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The Menace of Opportunism

1. The Growing Threat

Every ideological movement, as it grows in number and influence, is subject to the increasing temptations of opportunism, that is, to slur over, compromise, and eventually betray basic principle on behalf of a quest for short-run advantage. By definition, ideological movements are radical, divergent from and clashing with the mainstream of opinion. So, as the movement grows, temptations accelerate to fuzz over principle on behalf of quick acceptance by the mainstream: in the form of money, respectability, votes, or power. The only way to guard against such temptation is to have an increasing and ever-vigilant *cadre* of knowledgeable, dedicated, and principled militants to guard over the movement and to blow the whistle long and hard over any signs of opportunist sellout. And the rest of the movement must heed that whistle. For opportunism is like a cancer; once it begins, it feeds on itself, and eventually principle is lost — even supposed short-run advantage is lost — and the movement sinks into innocuousness and sterility.

Sellout does not occur all at once. In our world, the Devil does not take you to the mountaintop and offer you the kingdoms of this world in exchange for your soul. Perhaps it happened to Jesus, but not to the rest of us. Nobody comes and offers you \$10 million to betray your principles. Sellout comes as a gradual corruption of the soul, in a series of small but important steps that lead to total betrayal.

Opportunism is usually "right-wing", since respectability, votes, and money are generally in a conservative direction; but it can also be "left-wing", for these temptations can exist there as well. In the final analysis, it doesn't really matter whether the opportunist betrayal is right-wing, left-wing, or even both at the same time. In any case, the result is the same: the loss of the whole point of the libertarian enterprise — the libertarian principles themselves. Jefferson's famous phrase, "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty", does not apply merely to government; it applies just as critically to libertarian movements themselves.

And so now that the libertarian movement and the Libertarian Party are at the peak of their strength and influence in this century, and now that the LP is getting set to launch what promises to be its most important campaign to date, we can expect the danger of opportunism to be that much greater. And so it is. Already, signs are multiplying of a growing opportunism in both the movement and the Party. Only time will tell whether this mounting trend can and will be stopped.

2. The LR-SLS Clique

Most conspicuous has been the hankering after the support of campus leftists by the Students for a Libertarian Society and its close allies of *Libertarian Review* — all of whom occupy the same offices at 1620 Montgomery St., San Francisco. In particular, the LR-SLS clique has advocated the abolition of nuclear power *per se*, objecting violently to the libertarian doctrine of privatizing and deregulating nuclear power and then allowing it to take its chances on a free market. All this has fortunately been aired in many organs of the libertarian movement, and the problem constituted the entire July-August, special convention, issue of the *Lib. Forum*. SLS devoted all of its energies at the LP convention to trying to change the LP nuclear power plank to its desires. A titanic struggle ensued,

with the anti-anti-nuclear power forces, led by Bill Evers and myself, finally trouncing the SLS clique after an exhausting battle, first on the platform committee and then on the floor.

A hallmark of opportunists is their desire to suppress open disagreement from their views, to win their points by bureaucratic maneuvering rather than by honest discussion and open debate. The SLS and its allied institutions have repeatedly used the power of firing and threats of firing to keep dissident SLSers and others in line. All of this, plus the latest on the nuclear power issue, can be found in the superb coverage of the LP convention in the December issue of *Libertarian Vanguard* (Available for 25¢ from *Libertarian Vanguard*, 3570-17th St., San Francisco, CA 94114.) Only in the *Vanguard*, the organ of the Libertarian Party Radical Caucus, does one find realistic coverage of the convention, in contrast to the puffery and flackery in all the other libertarian publications. Particularly recommended are the excellent articles by Justin Raimondo, "An Open Letter to the Movement", an exposure of the long-term maneuvering in SLS and allied institutions; the *Vanguard* editor's "Convention '79"; and two articles on the nuclear power issue, Eric O'Keefe's "Privatize Nuclear Power," and "Political Report" by an anonymous Member of the LPRC Central Committee. One trenchant paragraph of the Member of the Central Committee's article is particularly relevant to our broader concerns about opportunism:

"Mueller and Lipson (of SLS) and their compatriots are clambering on the bandwagon of an ongoing mass movement (the student Left) while jettisoning as so much excess baggage the distinctive libertarian view on nuclear power.

Moreover, their . . . breed of opportunism has lately flourished on other issues, such as the ERA (Equal Rights Amendment), in some libertarian circles. This variety of opportunism might be called "over-intellectualized me-tooism." We all know what me-tooism means when we talk about the Republican party. It means that the Republicans say that they too accept the New Deal, but unlike the Democrats can deliver New Deal programs more efficiently, using business-like methods. Now, libertarians don't have the kind of veterans of political life and government work who could claim to deliver "public services" more efficiently. But there are in libertarian ranks some persons of intellectual dexterity. The ploy that me-too opportunists wish to try is this: Take the unlibertarian goals of the left or the right that have some mass appeal and hitch these goals to libertarian sounding rationales. In other words, we libertarians may not have votes to deliver, may not have promises of government effectiveness to deliver, but boy can we offer some convoluted reasoning. In pursuit of the footsoldiers of the anti-nuclear movement, these opportunists are eager to turn libertarian principle into a pale imitation of those held by the counter-cultural left . . . Even though the opportunists' tortuous justifications are unlikely to make any impact on the anti-nuclear movement, opportunism as a habit of mind threatens

(Continued On Page 2)

Opportunism — (Continued From Page 1)

to corrupt the life of the libertarian movement. Libertarians who stand by commitment to principle must expose these opportunist ventures and prevent any further inroads on the integrity of our movement . . ."

Undaunted by their defeat at the convention, the LR-SLS clique have continued and intensified their left-opportunism, virtually turning recent issues of *LR* into virtual organs for the dissemination of the views of the "libertarian" anti-nuclear scientist John Gofman. In the current (December) issue, *LR* goes so far as to flirt with the infamous boycott of Nestle for presuming to sell milk formula to Third World mothers who persist in mixing that formula with contaminated water. So what next, *LR*? There are three issues that the campus left has been pounding the drums on for the last several years: banning nuclear power, boycotting Nestle, and boycotting private investments in South Africa. When are you going to adopt the last plank? And while you're at it, why not try to find a "libertarian" rationale for coming out in favor of rent control; surely that would capture the urban masses, and convert them to libertarianism. Right?

