

A Semi-Monthly Newsletter

# The Libertarian

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PREVIEW ISSUE

MARCH 1, 1969

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## Why The Libertarian?

The libertarian movement is growing at a remarkable pace throughout the country. Yet the organizational forms, the means of communication, among libertarians are not only miniscule, but actually suffered a considerable blow during 1968. Last year saw the collapse of the Freedom School-Ramparts College of Palmer Lake, Colorado, with its attendant *Ramparts Journal*, Pine Tree Press, and Pine Tree Features. *New Individualist Review*, the theoretical quarterly published by graduate students at the University of Chicago, is all but defunct, and had been moribund for a long time. The need is acute for far more cohesion and inter-communication in the libertarian movement; in fact, it must become a movement and cease being merely an inchoate collection of diffuse and haphazard personal contacts.

The launching of *The Libertarian*, a twice-monthly newsletter, was announced at the first meeting of The Libertarian Forum, founded by Gerald Woloz and Joseph Peden in New York City for periodic dinners, lectures and discussions among libertarians. The fact that over sixty persons attended this initial dinner-meeting, some coming from as far away as Buffalo, Delaware, and South Carolina for the affair, demonstrates both the rapid growth of the movement and the widespread eagerness for increased activity and organization.

We believe that one of the greatest needs of the movement at this time is for a frequently appearing magazine that could act as a nucleus and communications center for

libertarians across the country. We also believe that while many libertarians have thought long and hard about their ideal system, few of them have been able to rise above the merely sectarian exposition of the pure system to engage in a critique of the present state of affairs armed with the libertarian world-view. This kind of critique is not merely "negative", as many libertarian sectarians believe. For it is the kind of work that is indispensable if we are ever to achieve *victory*, if we are ever to get our ideal system off the drawing board and applied to the real world. In order to change the present system we must be able to analyze and explore it, and to see in the concrete how our libertarian view can be applied to such an analysis and to the prospects for social change.

One would think that such a need would be obvious. No movement that has been successful has ever been *without* organs carrying out this kind of analysis and critique. The key word here is "successful"; for a magazine like *The Libertarian* is desperately needed only if we wish to unite theory and action, if we wish not only to elaborate an ideal system but to see how the current system may be transformed into the ideal. In short, it is needed *only if* our aim is victory; those who conceive of liberty as only an intellectual parlor game, or as a method for generating investment tips, will, alas, find little here to interest them. But let us hope that *The Libertarian* will be able to play a part in inspiring a truly dedicated movement on behalf of liberty.

## The Nixon Administration: Creeping Cornuelliism

Changeovers in Administration are always a disheartening time for any thoughtful observer of the political scene. The volume of treacle and pap rises to the heavens, as the wit and wisdom and the high statesmanship of both the outgoing and incoming rascals are trumpeted across the land. But this year things are even worse than ever. First we had to suffer the apotheosis of Lyndon Baines Johnson, before last November the most universally reviled President of modern times; but *after* November, suddenly lovable and wise. And now Richard Nixon has had his sharp edges dissolved and his whole Person made diffuse and mellow; he too has become uniquely lovable to all. How much longer must we suffer this tripe? It is bad enough that we have to live under a despotic government; must we also have our intelligence systematically defiled? Already, Ted Lewis of the *New York Daily News*, a dedicated Nixonian, tells us gleefully that the new charm and grace and folksy friendliness of Dick and his

aides are so pronounced that maybe this time the Presidential "honeymoon" will last the full four years.

