a means at once highly principled and cannily strategic—to crush the looming menace of opportunism in the bud. For, in the context of the current libertarian movement, opportunism will inevitably be very close to conservatism. It

(Continued On Page 3)

The LP: — (Continued From Page 2)

will be creeping—or galloping-Reaganism. Therefore, the major strategic task of the Libertarian Party in the coming period is to distinguish ourselves, sharply and continually, day after day, from conservatism. We must set ourselves clearly and sharply against conservatism, rather than build any bridges toward it. We must hammer away, day after day, at the theocracy, the hostility to all civil liberties,—from free speech to personal morals,—the militarism, and the war-mongering of the conservative movement. This will become particularly important in the coming years, as we can expect a disintegration of the Republican Party and therefore a possible tendency of Reaganites to join the LP ranks. This call—to distinguish ourselves clearly and always from conservatism—is not only the strategic requisite for putting the quietus to right-wing opportunism, it is also a matter of high libertarian principle. For, as the *Lib. Forum* has reiterated again and again, war and militarism—the pet principles of the conservative movement—are in fact the major menace to liberty in today's world. Combatting conservatism is therefore a requirement of principle and of strategy alike.

Happily, the LP leadership have clearly understood this need, as witness the blistering attacks on Reagan and Rusher during this campaign by Ed Crane and Bill Evers, and by MacBride's staunch and unquestioning adherence to such hard-core libertarian (and anti-conservative) planks as: absolute civil liberties (including freedom to sell and use heroin); the abolition of the FBI and CIA; and an uncompromising non-interventionist foreign policy.

In this connection, there is a potential long-run problem which is not at all important in the near future, but which might arise in later years as the LP gains in strength. Namely, that people who are not just opportunists but are simply and explicitly non-libertarians (whether conservatives, Ku Kluxers, leftists, or just plain power-seekers) may try to join the LP in order to capture the organization for their ends. Requirements for joining state LPs are lax to the point of non-existence. And, of course, any party that has permanent ballot status is legally required to have totally open registration, and hence open voting in party primaries. I don't have any clear solution to this; but it is a problem that may eventually require thought and study within the LP.

Interestingly enough, we have a clear demonstration, this fall, of the opportunist versus the radical strategies to a vital libertarian issue: taxes—and in this case totally outside of the LP framework. On the one hand, we have the gradualist and opportunist approach of the National Tax Limitation Committee (Rickenbacker-Friedman-Manion.) Fresh from their defeat in California, the well-financed NTLC worked long and hard for Proposal C in Michigan, bolstered by the determined stumping of Michigan by Milton Friedman. The proposal lost by 1.8 million to 1.4 million votes. What is this tax limitation proposal, for which we are all asked to work hard and contribute our dollars? Merely, to limit state taxes to their **current share** of the total personal income in the state—in the case of Michigan, 8.3%. Note, this does not mean that state taxes will remain fixed, let alone—God save the mark!—be cut! No, it is simply to allow state taxes to rise only in the same proportion as the total income of the public. Furthermore, to add to the almost ludicrous gradualism of this proposal, local taxes are to have no such limit; this is supposed to emphasize the sobriety and lack of radicalism of the proposal.

Let us see the grave problems of the NTLC approach. In the first place, who in blazes would go the barricades for 8.3%? Certainly, not I; I wouldn't walk across the street, much less devote time, energy, and money, for the holy cause of 8.3%. In short, who cares? Secondly, the economic jargon ("personal income", etc.) is too complex for the average voter to understand. After casting one's eye over the complex and impenetrable jargon of the ballot proposal, the understandable voter response is either indifference or to vote No on general principles. Thirdly, the exemption of local taxation from the limit allows the liberal opponents to warn that local taxes would increase as a result of the measure—a plausible enough objection to ensure that tax opponents will be split on the measure. Reaganite opportunism to the hilt. Proposal C lost, and it deserves to lose, as a similar effort lost in Reagan's California, and as it should lose until anti-tax forces come up with a limit that possesses teeth and excitement.

Far better, though not good enough, was the Colorado proposal, which also lost, sponsored by the Birchers, for an absolute current limit on all

new taxes within the state at any level, state or local, **except** those voted by the public themselves in a referendum. This is far better surely, but still hardly good enough. What happened to the good old cause of tax cuts? Even the Bircher proposal, let alone the Friedmanite, allows for the current level of taxes, and thereby implicitly agrees that the current level is proper and legitimate. What happened to the old Liberty Amendment, for the outright repeal of the federal income tax? Or how about proposals for repeal of other existing taxes? Sure, they would lose at first, at the polls, but these other piddling and pusillanimous measures lost too: and at least a fight for more radical measures would serve to raise libertarian consciousness among the public, and build the libertarian and anti-tax movements for the future. At the **most**, the Friedmanite, etc. proposals build only for weak limits on future tax increases; they do nothing to reduce the State and whittle it away. Quite the contrary.