3. The Situation in the Libertarian Party

The situation in the LP is more complex than the simple opportunist course on which the LR-SLS clique have embarked. Superficially, things seem fine; the platform, in particular, has become stronger and more radical with each passing convention. But this seeming strength masks important and growing structural weaknesses.

The major structural weakness in the LP is that its members are largely inattentive and uncaring about ideological concerns. The only time that ideological and political issues get discussed is two days every two years, during platform committee battles at national conventions. The rest of the time there is silence. There are no institutions in the LP whose job it is to educate party members on ideology or to promote discussion of the issues of the day. The *LP News* and state party newsletters are limited to news of the party and optimistic puffery — important services, to be sure, but then the vital matter of internal party education is lacking. (And those few state newsletters which do promote discussion confine themselves to unproductive personal bickering rather than intelligent discussion of the issues.) State and local parties do not meet regularly, and when they do, ideological and political issues are rarely discussed.

For Democratic or Republican parties to avoid discussion and hammering out of political viewpoints is perfectly legitimate; for they are not ideological parties, but simply cynical organizations for the obtaining and retaining of public office. But the Libertarian Party is an *ideological* party, a party devoted not to the mere attainment of office but to the spread of deeply held political principles and the rollback of the State on behalf of individual liberty. But what kind of an ideological party is it that shows little interest in subtle but important ideological or political issues? And indeed even exhibits irritation at the very mention of ideological problems? That is the kind of party which, unless the situation is remedied, is doomed to rapid and certain extinction as a force for ideological principle.

This situation is necessarily getting worse in proportion as the LP grows in money, votes, influence, and media attention. For if its *cadre* — its principled and knowledgeable activists — is not fostered, nourished, and intensified, then that cadre will inevitably be spread more and more thin in proportion to the growing number of LP members, voters, and sympathizers. In short, as the number of voters and members grows, and the cadre get weaker and certainly not larger, the vital cadre/member or cadre/voter ratio will inevitably fall — which will spell disaster for the LP as an instrument for the achievement of liberty.

So, as the LP grows, it becomes ever more vital to strengthen and increase the cadre of dedicated, knowledgeable libertarians. And yet, this is not happening at all; for the LP has shown no interest in this vital problem. It seems to think that money, ballot drives, and media hype will suffice for the victory of liberty. But that is the path to oblivion.

More specifically: the menace of opportunism comes now from two sources — external and internal. If the party grows substantially to become, as we have been promised, the third major party in the 1980 elections, then we can expect an influx of charlatans and political opportunists who will see a good thing and try to latch on to it to achieve office. Either assorted individuals and their followers will be joining the party, or organized political groups will join us specifically to take us over. Right now, there are

no restrictions on LP membership except the payment of nominal dues and the signing of a general non-initiation-of force pledge. And don't forget: insofar as we achieve permanent ballot status in the various states, we will not be able to restrict party membership at all. *Anyone* will be able to register as an LP member and to vote in the LP primary.

In order to combat such inevitable influxes we must promote the development of cadre — of a self-conscious, knowledgeable group of libertarians who know, not only that A is A and that self-esteem is good and that we are against aggression, but also know about the nuances of our ideology and can apply it in detail to the vital political issues of our day. And yet there are no LP institutions attempting to generate cadre and no interest in doing so. In fact, the cadre-building approach has been rejected under the smear term "Leninist."

In addition to the menace of external opportunism, there is also the inevitable temptation to internal opportunism — to sellout from within our own ranks. Already, this temptation has appeared, and has begun to be taken up. The temptations is to hide, blur over, and compromise on principle in order to attain: media respectability, votes, business support, support on campus, or whatever.

The first step of this dry rot has already taken hold — facilitated, as we have said, by the lack of cadre-building institutions in the LP. This step has been structural — the conscious decision to play down and bury ideological differences and, instead, to seize the levers of power within the party. There are two basic ways to push one's particular ideological or political "line" within a party. One is by open airing of differences, and, through persuasion and conviction, to build up a cadre of people within the party dedicated to one's own viewpoint. The other is to operate in secret and behind closed doors, to paper over differences, and to build up a bureaucratic political machine dedicated to the achievement and perpetuation of one's political power. The victory, then, comes not from persuasion and argument, but by bureaucratic maneuvering and manipulation, and by opportunistic power plays. And if the first method, that of cadre-building, can be smeared as "Leninist," then the second may far more justly be termed "Stalinist." This Stalinist method of bureaucratic maneuvering is the built-in method of opportunism, and is the first basic step toward later sellouts of fundamental principle.

Speaking of Stalin, we should all heed the lessons of the fall of Nikolai Bukharin, Lenin's favorite theoretician in the Bolshevik Party, and the head of its quasi-free-market wing in the 1920's. There were three major forces in the Bolshevik party after Lenin's death in the mid-1920's. Bukharin was the leader of the Right, who wanted to push forward to a quasi-free market economy something like present-day Yugoslavia. Leader of the Left was Trotsky, who wanted to press on from the mixed economy of the 1920's to full collectivization and central planning. And in the Center there was Stalin. In contrast to the brilliant theoreticians on his Left and Right, Stalin was little interested in ideology or principle but highly competent in the operation of bureaucratic power. Stalin at first sided with Bukharin; then, after Stalin knocked off Trotsky, he was able to cement his dictatorial rule and liquidate Bukharin. Bukharin was much better liked than Stalin even in the Communist Party and certainly in the country; why did he lose out? Basically, for two reasons: First, he was seduced by the view that all disputes must be ironed out behind closed doors, amongst the leadership of the Bolshevik party. Therefore, he failed to take issues to the public, where he could have won, and played the game on Stalin's own turf — the bureaucrats in the top layers of the party, who considered Bukharin a brilliant but impractical theorist. Secondly, Bukharin failed to realize that just because Stalin was apparently closer to him in ideology than to Trotsky did not stop Stalin from being the main danger. Bukharin should have formed a Left-Right coalition against the main menace, Stalin, but he failed to do so until it was too late. What he failed to see is that sometimes the main danger is not a person of opposing ideology but those who care little or nothing for ideology at all, and who simply wish to seize the levers of power.