Amidst the cloud of goo surrounding the new Administration, it has been difficult for anyone to penetrate the fog and figure out what the new President is all about. Of the thousands of top jobs at the immediate disposal of the new Administration, only 90 have been filled. We have been getting inured to both parties and both sets of rulers having the same policies; but now it looks as if the very same *people* continue in power, regardless of who happens to be chosen by the public. How much clearer can it be that the much vaunted free elections in the United States are a sham and a fraud, designed to lull the public into believing that their votes really count? It had long become physically impossible for any of us to cast a vote *against* such ageless and lifetime oligarchs as J. Edgar Hoover; now the same

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applies to almost everyone in government. In the few cases where the same people do not remain, there is a game of musical chairs with a few people shuffling in and out of the usual Establishment institutions: General Dynamics, Cal Tech, Litton Industries, the Chase Bank, etc. Certainly nothing startling can be expected on Vietnam, where Ellsworth Bunker remains as Ambassador, William Bundy, a longtime hawk, remains in the State Department post on Southeast Asia, and Henry Sabotage returns to head the negotiations in Paris.

Add to all this the fact that the Nixon Administration has been remarkably quiet and torpid--to the hosannahs of the press who proclaim that a return to Babbitt is just what the country needs--and one begins to wonder if there will be any change at all. To the *cognoscenti*, a little-heralded article in the *Washington Post* (Jan. 26) makes clear that a new note will indeed be added. It is a note that will mark the peculiar essence of the Nixon content and style; we might call it "Creeping Cornuellism".

The rise to fame and fortune of Richard C. Cornuelle is a peculiarly 20th-century variant of the Alger success story. Twenty years ago, Dick, a bright young libertarian, was a student of the eminent *laissez-faire* economist Ludwig von Mises at New York University; and with a few other libertarians of that era he soon saw that the consistent libertarian and *laissez-faire* position is really "right-wing anarchism".

As the years went on, Dick decided to abandon the world of scholarship for direct action, which he originally saw as bringing us closer to anarchism in practical, realistic terms. On reading De Tocqueville, he claims to have been the first person in over a century to realize that there exists, in addition to government and private business, a third set of institutions--non-profit organizations. Anyone who had ever heard of a church bazaar also realized this, but Dick brushed such considerations aside; he had found his gimmick, his *shick*. He dubbed these non-profit institutions the "independent sector", and he was off to the races.

After several years of promoting such startlingly new activities as private welfare to the aged, and loans to college students, Dick found a disciple: T. George Harris, an editor of *Look*. Taking advantage of the Goldwater debacle, Harris published an article in *Look* at the year's end of 1964, hailing Dick Cornuelle as the New Messiah, of the Republican party and of the nation, and heralding as the new Gospel a book which Cornuelle was working on--with the substantial assistance of Harris himself. On the strength of the article, Dick's book was published by Random House, he became Executive Vice-President of the National Association of Manufacturers, and revered advisor to Nixon, Romney, and Reagan, thus pulling off one of the neatest tricks of the decade.

Cornuelle's stress was on the glory of private charitable institutions, and on the importance of businessmen contributing to more private welfare programs. In another worshipful article following up the *Look* piece, the *San Francisco Examiner* (March 28, 1965) asked Dick the \$64 question: In essence, if the voluntary welfare sector is so great, where do you fit in? In short, what's your program? Here entered the virus of Cornuellism. For it seems that, as superb as it is, the "Independent Sector didn't keep pace while the rest of the country was developing." The Independent Sector, it seems, has "never learned to organize human activity efficiently." The *Examiner* adds: "To show the Independents how, Cornuelle thinks it may be necessary to add another department to the Federal government, of all things . . . It would be an agency that would find out what public problems are coming up and decide how to meet them effectively." Proclaiming enthusiastic support from all wings of the Republican Party, as well as--big surprise!--a "number

of liberal Democrats", Cornuelle wistfully admitted that the one exception to the Cornuelle bandwagon was Governor Rockefeller, because "He's committed to state action as opposed to Federal action." So much for right-wing anarchism!