In contrast, let us look at a truly radical anti-tax protest this fall, led by libertarian activists. In New Jersey, after several years of determined resistance by libertarians and taxpayer groups, Democratic Governor Brendan Byrne succeeded in passing a state income tax. On September 18, a mighty mass rally, organized by long-time libertarian activist Ralph Fucetola III and by determined taxpayer groups, convened at Trenton to demand repeal of the income tax. The angry crowd, which garnered large-scale publicity throughout the state, totalled from 10 to 20,000; the crowd arrived in 90 buses and hundreds of private cars from all parts of the state. Furthermore, the organized taxpayers had already gathered 570,000 signatures of New Jerseyites for immediate repeal of the tax. Organizing around this clear-cut, radical, and libertarian central demand, the protesters determined to build an independent taxpayer political movement in New Jersey, and to picket the homes and businesses of legislators who voted for the tax. Frightened mainstream politicians were reduced to pleading with the organizers to allow them to speak at and endorse the rally. At the end of the rally, hundreds of protesters drove to Governor Byrne's mansion in Princeton, where a crate of used tea bags was deposited (echoes of the anti-tax Boston Tea Party), and a call was made for Byrne's immediate resignation.

Furthermore, in another echo of the American Revolution, effigies of Governor Byrne and pro-tax Assemblyman Littell were hung from a nearby tree. Signs such as "Brendan BURN" proliferated. In his speech at the rally, Fucetola took the occasion to escalate the demands: proposing that people refuse to pay November's property tax bill, boycott the state lottery, do Christmas shopping out of state to avoid the state sales tax, join a general New Jersey strike on Dec. 15, and get on juries in order to acquit tax rebels. In addition to his more radical suggestions, Fucetola also called for a freeze on all local property taxes, and for no further taxes in the state without approval at a public referendum.

Already, the result of the anti-income tax protest was to make Governor Byrne so universally unpopular throughout New Jersey that Jimmy Carter cancelled his scheduled pre-election appearance with the Governor; which did not keep Carter from losing New Jersey by a substantial margin.

The anti-tax politics is an example of successful coalition politics built around a clear-cut central libertarian goal; it was a coalition of approximately 45 taxpayer and citizen groups, including the Federation of New Jersey Taxpayers, the National Taxpayers Union, and the Tax Revolt Association; Fucetola, in addition to being a leader of the Taxpayer Federation, is also a member of the Libertarian Party.

Note the contrast between the strategy and tactics of Friedman and Fucetola. In a sense, both are "gradualist"; since this was a coalition movement and not an explicitly libertarian conclave, Fucetola could scarcely have gotten up at the rally and called for abolition of all taxes. But Friedman's gradualism was so piddling as to concede both the present level of taxation and even higher taxes in future; also Friedman's movement was top-down, relying on a few prestigious names. Fucetola's "gradualism" was radical and dramatic, calling for repeal, escalating demands, and using repeal as a central focus for keeping up and escalating pressure upon the state. And the protest was genuinely grass-roots, from below, and directed against the political establishment. It is all too clear, moreover, that while the New Jersey movement is there to stay and grow in the future, the NTLC will now leave no movement behind in Michigan as they try to find some other state where they can make an

(Continued On Page 7)

Kuhn's Paradigms

By Leonard P. Liggio

For more than a dozen years, Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962, 1970) has been calling forth discussions and analyses. Initial response among a few libertarian scholars who saw the significance of Kuhn's threats, such as the late F. A. Harper, were very positive. Kuhn's work seemed to Dr. Harper to expand upon the analysis made by other 20th century thinkers; for example, he would quote the earlier writings of Albert Schweitzer, *The Decay and the Restoration of Civilization*: "But civilization can only revive when there shall come into being in a number of individuals a new tone of mind independent of the one prevalent among the crowd and in opposition to it, a tone of mind which will gradually win influence over the collective one, and in the end determine its character. It is only an ethical movement which can rescue us from the slough of barbarism, and the ethical comes into existence only in individuals . . . A new public opinion must be created privately and unobtrusively. The existing one is maintained by the press, by propaganda, by organization, and by financial and other influences which are at its disposal." Dr. Harper recognized that in the crisis emerging in America and the world, libertarian theory was a prime candidate to replace the dominant political and economic thought. However, the tasks necessary to build the foundations for a center (the Institute for Humane Studies) to explore such matters did not permit him to pursue in a more developed manner the implications of scientific revolutions for libertarian theory. The growth of libertarianism and the explosion of the contemporary crisis make the topic one that libertarians should address.

For that purpose, I thought that a non-original article presenting a summary view of Kuhn's thesis might stimulate further articles and create an ongoing consideration of the topic and its relevance. I suspect that many libertarians could provide some implications of this thesis for their own areas or from their own consideration of the issues. Although I am not yet clear on the suitable analogy between scientific revolutions and libertarian theory, I imagine that philosophers and scientists have had the most opportunity to consider the Kuhn thesis and I hope that they will write to the broader intellectual audience rather than the specialist. My own philosophical training with John J. Toohey (he was almost ninety years old when I studied with him) emphasized common sense and ordinary language so that the general educated person could understand it.