Libertarians should heed the vital lessons of the fate of Bukharin. We do not have any Gulags in our society or party, but the lesson of the main menace of the rise of bureaucratic opportunism within an ideological party cannot be absorbed too strongly.

4. The Radical Caucus — the Last Best Hope

None of these gloomy but realistic considerations negates my well-known and repeated speeches and writings on The Case for Optimism over the last

(Continued On Page 3)

Opportunism — (Continued From Page 2)

few years. The case for optimism still exists, but it is, as always, confined to two parts: the objective conditions of our society, which provide us the best opportunity in a century for the rapid triumph of liberty; and the growth in influence and media attention of the Libertarian Party and of libertarian ideas and institutions offering us a way out of our chronic crisis of statism. But one point has always been left out — one vital hole in the case for optimism, in the hopes that that hole would soon close. But instead, this flaw has been widening rapidly — namely, the continuing sharp decline in the relative strength of libertarian cadre, both in the movement in general and especially in the LP. Despite the growth in money and influence and votes, it is doubtful whether actual cadre has grown in numbers at all over the past several years. Cadre has been stretched thinner and thinner, and, unless this situation is rectified soon, the result will be the collapse of libertarian principle in the midst of apparent success: a famine of libertarianism itself amidst the growing hoopla of prosperity, votes, and media hype.

Is there a way out? The only real hope is the fledgling Radical Caucus of the L. P. For the Radical Caucus is the *only* institution in the Libertarian Party dedicated to development and nourishing of cadre, to the strengthening of and the continued, never-ending stress on consistent principle. The Radical Caucus is brand-new, enjoying virtually no funding, and struggling to get organized on a nationwide basis. But even in this early formative stage, the Radical Caucus has held a successful and well-attended meeting at the LP Convention, and, largely through the truly heroic efforts of its editor, Justin Raimondo, has managed to put out the monthly *Libertarian Vanguard*, as an excellent and indispensable vehicle of analysis, education, and organization. The Radical Caucus is the only institution developing cadre, and it provides by far the best, if not the only, hope of stopping opportunism in its tracks before it has a chance to triumph completely.

The Radical Caucus has been subjected to a considerable amount of criticism, largely because of the flamboyance of much of its style and rhetoric. There is, for example, the title: isn't it needlessly provocative? There is a sense in which the critics of the title are correct. For perhaps a better title would be "The Libertarian Caucus" of the Libertarian Party. But apart from sowing confusion everywhere, such a title would, of course, be even more provocative than the current one. But it would be accurate: for the Radical Caucus is nothing if not a determined and ongoing call for the centrality of ideology and libertarian principle in the Libertarian Party — a central concern which is in danger of being lost in the glitter of more glamorous if ephemeral baubles and tinsels. And besides: the term "Radical" is particularly apt, for "radical" means at the root, and the RC sticks always to the root of all libertarian concerns: concentration on basic principle and its triumph in the world.

There have also been passing criticisms of the sometimes flamboyant rhetoric of *Libertarian Vanguard*. Well, there is room for sobriety and also for flamboyance, and in a well-functioning movement there will be plenty of both. These are minor matters, and undue stress on matters of style and rhetoric will eventually come to be seen as cloaks for real though hidden differences in substance; that is, for substantive disagreements with a principled, militant libertarian position. The important point is that Justin Raimondo deserves to be honored rather than denounced. In addition to launching the *Vanguard* and keeping it functioning and challenging and of high quality in the face of great odds, he has also always been intelligent, principled, and honest. After a lifetime in the libertarian movement, I have found these qualities to be pearls without price.

In a profound sense, then, the health of the Libertarian Party is a direct function of the status within it of the Radical Caucus. The winning Clark-Koch ticket was supported by the RC as clearly superior to its alternatives. Fine, but if we look at the directorate of the Clark campaign, we see a different and rather disquieting story. The campaign directorate consists of four people: Raymond Cunningham, ex-of San Francisco now of Connecticut, as campaign director; Edward H. Crane III, on leave from the presidency of the San Francisco-based Cato Institute, as "external" director, in charge of media and public relations; Chris Hocker, ex of the San Francisco area and ex-national director, as "internal" director, in charge of LP member activities; and an unnamed finance director, in charge of fund-raising. While Cunningham is nominally in charge, he is only part-time while residing and continuing to work in Connecticut, while Crane,

Hocker, and the fund-raiser will be full-time in Washington, and therefore in *operating* charge of the campaign. Over these four is a Steering Committee of eight, who themselves of course are not full-time and who meet periodically in different cities to set overall policy. These eight are Cunningham, Crane, and Hocker; Raymond's wife Carol, formerly co-chairman with her husband of the Clark for President Committee; Dallas Cooley, M. D., of Virginia, national treasurer of the LP and head of the Libertarian Health Association; Howie Rich of New York, in charge of ballot drives and floor manager for the Clark forces at the Los Angeles convention; Dave Nolan of Colorado, founder of the LP and first national chairman; and John Hilberg of Boston and New Hampshire. Of the eight, seven were Clark supporters before Los Angeles, with Hilberg being the sole Hunscher supporter; four hail from the same wing of the LP in San Francisco.

The important point here is that of the four directors and eight Steering Committee members, there is not a single member of the Radical Caucus. Originally, Clark himself and his managers had promised that Bill Evers, member of the Central Committee of the RC, would be on the Steering Committee; but, very shortly afterward, upon strong pressure from Ed Crane, Evers was bumped from the Steering Committee.

When we consider the national officers and the national committee of the LP, we also find not a single national officer or at-large member from the Radical Caucus; and of the members of the NatComm elected from the regions, there is only one RC member: Eric O'Keefe from Wisconsin. RC representation on the NatCom has been reduced from two to one.