There is no need to keep belaboring the Cornuelle Saga, After all we are not so much interested in the triumph of one man's career over "dogmatism" as we are in what this portends for the Nixon Administration. For here is what the *Washington Post* now reports: a "central theme" of the new Administration will be a nationwide drive to stimulate "voluntary action" against social ills. It adds that Secretary George Romney is "in charge of planning the voluntary action effort." This concept needs to be savored: government, the quintessence of coercion, is going to *plan* a nationwide "voluntary" effort. George Orwell, where art thou now? War is Peace, Freedom is Slavery, Voluntary Action is Government Planning.

The *Post* goes on to say that Romney, Secretary Finch, and the President "are devotees of the idea that vast and untapped energies of volunteers in an 'independent sector' can transform the Nation." Nixon endorsed the idea in 1965, and recently declared that "the President should be the chief patron of citizen efforts." And it turns out that last year, Secretary Finch was co-author of a book on the independent sector, with--you guessed it--Richard C. Cornuelle, the "godfather of independent action" and head of the Nixon task-force on independent voluntary action. Two major programs are emerging: a mixed public-private organization chartered by the Federal government to stimulate voluntary action drives, and a series of Presidential awards, like the World War II Navy "E" for Efficiency, to be bestowed by the President in person for outstanding voluntary efforts.

Oh right-wing anarchy, where art thou now? So now we are to have "voluntary" actors bedecked with honors by their Chief, the nation's top coercive actor; and we will have Dick's long-standing dream of a Federal agency to stimulate and coordinate these efforts. *The Libertarian*, for one, would not bet a substantial sum against the prospect of our old friend Dick being appointed to head the new bureau. Who, after all, is better qualified?

But we must not look at this sordid story as merely the saga of a former anarchist who coined a "new" political philosophy which might well result in his climbing to a high post in government. The situation is far more sinister than that. For this "voluntary" hogwash has a familiar smell: the smell of the Presidency of Herbert Hoover, whose political life-style was one of frenetically promoting "voluntary" programs, with the mailed fist of governmental coercion always resting inside the velvet glove. Hoover's pseudo-"voluntary" New Deal was the complete forerunner of Franklin Roosevelt's candidly coercive New Deal. It has another smell: the smell of Mussolini's fascism, in which coercive government multiplied its power by mobilizing the support of masses of misguided "volunteers" from among the citizenry. And finally, Nixon-Cornuellism has the smell of the burgeoning corporate state--the political economy of fascism--which has increasingly marked the American system. It is the "enlightened" corporate state where nothing is any longer distinctively "private" or "public"; everything is cozily mixed, in an ever-intensifying "partnership" of Big Government and Big Business (with Big Unionism as the happy junior partner). This is the sort of polity and economy that we have in the United States, and Creeping Cornuellism embodies still more of it.

Not only more of it; for Nixon-Cornuellism is, to the libertarian, a peculiarly repulsive variant of American corporatism. For it cloaks and camouflages the viper of statism in the soothing raiment of voluntaristic and pseudo-libertarian rhetoric. What political style can be more disgusting than that?

## State Of Palestine Launched

During February, the state of Palestine is being launched at Cairo. For the first time in many centuries, Palestine is being proclaimed as an independent nation, free, at least in aspiration, from foreign imperial domination. The delegates are a mixed team of guerrilla fighters from Al Fatah, the largest of the Palestinian guerrilla organizations, as well as members of the Popular Liberation Front.

A highly significant preliminary meeting took place in January in Cairo, at a conference called by the Communist Party, and shepherded by delegates from the Soviet Union. The Communist line has been to force the Arabs to accept the Soviet peace plan and the UN resolution of November, 1967, which is to guarantee the borders of Israel once it surrenders its gains acquired during the Israel-Arab war of 1967: In short, to ratify all the previous aggressive gains of Israel if she withdraws from her latest conquests. Despite the fact that the conference was loaded in favor of the Communist line, the conference was swung from Communist control in favor of a militant position by the leadership and the oratory of Dr. Nabeel Shaath, 30-year-old American-educated professor, formerly teaching at the University of Pennsylvania and now head of the proposed Palestinian state residing in unoccupied Jordan.