Kuhn emphasized the role of the **Paradigm** which provides a model from which springs a particular coherent tradition of scientific research. A dominant paradigm will provide a consensus, because with the same model, research will not lead to open disagreement over fundamental questions. Paradigms define legitimate problems and methods of research because to become dominant it must be able to attract a lasting group of adherents from competing systems of thought or a previous paradigm, and it must be open-ended so that scholars may undertake to solve new problems. Although once the paradigm becomes established it is taken for granted, its necessary open-endedness leaves numbers of problems for solution. However, these problem solving activities create a more precise paradigm. Thus, the problems which the researchers face are: determination of significant fact, matching facts with theory, and explanation of the more precise theory.

However, a paradigm isolates those involved in research in a field from important problems not conceptualized by the paradigm. As problems increasingly become evident which cannot be solved by the paradigm, a crisis emerges which can force scholars to search for a new explanation. At times, the breakdown of the previous paradigm forces recognition on the people involved; or the crisis may merely blur the paradigm. Scholars may be able to ignore the crisis or set it aside for the future. But, the crisis in itself will not lead to replacement of an established paradigm with a new one; the new paradigm must be there, must be articulated, so that it can be available to be selected after comparison with the old paradigm and any other competing candidates. The acceptance of a new paradigm occurs after conflict. The conflict of the old paradigm with the new ones and of the competing ones against each other is an important part of the development of new scientific thought. During the period of crisis there is an appearance of undefined and random searching, and the breakdown may be magnified, and the crisis

made more striking. In the crisis, individuals become estranged from the established system and behave more and more eccentrically in terms of the established system, or else they leave the system entirely. Those who leave the system highlight the crisis and evidence its intensity. Those who opt to fight within the system face polarization and conflict, as persuasion and punishment are applied to maintain the existing system.

Kuhn seems to believe that the role of logical positivism has been to short-circuit the intellectual mechanism which signals the existence of crisis in the scientific world. It appears to involve too little theory and limits research on the precedents of past practice. The meaning of science is limited in the extreme to the single experiment. Thus, there is no pushing against scientific frontiers and no development. Without surprises or crisis there is no mechanism to tell scholars that fundamental change is occurring. This may help us explain the nature of the current crisis: it seems evident to everyone except the specialists in each field because, denying that they are operating on the basis of a theory, they deny the existence of the dominant paradigm, and they do not conceive of the crisis as anything more than a lack of information. It is possible that the contemporary crisis may become much more intense and the ordinary transference of allegiances within a profession from an old paradigm to a new one may be blocked by the refusal of scientists to acknowledge that they are working on the basis (if only implicitly) of a theory.

But one or more persons deeply immersed in the crisis itself will come up with a new way of viewing the data; the legitimacy of the established paradigm is challenged and new meanings are given to the established concepts. Kuhn notes that this usually occurs to someone when he first encounters the field as a profession or to someone who does not become caught up in the accepted ways of defining problems, i.e. the system of professional game playing with the professional rewards and punishments involved. During a crisis, scholars begin doing research as though the previous dominant theory or paradigm was not controlling. Individual scholars begin to change their world view; they adopt new ways of looking at things which they had previously looked at with the old ways. They begin to examine new things. As the change of world view expands, the scholar who is developing the new paradigm must re-educate himself. The new world view is very much at odds with the previous world view and with the intellectual world he previously inhabited.

In view of what seems to me a very important insight about contemporary science — the effect of logical positivism short-circuiting the mechanism signalling the existence of a crisis (which means that to many scholars the current crisis is invisible) — Kuhn's chapter on "The Invisibility of Revolutions" (pp. 136-43) is especially significant. If contemporary science is less equipped than previous scientific epochs (Kuhn does not even raise the question of the role of government control of scholarship as a locking-in mechanism) to recognize crises of theoretical frameworks, this intensifies a problem which Kuhn highlights — the tendency of scholars not to view revolutions in scholarship or science as revolutions at all but as mere additions to knowledge. Kuhn explained why "revolutions have proved to be so nearly invisible." Scientists and laymen take their conception of science from an "authoritative source that systematically disguises — partly for important functional reasons — the existence and significance of scientific revolutions. Only when the nature of that authority is recognized and analyzed can one hope to make historical examples fully effective." Kuhn makes the very grave point that science operates on the model of theology: textbooks act as a source of authority. Textbooks "record the stable outcome of past revolutions and thus display the basis of the current normal-scientific tradition."

Textbooks "have to be rewritten in the aftermath of each scientific revolution, and, once rewritten, they inevitably disguise not only the role but the very existence of the revolutions that produce them. Unless he has personally experienced a revolution in his own lifetime, the historical sense either of the working scientist or of the lay reader of textbook literature extends only to the outcome of the most recent revolutions in the field." (Textbooks thus begin by truncating the scientist's sense of his discipline's history and then proceed to supply a substitute for what they have eliminated.) (Scientists are not, of course, the only group that tends to see its discipline's past as developing linearly toward its present vantage. The temptation to write history backward is both omnipresent

(Continued On Page 5)

Kuhn's — (Continued From Page 4)

and perennial. But scientists are more affected by the temptation to rewrite history, partly because the results of scientific research show no obvious dependence upon the historical context of the inquiry, and partly because, except during crisis and revolution, the scientist's contemporary position seems so secure. More historical detail, whether of a science's present or of its past, or more responsibility to the historical details that are presented, could only give artificial stature to human idiosyncrasy, error, and confusion. Why dignify what science's best and most persistent efforts have made it possible to discard? The depreciation of historical fact is deeply, and probably functionally, ingrained in the ideology of the scientific profession, the same profession that places the highest of all values upon factual details of other sorts."