This does not mean that all non-members of the RC constitute a monolith. Indeed, the NatCom is divided approximately 50-50 between the Crane-Koch "pro-professional" forces, and the Hunscher-Emerling "decentralists." More important during 1980 and perhaps for the future, is the fact that the Clark campaign structure is almost exclusively dominated by the Crane forces. But most important is that the RC has virtually no leading role in either the Clark campaign or the party structure.

But there is a cheery side of the coin in all this. Namely, that the RC is in an especially independent position; while backing the ticket, we are peculiarly free to call the shots as we see them, to warn, to point to trends, and, above all, to rally the party and the movement against the menace of opportunism, a menace which may well take concrete and disturbing form in the months and years ahead.

Above all, the important task ahead is to build the Radical Caucus, to make it as strong, as knowledgeable, and as extensive as we can. The real future of libertarianism as a political movement is wrapped up in the fate of the RC. As far as the campaign goes, we must realize, then, that the campaign is in *their* (non-RC) hands. They have their desired ticket and their desired control, a control which we have been assured is the leadership of the Best and the Brightest in the Libertarian Party, of the most competent, of the real professionals. OK. So it is now up to *them* to deliver on their promises to the rank-and-file of the Libertarian Party and to the libertarian movement. In essence, that promise is two-fold: to bring us a campaign that is (1) dedicated to and fully consistent with libertarian principle; and (2) will reap us several million votes in 1980, moving us to the status of third major party. That is what we voted for in L. A. and what we have been promised: a high-flying, genuinely libertarian campaign that will reap, let us say, 3-5 million votes.

I hope they do it. But if the campaign falls short in *either* department, then, after the 1980 election, there will have to be a mighty and thoroughgoing reassessment, in the immortal phrase of John Foster Dulles, an "agonizing reappraisal" of the Libertarian Party and where it has gone. Let us hope that such a reappraisal will not be necessary.

Appendix: RC Votes for National Committee

The at-large members of the NatCom were elected under the ludicrous and chaotic "cumulative voting" system, in which each delegate can vote for seven choices for the seven at-large seats, or can cast all seven votes for one person, or any combination in between. In short, each delegate could cast seven votes in any combination among the eighteen people running for the spot. *Libertarian Forum* has obtained the detailed, state-by-state voting for NatCom members, and from this we have constructed a tabulation of the total percentage of each state's votes that went to the three candidates from the Radical Caucus (Evers, Raimondo, and Rothbard). In this way,

(Continued On Page 7)

Law in Anarchy

Charles B. Olson

The libertarian movement upholds human rights, individual rights, as absolute. Libertarians believe that the individual has the right to live his (his/her) life and use his property as he chooses so long as he does not initiate the use or the threat of physical force against the person or property of anyone else. Law deals with the conflicts between men which arise when the above nonaggression axiom is violated.

Libertarians argue a great deal about how court/protection agencies (henceforth "courts") would operate in an anarchy: who chooses the court, what if anything determines the law, how many times can a person appeal, does a person have a right to trial by jury, etc. . . . Libertarian analyses in a wide variety of disciplines are characterized by methodological individualism: the analysis centers on the individual—his rights, his goals, his desires. The following analysis of law and justice centers on the victim and is based on a much ignored human right.

Not only does the individual have the right to life, liberty, property, the pursuit of happiness, and the right to defend himself and his justly-acquired property; he also has the right to bring about justice when any of his above rights have been violated. He is not required to have witnesses or to prove his case to anyone besides himself. If his rights have been violated, and he uses force against the aggressor to bring justice, then his actions are legitimate. Clearly if his actions are in excess of what is justified by the original crime, then he has not acted according to justice and has aggressed and should himself be brought to justice.

Justice

What is justice? Justice is an absolute. Judges, courts and scholars discuss justice, argue about it in specific cases, and try to approximate it in the real world; however there is only one justice: justice is what is fair. To go beyond this, one must distinguish between two very different types of crime: restitutable crime and nonrestitutable crime.

In restitutable crime, justice is restitution: restoring the victim to his former status. For example, in the case of theft, restitution is not only returning the stolen property, but also compensating the victim for the time and the cost of obtaining justice and for the mental anguish caused by the crime. Due to the "mental anguish" involved, restitution is not a simple matter. As a general approximation of restitution, Walter Block's rule of "two teeth for a tooth" works well. For example, if a man steals \$1000, he must return the original \$1000 plus an additional \$1000. Note the desirable trait of proportionality; note also that this rule is meant to approximate restitution and thus can and should be overruled for various specific cases.

Justice in the case of nonrestitutable crime is very difficult. It is proposed that the victim can rightly penalize the aggressor by an amount equivalent to the aggression which he has suffered. Thus in the case of murder, the victim can rightly demand (presumably in his will) that the murderer be executed. Similarly the victim of torture (of which rape is a special case) can demand that the torturer be tortured. Note that an externally equivalent amount of bodily harm or torture inflicted on the aggressor would not be equivalent to what was suffered by the victim. For while the aggressor is suffering punishment in return for a crime, the victim suffered an injustice, which he did not deserve. So once again as an approximation of justice, the "two teeth for a tooth" rule is called upon. Thus the victim of torture could torture the torturer for twice as long as the victim was tortured, and the victim of murder could request that his murderer die two deaths, or rather be tortured and then executed (or that the murderer forfeit his property to the victim's heirs, in addition to being executed).

The proposed sanction of retributive torture in a civilized society requires comment. We are primarily discussing the rights of victims: victims cannot be restituted. The question is: "Are these victims entitled to penalize their aggressors by an equivalent amount?" Though this is a matter for great discussion, I think that it is their right to do so. Note that no one is compelled to carry out the victim's wishes in these regards, and that the victim and only the victim may pardon the aggressor. Note that "torture" is not necessarily bodily torture: it could include confiscation of property.

Third Parties

When a victim uses force against an alleged aggressor to bring about justice, this use of force is rightly viewed with skepticism by all uninformed third parties. Do uninformed third parties have the right to defend an

alleged aggressor? Yes, so long as they do not know that the alleged victim's claim is legitimate. A third party who intentionally shields an aggressor from justice is a willing accomplice.