Dr. Shaath, a Christian like most of the Palestinian delegation to the conference, declared that "We will not accept any substitute for a war of national liberation. We will not accept any settlement that denies our rights, be it the Security Council or any other proposal or political settlement." Shaath proclaimed the goal of the Palestinians to be the return of the forcibly exiled Arab refugees to their homes and properties in Palestine, and declared: "We are fighting today to create the new Palestine of tomorrow, a progressive and democratic nonsectarian Palestine in which Christian, Moslem and Jew worship, live peacefully and enjoy equal rights."

Previous to this meeting, Al Fatah affirmed its emphasis on the independence of its "armed Palestine revolution" from all governments everywhere, obviously implying the reactionary machinations of the Arab governments of the Middle East as well as of the long-standing cynical maneuvers and manipulations by the Soviet Union.

### "Private" Enterprise At Work

The way "private" enterprise works in our era of the neo-fascist corporate state is well shown in an article in the *Wall St. Journal* (Feb. 5) on the National Corporation for Housing Partnerships. The NCHP, created by President Johnson, but supposedly run along the Nixonian lines of revving up the "engine of private enterprise", wants to raise \$50 million from private industry to invest in low-rent housing projects which would eventually mount up to \$2 billion of capital.

Praiseworthy? But wait. In order for the corporation to get started, there must be a substantial flow of Federal funds to subsidize rentals in the new projects. The NCHP wants \$150 million from the Federal government for this year and next before it sets up business as a corporation. With this huge subsidy, "private enterprise" in the form of the NCHP would be willing to build 10,000 low-rent units in the first year, and hopefully move up to 60,000 units annually.

A particularly desired form of federal subsidy would be to pay a subsidy that would keep mortgage interest costs down

"Whenever the ends of government are perverted, and public liberty manifestly endangered, and all other means of redress are ineffectual, the people may, and of a right ought to reform the old, or establish a new government; the doctrine of non-resistance against arbitrary power and oppression is absurd, slavish and destructive of the good and happiness of mankind."

---Declaration of Rights of Maryland, 1867

to a near-zero sum of 1% per year. With this kind of subsidy, a whole roster of the nation's largest corporations stand eager to do their great humanitarian work. This includes Kaiser Industries Corp, whose head, Edgar Kaiser, is the president of the NCHP, Westinghouse, Metropolitan Life, Deere and Co., and Ling-Temco-Vought. Many of the biggest banks, such as Chase Manhattan, First National City, Bank of America, Mellon National, would be willing to lend the corporation money to launch its operations. Also, not surprisingly, a host of local realty firms would be happy to join in the bonanza.

The big attraction, apart from humanitarianism, is a huge, guaranteed profit, or, as the *Journal* puts it, "a guaranteed, Government-supported market to attract profit-motivated private industry and investors." The estimated annual rate of profit for these investors would begin at over 24% and end at 17%. Pretty good returns for "helping the poor"!

### A People's Court?

In the January 1969 issue of *The Center Magazine* Gerald Gottlieb, a consultant to the Center For Democratic Institutions in Santa Barbara, Calif., has made a proposal of great interest to libertarians. Reviewing the failure of the World Court and other international judicial bodies to preserve the peace and ensure justice to individuals, he proposes the creation by private citizens of a universal court of man "independent of nations and able to render judgment upon those who misuse sovereign power". Its jurisdiction: crimes against human rights and peace; its legitimacy: arising from the sovereign rights of the people retained by them and not granted to governments. How would such a body enforce its jurisdiction and decisions against sovereign states? By arousing world public opinion through any and all media, through appeals from professional and business associations, churches, social institutions, etc. Recalcitrant States would be faced with boycott and public degradation by an aroused world public. While Gottlieb eventually would depend upon the coercive influence of other states, this is not crucial to his argument. The recent success of the Bertrand Russell War Crimes Tribunal in arousing European sentiment against American actions in Vietnam, and the propaganda success of the American Commission of Inquiry on Conditions in Ireland in 1920-22 in forcing the British government to moderate its policy in the Irish rebellion, suggests that privately-constituted international courts may serve to mitigate the criminality of sovereign states, or at least focus world attention on their grosser violations of human liberties.