This aspect of Kuhn's discussion was especially striking to me as it paralleled my discussion of it regarding history. In an article in the *New Individualist Review* (volume 1, no. 3, November, 1961) on Herbert Butterfield, the Cambridge historian, I sought to introduce to a conservative audience an isolationist approach to international relations. Butterfield was strongly critical of "official history," which would be a paradigm which had strong artificial supports so that its displacement would be a more complex scientific revolution. Contributing to the 1984 atmosphere of resistance to non-official ideas in history, Butterfield noted generalization and abridgement in the writing of history texts. I believe that the common source for Kuhn's discussion and for my own was indeed the writings of Herbert Butterfield as Kuhn refers to Butterfield's *Origins of Modern Science* (1949). To quote from my earlier article: "Unlike mathematics which begins with the simplest things and proceeds in turn to the more complex, history starts with the most complex things, of broad generalizations, with the result that the mere reading of history, the mere process of accumulating more information in this field, does not necessarily give training to a mind that was initially diffuse. Rather, it initiates all kinds of generalizations, formulas, nicknames, and analogies which answer to men's wishful thinking; and these come into currency without having to be submitted to any very methodical kind of test. These broad generalizations are the result of the abridgment of history . . . Butterfield does not think that it is a coincidence that this abridgment has worked to the advantage of official history, since the total result of this method is to impose a certain form upon the whole historical story, and to produce, a scheme of general history which is bound to converge beautifully upon the present — all demonstrating throughout the ages the working of an obvious principle of progress. Abridgment tends to make our present political system or our country an absolute and imparts an impression of inevitability of the existing system or of a war, since it neglects the alternatives which exist at each point and which indicate the relativity of the existing political system or the foreign policy of our country."

Not only does abridgment eliminate important parts of the historical reality (so far as known to the historian) but an implicit unilinear model of progression is introduced. Butterfield dealt with this issue first in his early work, *The Whig Interpretation of History*. That work showed how historians had written history as a kind of necessary progression toward increased freedom through the English parliamentary system. One of the consequences of that historical writing's dominance was that classical liberals believed that, having discovered the truth about economics, it was only a matter of time through the process of education and democracy before society would create the free society: it was an historical necessity. Of course, the abridgment of history involved in the writing of such books meant that the reality of the conflicts which brought additions to freedom and the lost opportunities for even more freedom, among other things, was completely neglected. Worse, the revolutions which are important in history are neglected or misunderstood. The political revolutions with their violence force themselves upon the history textbook. But, the complexities of intellectual and industrial revolutions, the really important changes for mankind, remain undescribed, and for the most part, unexplored. The greatness of the potentials and the extent that they yet are lost both for the reader of history texts and for the historical scholar.

For science, according to Kuhn, "the result is a persistent tendency to make the history of science look linear or cumulative, a tendency that even affects scientists looking back at their own research." There is "a reconstruction of history that is regularly completed by post

revolutionary science texts. But in that completion more is involved than a multiplication of the historical misconstructions illustrated above. Those misconstructions render revolutions invisible; the arrangement of the still visible material in science texts implies a process that, if it existed, would deny revolutions a function."


Scientists may create a crisis but not be prepared to resolve it. Kuhn notes that "scientific training is not well designed to produce the man who will easily discover a fresh approach." The question to be posed: Is the rigidity which is described merely existent among the individual members of the scientific community and locked-in? Kuhn quotes Max Planck's *Scientific Autobiography*: "a new scientific truth does not triumph by convincing its opponents, and making them see the light, but rather because its opponents eventually die, and a new generation grows up that is familiar with it." There is a resolution of the crisis and of the revolution it causes when a theory is conceived in the mind of one individual or a few individuals. "It is they who learn to see science and the world differently, and their ability to make the transition is facilitated by two circumstances that are not common to most other members of their profession. Invariably their attention had been intensely concentrated upon the crisis-provoking problems; usually, in addition, they are men so young or so new to the crisis-ridden field that practice had committed them less deeply than most of their contemporaries to the world view and rules determined by the old paradigm."

Scientists, use of a single set of standards increase the efficiency of scientists, but it is a set judged only by members of the profession. Ultimately, poets, musicians and artists are more concerned with public approbation than scientists. In music, art and literature, original and classic works are the basis of education. In history, philosophy and social sciences, increased use is made of textbooks but they also use original sources, classics, and conflicting interpretations so that there is a certain awareness of competing solutions to problems. But, in science there is a very heavy reliance on textbooks: "Until the very last stages in the education of a scientist, textbooks are systematically substituted for the creative scientific literature that made them possible."

Scientific education may be such as to drastically distort the perception of the past: it proposes a straight line of progress. While one remains in the field there are no alternative theoretical frameworks permitted. Kuhn emphasized: "Inevitably, those remarks will suggest that the member of a mature scientific community is, like the typical character of Orwell's 1984, the victim of a history rewritten by the powers that be. Furthermore, that suggestion is not altogether inappropriate. There are losses as well as gains in scientific revolutions, and scientists tend to be peculiarly blind to the former."