Courts

The right to bring about justice does not reside in a court: it rests fully and irrevocably with the victim. Courts may use force only insofar as they act on behalf of victims.

Courts have two functions: 1. to examine the evidence in a particular case and make a decision concerning the legitimacy of an alleged victim's claim; and 2. to use force to bring about justice on behalf of victims. Indeed each man is potentially a court. He sees the facts of a particular case, judges, and if he decides that the victim's claim is just, he may offer his help to the victim in obtaining justice. For his (or a court's) use of force to be legitimate, it must be on behalf of a legitimate claim, and in accordance with the victim's wishes. One small step brings us to a full-fledged court: someone who offers his services on behalf of justice professionally.

One may ask why an individual would pay for court services if he could get justice for free by his own use of force. Undoubtedly some would opt to use force directly. This has great disadvantages, however: 1. the victim must most likely face his former aggressor who may aggress against him again, especially if it seems that the victim is trying to enforce his claim with no aid or witnesses; 2. the victim is far more likely to overreach justice and thus incur liability than is a third party not involved in the crime; 3. the facts of the case will not be made public unless the victim does so himself, and so he will not only be losing a lot of potential allies, but he may also encounter uninformed third parties who defend the aggressor from him.

These three disadvantages are avoided by relying on a professional court. As pointed out above, anyone may call himself a court and act as a court. One may ask, "Would there be any courts of superior quality in such a system?" To answer this question, one must consider two cases: 1. the court as a cover for criminal activity; and 2. the court as a legitimate business. The first type of court is no more than a criminal gang, and it must be treated as such. Surely there would be courts of that nature, but before we deal with them further, let us consider the second case.

There would indeed be courts which would attempt to be legitimate businesses. By the very nature of the business, the court must strive to approximate justice as closely as possible so as to avoid liability. To do this, written law and learned judges are tremendous assets. Note that courtesy and efficiency are also assets; and that a court depends entirely on its reputation for its livelihood.

One may protest that multibillion dollar companies (or wealthy individuals) could own courts and give them the firepower to enforce whatever they like. They might do criminal acts, but the shroud of legitimacy is tremendously powerful and it would not be there. Compare what they might do with today's world; Would inefficient sugar producers in the South be willing or able to police every port and border to keep individuals from importing sugar? Who would launch (or even imagine) the ambitious scheme of forcing everyone in a certain locality to hire electricians of guild X when building houses? Who would try to enforce the monopolies of electricity, water, phone, and postal service? Ambitious crooks indeed. Would they succeed in taking 40% of the gross national income? Who would dare dictate what peaceful acts you may or may not do in your own home? Who would force the entire country to pay for the slaughter of the people of Southeast Asia? If you are afraid of arbitrary and absolute power, the choice is clear. Rip away the shroud of legitimacy. Aggression is aggression.

Rational men, who desire a just and peaceful resolution to their conflict, will find it in this system. A man who aggresses, who will not listen to reason, who lives by force, may find he can initially intimidate others and aggress against them for his own profit; however, this system, anarchy, gives him no shroud of legitimacy to hide in, and thus with his story being known and understood, he will find that his only potential allies are criminals like him, who cannot be trusted, and united against him he will find all good men who wish neither to aggress nor to be aggressed against.

□

Opportunism Revisited

The following previously unpublished, satirical warnings against opportunism were written by the editor of the *Lib. Forum* during the dark days of libertarianism in the early 1960's, when it seemed that (a) there were only a handful of libertarians in the country, and (b) one of the most important libertarians was leading us toward an egregious opportunist sellout. Both of these articles were *cris de coeur* against the sellout, "A Fable For Our Times" being written in May, 1961, and "A Modest Proposal . . ." being written in January, 1962. They were not published because there was then no conceivable outlet that might have published them. It is perhaps a telling lesson that the perpetrator of "positive" and "voluntary" opportunism is now long gone from the libertarian movement and has no current influence in social or ideological concerns; in a sense, he has cast himself permanently into the dustbin of history. But while he is gone, and while the particular cause of these satires is therefore no longer a problem for any of us, his case illustrates the essential nature of opportunism, and the contemporary reader may find an important resonance with the problems of today. Opportunism has many faces, but in a profound sense it is always the same. The "Fable" and the "Modest Proposal," therefore, may have relevance to our time and to the fate of libertarianism in the future. The fact that the person who gave rise to these responses is no longer a social force may also give us hope for the eventual triumph of liberty. — Ed. Note.

A. A Fable For Our Times

I

Once Upon A Time there was a peaceful valley. The people were happy in this valley; they worked, and they traded, and they laughed together. No man exerted force upon his neighbor, and all lived and prospered.

One day there came to this valley a roaming band of marauders, led by a gang leader, whom we shall call Hector. This band came with machine guns, and, as was their custom, they raped and looted at will among the people of the valley. As they were preparing, as usual, to put the whole valley to the torch ("for kicks," as one of Hector's Gang put it succinctly), one of their number, a brilliant young intellectual whom we shall call Iago, stopped them. "Look chief," said Iago. "Why don't we change our *modus operandi*? I'm getting pretty sick of all this roaming around, looking always for the next mark, the next victims, always on the run. This is an isolated spot, a beautiful spot. Let's settle down here, and run these people's lives. Then, we can milk them all the time, instead of killing them all and moving on." Hector was a shrewd gang chief, and he saw the wisdom of the idea. The gang settled down.

And so the robbery and the pillage became chronic instead of acute. Annual tribute was levied on the people, the Gang exercised power and dictation over them, and the Gang strutted around in uniforms, issuing orders. There was a great deal of resentment at first, the valley people muttered, and they began to form a People's Resistance.

Iago, the chief theoretician of Hector's Gang, explained to the chief that another great change in their methods was due, to fit the changed conditions. "These people outnumber us, chief. Even though they have no guns now, they could one day throw us out, and we'd lose the best deal we ever had. What we've got to do is *to make them like it*." Making them like it was the great task of Iago and his group of fellow-theoreticians, and Hector and his boys marvelled at the results. Iago fed to the people arguments like the following: "This isn't tribute, it's 'protection'. We have to protect you for your own good. Otherwise, you'd start killing and looting each other."