Perhaps libertarian foundations and scholars could sponsor further study of this proposal--so libertarian in principle and so feasible in practice.

J. R. P.

## Sitting On Sidewalk Outlawed

The city of San Francisco has adopted a law giving the police the right to arrest anyone found sitting, lying, or sleeping on the sidewalk. The criminal sitter is subject to punishment of six months in jail and a \$500 fine. The law, passed to the great glee of the citizens of the town, is commonly known as the "anti-hippie" law, and everyone is looking forward with enthusiasm to cracking down on hippies who are notorious users of the streets.

While we hold no particular brief for hippies, we must note one more step on the road to a totalitarian America. So now we can't sit on the street! The police are assuring everyone that the law will be used reasonably, and only against large groups of sitters who obstruct the sidewalks. But liberty requires not that despotic laws be passed and then only moderately enforced, but that the law not be passed at all.

This new incident points up a vital problem in political philosophy: who gets to own and therefore to control the streets. For so long as the urban governments are allowed to continue to own the streets, we are at any time liable to be oppressed by all sorts of regulations and controls made over those of us who use the streets--which means everyone. Thus, during the riots of the summer of 1967, all the cities decreed compulsory curfews for everyone, thus making criminals out of anyone having the effrontery to walk out of his home after, say, 10:00 P. M. How much more despotism over our daily lives is needed before we question whether we are, indeed, a free country?

The only ultimate solution to this problem is to abolish all government ownership and control of the streets, and to turn the nation's streets over to private ownership, which might assume all sorts of individual, cooperative, or corporate forms. But until that golden day, we must at least see to it that government exercise its ownership powers as little as possible. We must proclaim that the streets belong not to the government, but to the people, for the people to use as they see fit. Community no-ownership is far better than government ownership; for a little obstruction of the streets is better than frozen tyranny.

In the meanwhile, the citizens of San Francisco can count their small blessings, for their streets were saved from a graver fate. One of the eager beavers on the board of supervisors urged a law prohibiting anyone from "standing aimlessly" on the pavement. The law failed to pass, not of course because the supervisors were taken with a sudden

fit of concern for the liberty of the individual who might, sometime, wish to stroll or even stand, rather than stride purposefully down the street. No, as so often in the past, vested self-interest came to the unwitting rescue of liberty. For the anti-sitting law was passed under pressure of the local merchants, and the merchants became uneasy at the thought of throngs of aimlessly strolling tourists, with money in their pockets, getting hauled off unceremoniously in the paddy wagon. Like politics, liberty sometimes makes strange bedfellows.

### RECOMMENDED READING

Irving Louis Horowitz, "Young Radicals and Professorial Critics", *Commonweal* (January 31, 1969). A thoughtful defense of young student radicals and a critique of their conservative Social Democratic opposition among the faculty.

Paul M. Sweezy, "Thoughts on the American System", *Monthly Review* (February, 1969). Keen insight into the nature of the American system by one of America's most intelligent Marxists. Sweezy sees the Nixon appointments as demonstrating an interchangeable ruling class shuttling back and forth between industry and government, and he also examines the differences and "contradictions" between national and local ruling elites. He is also refreshing on the Left for not dismissing the Vietnam War as already ended.

### TWO NEW LIBERTARIAN PERIODICALS!

Factotum Bulletin, a bulletin for news of the libertarian movement. Can be obtained from the Center for Libertarian Studies, 1507 W. Hildebrand, San Antonio, Texas 78201. Irregularly published, as supplement to the Center's Libertarian American.

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