The important issue of the relationship of scientific revolutions to fields other than the pure sciences raises issues relating to the nature of each discipline. Kuhn's suggestive discussion on this deserves lengthy quotation: "No creative school recognizes a category of work that is, on the one hand, a creative success, but is not, on the other, an addition to the collective achievement of the group. If we doubt, as many do, that non-scientific fields make progress, that cannot be because individual schools make none. RATHER, IT MUST BE BECAUSE THERE ARE ALWAYS COMPETING SCHOOLS, EACH OF WHICH CONSTANTLY QUESTIONS THE VERY FOUNDATIONS OF THE OTHERS. The man who argues that philosophy, for example, had made no progress emphasizes that there are still Aristotelians, not that Aristotelianism has failed to progress . . . during periods of revolution when the fundamental tenets of a field are once more at issue, doubts are repeatedly expressed about the very possibility of continued progress if one or another of the opposed paradigms is adopted . . . Scientific progress is not different in kind from progress in other fields, but the absence at most times of competing schools that question each other's aims and standards makes the progress of a normal-scientific community far easier to see." (pp. 162-63)

Libertarians must begin to precisely relate Kuhn's insights to the paradigms which they propose to substitute for the dominant theories. It is a difficult task, but it can be done if step-by-step analyses are undertaken.

*This essay does not deal with certain epistemological implications of Kuhn's work. 

Toward a Libertarian Movement

Reason editor Robert Poole recently propounded a view of societal change ("Libertarian Realpolitik", *Reason*, August 1976) which might be classified as the "Infinite Series of Small steps Toward Freedom" viewpoint. However, using the set of definitions originated and popularized by one of history's greatest tacticians and social change theorists, V. I. Lenin, this view should be characterized as "Right Wing opportunism."

While clearly no libertarian (Lenin was about as far from libertarianism as one could get, in fact) Lenin nevertheless conceived and propounded a theory of societal change which can only be regarded as brilliant. His views are cogently presented in "Left-Wing Communism An Infantile Disorder," a tract written to clarify his position on matters of tactics and strategy and to steer the international Bolshevik movement toward the attainment of power. The ends of his Bolshevik party were clearly different from those of the Libertarian Party, yet the grand structure of means can be applied to the attainment of opposing ends. Lenin viewed the "victors" at any stage of a societal struggle as those who created the largest, most effective and highest quality movement. That is, those who ultimately succeeded were those who succeeded in bringing the highest number of influential people to their side, realizing of course, that the first factor (numbers) is difficult to define except as a "critical mass," and the latter (quality) is essentially a subjective determination of those involved in the struggle.

While numerous Marxists would have simply sat back and waited for "the inevitable forces of history" to hand them their utopia on a silver platter, Lenin realized that no such thing would occur automatically. He was, of course, rationalizing this position to fit in with Marxist determinism, utilizing the lame excuse that it was the duty of the revolutionary to "midwife" for the birth of a revolution so as to "ease the pains" and thereby expedite the process. Lenin postulated three kinds of activism designed to change society, each having the same goals in mind but pursuing widely different means. Two of these, "Left-Sectarianism" and "Right-Opportunism," were viewed as destructive of the ends to be attained, while his own position of "movement builder" (my designation) was viewed as the most efficacious for the attainment of revolutionary ends.

Left-Sectarianism, according to Lenin, is the view that no alliances, dialogues, etc. should ever be made with similarly inclined groups, as this would be a "compromise." In their desire to remain purist this strategy would rule out any chance of ultimate success. An example of this viewpoint would be the libertarian who, when addressing a group of business people, rather than "sizing up" his audience and stating the case for liberty in as convincing a manner as possible, would, instead, declare that if you don't want heroin in vending machines, you are an enemy of liberty and the hell with you. A Right-Opportunist, contrarily, would not mention the libertarian arguments for legalization of activities deemed worthy of restrictive legislation and would, instead, speak only to those issues on which he and the audience were in agreement, hoping to enlist their support for one project or another to roll back government. The most effective approach, I believe (following a "flexible" Leninist viewpoint), would run something as follows: government regulation of small business is bad; we should realize that government regulation of drug use is another manifestation of "Big Brotherism;" and if drug users and businesspeople wish to be free, they must adopt a policy of live and let live toward each other, etc.; thus going from specific cases to general principles and then applying these principles to areas which would at first have seemed absurd to those listening, giving empirical analyses of costs and benefits to back up the general principle enunciated by the speaker.

The problems inherent in Right-Opportunism and Left Sectarianism, the necessity for maintaining a proper balance between them and the maintenance of a proper means-end relationship, were questions to which Lenin frequently addressed himself. Libertarians would do well to address themselves to these vitally important issues as well. The problems inherent in Left-Sectarianism should be obvious, i.e., the ends are never attained due to the failure to attract adherents by convincing opponents (or those who are neutral) of the validity of libertarian views through a process of argumentation. The problems with the latter view are less obvious but equally pernicious. For if, as Mr. Poole suggests in

his editorial, we take several of these small steps toward freedom, won't we be freer? And, after all, isn't that the goal of the libertarian qua libertarian? What is the error here, and why do I oppose it so?