"That's right, he's right," the people muttered. "Hector and his gang may be a bunch of rowdies, but at least he's protecting us from ourselves." For the memories of the people are short.

And Iago went on: "This isn't tribute, it's 'protection'. We must protect you from those butcher-birds on the other side of the mountain." And these words took on a plausibility, for Hector's Gang, ever eager for loot, began to send probing parties to the other side of the mountain, and fighting periodically ensued. The people listened, and they agreed. "That's right. Hector and his boys might be a bad lot. But at least they're *ours*. They're not a bunch of foreigners like those people on the other side of the mountain. We need protection from them." The people forgot that there had been no trouble with the people on the other side of the mountain before. For the memories of the people are short.

"This is great, chief, but we need more measures and more theories to keep these suckers contented," said Iago. And Hector and Iago began to propagandize that all the people's children must be educated in schools owned and operated by Hector, Iago and their Gang. They called these schools "Valley Schools"; the "people's schools." "Anyone who doesn't educate his kid in a Valley School is undemocratic. He's anti-social and hates the people. In fact, he's Un-Valley." Iago's scholarly-inclined henchmen, calling themselves "economists" ("It's got a good Greek sound, chief,") preached that "everyone really benefits from being forced to pay for and attend Hector's Valley Schools because if A is educated, then B is better off, and therefore B should be forced to be educated, and A too . . ." And the people listened, and nodded their heads; and the scholarly-inclined among them listened and nodded their heads too; and pretty soon they became members of Hector's Gang, Scholarly Division.

What wonders were achieved by Making Them Like It! Hector and his original gang sent for all their relatives for hundreds of miles around; and they all came and joined Hector's Gang, and lived off the fat of the land. The rate of tribute kept increasing, and so did the numbers of the Gang. As the "take" kept going up, the People began to grumble again. Iago and his men exhorted and admonished the grumblers: "You are all selfish," they said, "because you don't want to contribute and serve your brothers." (The "brothers" were, of course, largely members of Hector's Gang). And the people, especially the moralists among them, nodded their heads and agreed. They agreed that anyone who kept opposing Hector and his Gang was "selfish, anti-social, and out for his own gain and greed."

And Hector and his Gang conscripted much of the valley people into a giant labor force to build the Gang a gigantic palace on top of the Valley's leading hill. It was a beautiful and imposing palace, so everyone said. A few people grumbled at this coercion and waste. Iago and his men thundered: "You miserable creatures! Here is a great monument that we have built, a monument to the glory and destiny and grandeur of Our Valley. And you, slackers and penny-pinchers, would deny Our Valley its monument." "He's right," the people said, glaring angrily at the grumblers. "This valley has the biggest palace of any valley in the land."

Periodically, Hector and his Gang would go fight the people on the other side of the mountain, to extend their territory and their area of loot. At these times, they needed more men to fight, and so they would again conscript valley people into their Gang. The conscripts, and all the people, were taught that any resistance to this conscription would not only be met with stern measures, but was also dire "treason" against the Valley and its rightful government, Hector's Gang. The old battle standard that Hector and his men used to raise before going into the next town, Hector and his Iago transformed into the "Valley's Sacred Flag"; anyone who did not bow down to that flag — or sing the old chanty that Hector and his Gang had always sung before going of for a fight — was also branded a "traitor" and dealt with accordingly.

Brilliant indeed were some of the theories that Iago and his men wove in the service of Hector and his Gang. For example, when an isolated Resister would point to the process of theft that was now organized and continuing, Iago's men said: "You know, you may have been right for the previous historical era. Nowadays, times have changed, and our thinking must change to suit the modern age. In the pre-Hector Era, this process was indeed robbery. Nowadays, it is cooperation for the common good and the welfare of the people of the Valley." And one of the more brilliant of Iago's Economists said: "You people don't realize that the money taken from you by Hector and his men benefit you all enormously. For Hector and his men spend their money — do they not? — in your shops and your markets. By this spending they give you employment, they circulate the money supply, they keep up mass purchasing-power, which is vital to the Valley Economy, and they provide "built-in stability" for the economic system of the Valley." The people listened, and they marvelled at the wisdom. And Iago's men put the theory into complex mathematical symbols; and the people marvelled, and Hector was overjoyed, and the more scholarly among the people listened, and they soon joined Iago's Division of Scholars.

We could go on indefinitely to delineate the fascinating social structure of this remarkable and surely unique valley. But the important point to note is that, by the marvel wrought by Iago's propaganda, the status of Hector and

(Continued On Page 6)

Opportunism Revisited —

(Continued From Page 5)

His Gang had completely changed from the old and almost-forgotten days. Where once Hector and His Gang skulked like criminals, were regarded by everyone with great contempt and hatred as criminals, and were perpetually on the run, now a revolution had truly occurred. Hector, Iago and the rest were not criminals but the Most Respected people in the land. Not only were they rich from their chronic annual loot; they were feted by all, loved and feared and honored by the people of the valley. Honors were heaped upon them all. And all because their theft had become regularized, openly proclaimed, and sweetly defended. Lolling on their divans, Hector contentedly said to Iago, "Boy, we never had it so good." Clapping Hector on the back, Iago said, "There's a sucker born every minute." And, in the meanwhile, Iago's men were speaking on the hustings before the people: "Our times call for great sacrifices, for the willingness to give." And the people listened, and they nodded their heads.

II

Generally, people agreed, or resigned themselves, to the rule of Hector. Those few people, here and there, not swayed by Iago's propaganda, were taken care of by the Gang. If they became too adamant, they were politely taken out and shot . . . as traitors to the Valley. "It's too bad," said the people, "and I thought I knew Jim. Of course, who could have known that he was a traitor?" Everyone agreed that stern times called for stern measures.