If Mr. Poole were able to convince a local government to reduce taxes through application of "business like methods" to governmental action, or to decriminalize drug use (that is, to merely reduce the penalties and not abolish them), or to defuse a few regulatory agencies, or to withdraw a few troops from abroad, or to do any of the things on his short term agenda, each would seem to be laudable and worthy of praise as steps toward freedom. Yet what of long run goals? How do people tie these different steps together so as to establish a case for taking even more of these steps in the direction of liberty? Would it be simply because Mr. Poole would continue to pressure the state to do so? Surely, if Mr. Poole and company met with success of any kind he would immediately meet such concentrated opposition from entrenched parasitic interests (favored businesses and unions, bureaucrats, etc.) that his efforts would be themselves defused before they had any chance to advance further. An example of such failure is to be found in the voucher plans to move education toward the free market. Without extolling the efficacy of the free market and building up public support for "de-statizing" education, an attempt was made to introduce a limited form of competition in this field (somewhat analogous to Oscar Lange's "market-socialism"). Immediately, teachers' unions and bureaucrats led a successful counter-attack which laid the voucher plan to rest permanently.

To reach our goal of liberty, we must establish in the "public mind" the validity of certain general rules. We must strive for acceptance of a theoretical super-structure which demonstrates that market mechanisms are not only preferable in one instance due to better administration by one gifted businessman, but that government botches everything because of the nature of government.

Recently, I conversed with a talented and intelligent economist who took a similar Right-Opportunist view as Mr. Poole. The economist was a libertarian (an anarcho-capitalist, in fact) and was arguing in front of a small group of persons that the efforts of the Libertarian Party were ultimately futile, and that the only viable alternative strategy for liberty is to demonstrate empirically that the state ruins whatever it touches. He stated that it was his goal to approach a "small Southern Board of Education" and apply for a grant to manage the schools on a "free market basis." He was sure he and his co-entrepreneurs would run the schools so efficiently that they would then be awarded all of the contracts for public education in the surrounding areas, thereby demonstrating the efficacy of the market (a non-sequitur, for being a private recipient of a state monopoly in no way demonstrates anything about the free market). Yet, assuming he was successful, how would the public tie this occurrence to other instances of government intervention without being presented a coherent body of theory or principles by an articulate and organized movement which would show this to be an instance of the application of a general principle?

If Mr. Poole pursues his strategy of "hiding" his libertarian principles, how will such a movement, capable of pointing out the general nature of state intervention, come into existence? Further, who would then seize the initiative and organize public opposition to the state and start the process of dismantling it? Many a critique of government intervention, both empirical (demonstrating specific cases of state mismanagement) and (presenting a theoretical framework for analysis of state coercion) has been penned, yet who is there to promote these views and organize opposition to the state? Will the "masses" automatically rally around the glorious banner of de-municipalizing sanitation services in Pittsburgh? Clearly they must be presented with a world view in which consistent ties between what in Mr. Poole's strategy would be presented as isolated phenomena would be established, i.e., one which articulates general rules of human action.

Other criticisms which can be levelled against Mr. Poole's Right-Opportunism include his views concerning the purpose of a (libertarian) political party. Mr. Poole states, "The purpose of a political party is to elect people to office. Those libertarians who find this unpalatable should

(Continued On Page 7)

Movement — (Continued From Page 6)

leave parties to the politicians and start or support educational libertarian groups." While I do not desire to question Mr. Poole's ultimate libertarian ends, it must be pointed out that electing libertarians to office has a purpose (it is a means to an end) and, if it comes to be seen as an end in itself, will lead to the worst kind of opportunistic-power grabbing. While transitional programs are not being questioned here, I do maintain that one should not lose sight of, or stop enunciating, long term goals. The Libertarian Party platform is, in my view, one of the most dramatic and important projects undertaken by libertarians in recent years, for it is an attempt to apply the corpus of libertarian thought and theory to real world situations and come up with concrete policy conclusions. What long range impact would libertarians have if we were to dilute our policy aims and hide our ultimate goals?

Mr. Poole also states, after arguing for a gradualistic approach (repeal of only federal victimless crime laws, abolishing only some regulatory agencies, etc.), "Notice that the list does not include abolishing income taxes or welfare or the FDS - ideas whose time has yet to come, since people today cannot see how to do without these institutions. Until viable replacements can be researched, developed, and popularized, people's needs and fears must be taken seriously if a candidate is serious about being elected." Has Mr. Poole neglected the important point, enunciated as a major defense of the market by such a long line of libertarians, that the market provides a framework for the attainment of non-coercive ends and that the specific institutions which will arise to satisfy these demands cannot be predicted? One cannot "research, develop, and popularize" "viable replacements" to state institutions and then claim that this particular constellation of human relationships will be that adopted through the market.

In conclusion, I "attack this (Mr. Poole's) approach as compromising or unprincipled" for a number of reasons. The points which Mr. Poole states we should keep in mind in no way compensate for the defects of his abandonment of principles (or at least of enunciating them publicly). The first point, "The purpose of a political party is to elect people to office. . . was attacked for the possibility of leading to opportunistic power-grabbing. The second, that "it is not compromising to face the necessity of evolutionary change and, therefore, to implement a long term plan a step at a time," is a statement with which I am in general agreement but which in no way supports Mr. Poole's particular viewpoint regarding tactics and strategy. The third, that "Libertarians are under no obligation to advertise their ultimate goals every time they make a public statement, so long as they don't misrepresent or conceal their principles. . . is, to begin with, contradictory. Principles in this context presuppose goals and to enunciate your principles (that is, to not conceal them) in an understandable way is of necessity to advertise your goals. Further, it has been argued that this viewpoint in no way advances liberty, for this third point, if followed, would not lead to the most vital ingredient in any recipe for change in a libertarian direction, an articulate and organized libertarian movement.

Of course, all of the above should in no way be construed as a personal attack upon Mr. Poole (who has done a fine job editing *Reason* magazine, providing the libertarian movement with a forum for the exchange of ideas), nor as questioning his devotion to libertarian principles. Rather, my intense love of liberty and desire to see it realized one day lead to attack, with no quarter given, a strategy which I believe would lead to the emasculation of the libertarian movement and which would be its death sentence. Our promise is so great and our goal so noble that stepping on toes (non-coercively, of course!) doesn't cause me a moment's hesitation. For a more detailed discussion of these points, I refer the reader to the following works: *The Intellectuals and Socialism* reprinted in *Studies in Philosophy, Politics and Economics*; *Principles or Expediency in Toward Liberty: Essays in Honor of Ludwig von Mises*; and *Law, Legislation and Liberty*, Vol. I, p. 56-59, by F. A. Hayek; *Left-Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder and What Is To Be Done?* *Burning Questions Of Our Movement* by V. I. Lenin; and historical works on Richard Cobden and John Bright, two of the world's most radical and successful historical figures (leaders of the English radical-liberal free trade movement), particularly *English Libertarians Battled War, Tariffs* by Ralph Raico in LP NEWS issue 30, Jan.-Feb 1976. □

*Mr. Palmer is head of the Young Libertarian Alliance.

The LP: — (Continued From Page 3)

impact.

The lesson for libertarians is clear: even on such issues as state and local taxation, where one might think we are close to Reaganite conservatism, conservatism must be forsworn. Even on local economic issues, conservatism is simply a more moderate branch of the statist Establishment. Conservatism is everywhere statist in principle, strategy, and tactics; libertarianism is radical and anti-statist. And never the twain shall meet. □

Health and Liberty

Ivan Illich is a radical critic of modern bureaucratic statist society often described as a radical libertarian by critics within the liberal and left establishments. Yet he is still comparatively unknown among libertarians whose forebears were Tucker, Nock, Mises and Rand. The reason may be that Illich's credentials do not seem promising to such libertarians: he is a Catholic priest, albeit not in the good graces of Rome; he is a Middle European critic of American materialist society; he rarely indicates any specialized knowledge in economics; he has been a missionary educator in Latin America; and as a sociologist and Christian he tends to see man holistically rather than as producer, consumer, owner, worker or partial actor. He does not indicate in his writings familiarity with the Old Right, objectivism or Austrian economics.

Yet Illich is often identified by his critics as one who "attacks even modest liberal strategies for change, such as national health insurance....and nowhere does he argue for a major redistribution of resources or public control of the process of industrialization". Illich is rightly accused of rejecting "political and economic solutions in favor of a sterile (sic!) individualism. These are the politics of life style and the economics of Milton Friedman!"

The same critic, reviewing *Medical Nemesis* in the NY Times, calls Illich the leading Luddite of the 20th century. Another critic, writing in the *Nation*, after echoing the Luddite theme, pinpoints the real evil of Illich: "it is the 'recuperation of personal responsibility for health care' - not society, not an equitable system, but personal responsibility he advocates. A very attractive theory for the libertarians and laissez faire proponents, to whom all social engineering of any kind is anathema. At the extreme end, the Illich panacea attacks the concept of man as a social animal capable of, needful of, planning and organizing efforts for mutual help and support".

Pretty horrible, but there is worse yet. This monstrous Friedmanite, Luddite, libertarian priest is "intensely religious" and "celebrates suffering". Proof? Illich says: "Man's consciously lived fragility, individuality and relatedness make the experience of pain, sickness and death an integral part of his life. The ability to cope with this trio autonomously is fundamental to his health". Yes, Illich believes in coping with reality face to face in manly and womanly fashion, retaining self-awareness, and self control, asserting to the end one's self-esteem and autonomy as a free, rational and responsible human being.

In *Medical Nemesis* Illich argues that modern medical practice with its enormous investment in technology has reached a stage at which it becomes itself a menace to human health, a process he calls iatrogenesis; he denounces the imperialism of the medical monopolists in constantly medicalizing all sorts of social, personal and cultural problems with a consequent reduction of individuals to a new kind of dependency, a serfdom based on the control of one's health by the medical lords. Finally, he points the way to liberation through destruction of the monopoly by abolishing state licensing, and personal reassertion of control of one's health, personal autonomy over one's body and mind, through the practice of self care.