Meanwhile, what had happened to the remnant of the People's Resistance? They had no guns, the Resisters, but they fought on in the realm of ideas. "The spirit, the idea, of liberty must be kept alive," they said. And so they circulated among themselves their love for liberty and their recognition of who Hector and Iago and their men were and what they were doing. And the thing that gave them most sustenance was their shared credo: "Never forget. Hector is a thief. Hector is a murderer. Hector and his gang are crooks and tyrants, and, one day they shall be kicked out of this Valley." "Hector is a thief and murderer." And what is Iago? Iago the Resisters held in greater horror even than Hector. "For Iago," they pointed out, is a man of intellect; his is a uniquely moral failure. And Iago is keeping the regime alive by prostituting his intellect in the service of himself and Hector, by duping the people into acceptance. "Never forget about Hector and Iago," they told each other. "Never forget."

One day there arose among the Resisters a leader; he was young and strong and highly intelligent — a man of the truly heroic virtues. Affectionately, the Resisters called him The Leader. The Leader scorned the counsel of the Old Ones among the Resisters: the Old Ones had advised the Resisters to write and speak against tyranny only in the abstract; never to "get specific," never to mention Hector or Iago or any of their deeds. "The hell with that," the Leader thundered before a meeting of the Resisters. "No wonder the old ones are getting nowhere. We must write on the walls: Hector is a thief; Hector is a murderer; Iago is a prostitute and a consort of thieves and murderers. We shall drive them out!" The Resisters cheered this young man in a thunderous ovation. Their hearts were joyful; they had found their Leader.

The Resistance movement now grew and prospered. In their palace, Hector and Iago and their men were getting a little worried. "This damned Leader," they muttered. "He knows us too well. And when we call him a traitor, he throws the word right back in our teeth. He really hates us."

I have said before that Hector and Iago had effected a social revolution in the Valley. Before they had been criminals; now they were the most respectable and honored men of the Valley. Now, on the contrary, it was the Resisters who were the social outcasts, who were branded criminals and traitors, who achieved no respectability at all. Now it was the Resisters who had to lead a furtive existence.

III

One day, the Leader had a Revelation. He was struck by a New Concept. He was still young, but now he felt he had Matured. He called the Resistance together to explain: "I want you to know," he proclaimed, "that I will never abandon the Resistance. Our end — complete liberty — shall always remain unchanged. (Cheers.) But these are new times and they require new concepts and new methods to achieve our common goal. (Puzzled Murmurings.) We have been repeating, again and again, the old slogans: Hector is a thief, Hector is a tyrant, and so forth. These slogans

have become tired cliches; everybody knows them. (Murmurings: Everybody? Who but the Resisters have listened to them?) Furthermore, we can never convince anyone by remaining negative and always appearing to oppose change. Hector and Iago were in a sense right when they accused us of being sour and negative. From now on we must accent the positive! What we must do is show them: to show Hector and Iago and all the rest that our way is better than theirs. That we can achieve more good more efficiently by voluntary methods than they can by coercion. Let us abandon sterile and negative slogans, and let us show them by our actions and our deeds that the voluntary way is the better way."

The Leader was, as always, eloquent, and it was easy to sway the bulk of the Resisters. "Let's at least give it a try," said the bulk of these hungry, weary, and embattled men. And so the leader went up and down the valley, preaching the new gospel of the Positive. Soon he found that, where once he was treated as an outcast among the Best People, he now found doors flung open wide in greeting. "You're right," said more and more of the wealthy and the respected; "In the old days, when you and the others were going around denouncing Hector and Iago, you were just a bunch of radical crackpots. Now, by God, you're doing something constructive. And you're not making people mad by attacking folks and institutions that they respect." Funds and support poured into the Leader's New Resistance movement. The emphasis of the New Resistance was on the positive, voluntary way. "Hector and Iago claim that theirs is the best way to promote social welfare," the Leader thundered in a speech. "Hector and Iago claim that compulsion is needed, for example, for the worthy goal of feeding and housing Hector's relatives. But we know that the voluntary methods of private people can do that job better and more efficiently. Let us show them!" The crowd cheered, and soon funds poured in for such projects as the voluntary care and feeding of the relatives of Hector. "Never attack the high rates of tribute," the Leader warned his men of the New Resistance; "if we show the whole Valley that we can do the job by voluntary means, if we feed and clothe and house Hector's relatives, for example, then Hector will eventually lower the rates of tribute. Let us be up and moving!"

And so the money poured in . . . from Resistance men and others, voluntarily swelling the coffers of Hector and his Gang. The old Resistance men abandoned their old negative preaching, and got down to the hard, practical task of raising money for voluntary gifts for Hector's pet projects — to show Hector and all the rest the superiority of the Voluntary Way. And what was the reaction of Hector and Iago and the rest? They sat at their periodic board meeting of the Gang, reviewing the new stance of the Leader and the Resistance, and they did only one thing: they laughed, and they laughed, and they laughed. And finally Iago recovered a bit, and he said: "So, the sheep themselves have supplied us with their own Judas goat!", and they all roared again with laughter.

It was not long before the Leader was wined and dined by Hector, Iago and the rest, was asked to serve on consulting committees, was asked to demonstrate ever more in action how the voluntary way could add to the Gang's coffers. At a great annual convention of the Gang, with many Resistance men this time invited, Iago, in his speech, turned to The Leader, now seated also at the dais, and he said: "Let us never forget, my friend, that our ends remain always the same. It is only our means that differ. Let us employ both yours and our means, and then let us achieve our common goal in the best way." (Resounding cheers from everyone.)

And so, what even Iago, with all his wiles, had been unable to quite achieve, was now achieved; and peace and harmony had been fully restored to the valley. The Resisters were now loyal, positive, and generous, and their former bitterness and hatred had been transmuted into friendly and willing cooperation with Hector and His Gang.

Of course, there are always a few malcontents in every society, a few rotten apples in every barrel. A couple of the Resisters began to mutter: "The Leader said tribute would go down, if we voluntarily supplied the rest; but, instead, tribute has gone up." ("There are new needs for a troubled time," said Iago's men; "Patience, we shall demonstrate . . ." said the Leader's men.) One malcontent Resister said to another. "At least in the time of the Old Ones we could attack robbery and tyranny in the abstract; now we can't even do that." And, secretly, covertly, in the dead of the night, tiny groups of dissenting Resisters met, and told one another: "Hector is a thief. Hector is a murderer . . ."