Illich's works are polemical, provocative, disturbing; they raise as many questions as they answer; they compel the reader to demand more clarity than is available; his style reminds one of Proudhon's, often paradoxical, and tending to give special nuances to commonplace terminology. Illich challenges his readers to step aside and outside the normal intellectual channels. If you like mental exercise, read this book.

(J.R.P) □

Metric Mania

One of the biggest rip-offs now in the making is the planned forced changeover to the metric system being engineered by a small group of elitists despite a century of opposition from Congress and the American public. If Congress goes along with their plans, every American will have to foot the bill for the changeover and will have to put up with the confusion and frustration of a dual system for the rest of his lifetime.

The "metrication" of the United States is a bizarre undertaking. There is no popular demand for a change in our system and there is much latent opposition that should be apparent to even the least prescient politician.

The culprits in this wasteful economic and social drama are a few professional engineer and educator groups. They are supported by tool makers, scale manufacturers and others who would profit immensely from a forced changeover.

Under a barrage of propaganda, some Congressmen have weakened and Congress has agreed to a study and to fund an "educational" campaign.

Proponents assert that the inch-pound-gallon system which is functioning so well for us is obsolete and that we ought to substitute the European metric system. They claim metrics is simple and logical, being built on blocks of 10, 100 and 1,000. In contrast, they say, our present English system is characterized by complexity and illogic.

Almost every news item and feature article on the alleged desirability of the metric system mentions the "drive" or "fight" to establish the system in the United States, presumably against some formidable opposition. Yet, there is nothing to stop anyone from using the metric system. It is not illegal. Congress legalized the use of metric measurements in 1866. But in the 110 years since, no major U. S. manufacturer has seen fit to standardize on the metric system—knowing that Americans don't want it.

Since the 1866 legalization, more than 100 bills have been introduced in Congress to force a mandatory metric system on the United States. All have failed to pass. In 1968 Congress authorized a study. Later, a bill was passed that stated it was national policy to "go metric." The bill authorized spending \$10 million a year for four years to publicize the metric system. In 1975 Congress passed the Metric Conversion Act which was signed by the President. Under the Act, a U. S. Metric Board has been set up to "coordinate" efforts to convert the United States to the metric system during the ensuing ten years.

The proponents try to create the impression that all businessmen are for the metric change. Actually, large segments of American industry are opposed.

If the metric system had the benefits that proponents claim for it, it would have been adopted by American industry and business long ago. But it hasn't. And, it would be used widely in world commerce. It isn't. Just look in the business pages of your daily paper. You will see that the

world of commerce uses measures that by and large originated in England.

World petroleum production is measured in U. S. barrels of 31½ gallons—not in any metric liters. World gold and silver production and sale are measured in troy ounces—not in grams or kilograms. Copper, lead, zinc and tin are sold by the pound. World trade in lumber is carried on in board feet. (A board foot is a cubic measure, one foot square by one inch thick). Trade in wheat, corn and soybeans is in bushels. A bushel of wheat is 60 pounds. Live cattle and hogs are traded by the hundredweight. Shell eggs are marketed by the dozen.

Most of the world's wines and liquors such as Scotch whiskey, Irish whiskey, and American whiskey (bourbon), are bottled in fifths—a fifth of a gallon. Occasionally quarts (quarter of a gallon) are used. Most domestic liqueurs (cordials) are put up in fancy bottles that are labeled by federal law "¾ quart"—or 24 ounces.


Foreign wines and liquors generally come in odd sizes ranging from 24 to 30 ounces. The non-metric sizes dominate the smallest as well as the largest containers. A "split," holding 6 ounces is marketed as well as the "magnum" holding two quarts, or 64 ounces. There's even a non-metric "jeroboam" (used mainly for champagne) that holds a hefty 7/10th of a gallon, or 90 ounces.

There is not a single industry that would not be adversely affected by a mandatory change to go metric. The building industry, for example, is based on the inch, pound, and pounds-per-square-inch system. Architects, engineers, building contractors, and building inspectors must all talk the same language. They do now, in the present English system.

The auto industry, despite announcements that nuts and bolts may go metric, will remain on the old system. The wheels will remain 13, 14 or 15 inch because the entire world uses these non-metric sizes. Thus, you can buy tires to fit your car anywhere in the world.

Most Americans did not pay attention to the early efforts to saddle the country with a metric system because they didn't believe that Congress would seriously consider such a move. But now that Congress has given the green light (another indication of the deterioration of Congress), opposition is mounting.

In all the torrent of words issuing from the proponents, nothing has been told to the average American what benefits the changeover will bring him. The reason is, there are no benefits to the homemaker, home owner or other citizen. Only confusion. John Rozmital, head of the National Viewpoint Society, says the promised benefits of bigger foreign trade are promises only and like promises of politicians, will not be actualized. "The only apparent gainers will be the makers of measuring equipment," he says.

In a satirical denunciation of the efforts to "metricate" us, the critics say that the government that brought us Vietnam, the gasoline shortage of 1973-74 and Watergate, is now about to foist on us another disaster—the confusing and frustrating dual measurement system. 

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