And one day a wondrous thing came to pass. As the Leader strode
(Continued On Page 7)

Opportunism Revisited —

(Continued From Page 6)

confidently to a meeting with Hector and the others in Hector's splendid palace, he chanced to look into one of the fine mirrors in the hall. Truly, a miracle had been wrought; for when the Leader looked into the mirror, the face he saw was the face of Iago.

B. A Modest Proposal to the XYZ Foundation for the Advancement of Individual Liberty

by Mefistofele, Jr.
(with apologies to C. S. Lewis)

Dear Sirs:

I know that for several years you have devoted your efforts to advancing individual liberty and rolling back the tide of statism in America. I believe I can make an important contribution to the dialogue now under way about the proper strategy toward advancing our Cause.

I cannot agree more with those who say that all doctrinaires and "purist" libertarians be avoided like the plague. This is surely the most important plank in any strategy platform. Those people who are totally opposed to statism and totally favor liberty are highly dangerous . . . or, rather, highly embarrassing and inconvenient people. That their influence is nil is proven by their obvious status as a tiny minority. Surely such extremists, with their constant and tiresome ranting about "principle" and "consistency," can only be excess baggage for the cause; surely also they can never gain that respectability which is so necessary for maximum influence. The important thing is not pie-in-the sky principle but here-and-now influence on the citizen and voter. Furthermore, these doctrinaire "purists," by their very commitment to principle and logic, demonstrate not only their lack of good breeding but also their abandonment of true intellectuality; genuine intellectuality, *non*-commitment, from *non*-dedication, from that form of the "open mind" which is *always* ready to "adjust" to any type of measure, however despotic, that is enacted. Any other way is both anti-intellectual and unrealistically doctrinaire. Only *that* type of mind can really advance the libertarian cause we all hold dear.

While, gentlemen, you have been pursuing many aspects of this program, you have not, I believe, done it with enough consistency (which in *this* case is needed.) Certainly Milton Friedman is infinitely preferable to Ludwig von Mises, and A. F. Burns to Friedman but by the same token, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., Paul Samuelson, and J. Kenneth Bakbraith are still more preferable. *They* have even greater influence and respectability. A program of heavy support for such leaders of opinion as Galbraith, Schlesinger, etc. will have far greater impact than any other we could imagine. Such a program would also have another prime advantage: it would *not* be doctrinaire libertarian, and it would *confuse* the statist opposition, because *no one would ever be able to detect that you were anti-socialist and anti-statist!* Think of the advantages that *that* would bring! Remember, you must always conduct yourselves in such a way that no one could suspect you might have any libertarian inclinations. It is only in this way that the libertarian cause can finally be victorious.

There is also another thing that the purists forget. The *real* enemy of liberty is not the State, but a particular *type* of statism — those evil and secret plotters who form the International Communist Conspiracy. Let us keep our concentration on *this* menace, and use all powers of the State to fight it on every front; thus we keep our liberty secure, and we achieve the aim of liberty without using utopian doctrinaire means. Let us not forget then that such thinkers as Schlesinger, Jr., Galbraith and Samuelson are dedicated anti-Communists and are therefore perfectly deserving of libertarian support and gratitude.

It is important, then, that these troublesome "purists" be induced to keep their mouths shut about liberty and the State. Let us hew to more moderate, more practical, and realistic courses. Let us above all show our good will by *never attacking* the government; Americans are positive-minded people, and don't like negative carping against government. Let's show the leftists that we can do their programs better if they only give us a chance.

One example and I must conclude. The tiresome purists are always ranting against conscription. Let us place our emphasis more positively; let us rather say that we shall inaugurate a program of educating the American

people to such an extent that they will wish to enlist in large numbers in the armed forces (let us show them how rewarding an army career can be, spiritually as well as economically) so that, eventually, conscription can be de-emphasized. If we work hard enough, then everyone will *want* to offer themselves as slaves . . . I mean, patriots . . . so that conscription will only be necessary as a last resort for the few recalcitrants.

I see great days ahead, gentlemen of the XYZ Foundation, as we go on to implement this program. One thing more, however: it will be necessary to form some sort of "general staff" of conservative and libertarian groups to see to it that these troublesome purists are properly supp . . . that is, coordinated. Then there will really be smooth sailing on the Road to Liberty, which should be achieved by about . . . 1984, don't you think?

Ever yours,
Mefistofele, Jr.

□

Opportunism — (Continued From Page 3)

we are able to gauge the extent of RC support in each state, and compare it to the national average.

State	Radical Caucus
Alabama	17.1
Alaska	10.1
Arizona	7.9
Arkansas	0
California	15.5
Colorado	10.2
Connecticut	16.7
Delaware	47.6
D. C.	21.4
Florida	20.0
Georgia	22.4
Hawaii	25.0
Idaho	64.3
Illinois	7.5
Indiana	10.7
Iowa	2.6
Kansas	11.9
Kentucky	9.5
Louisiana	12.2
Maryland	8.6
Massachusetts	0
Michigan	34.3
Minnesota	10.2
Mississippi	0
Missouri	10.7
Montana	38.1
Nebraska	0
Nevada	1.0
New Hampshire	0
New Jersey	19.0
New Mexico	0.7
New York	8.9
North Carolina	23.2
Ohio	14.3
Oklahoma	0
Oregon	4.1
Pennsylvania	8.2
Rhode Island	0
South Carolina	17.1
Tennessee	2.4
Texas	1.9
Utah	25.7
Vermont	0
Virginia	8.6
Washington	5.4
Wisconsin	6.6

United States

11.6

Billboards

by Walter Block

The anti-billboard mania is alive and well. It is all too easy to blame the garishness and even presence of billboards for practically all the evils facing mankind: traffic accidents, ill temper, bad manners, commercialization, etc. But before falling in with the view that billboards should be prevented at all costs, we must take a long and careful look at this doctrine.

One important thing to realize is that there *are costs* to the prevention of billboards and other types of transportation advertising. For these advertisers are ready, willing, and able to *pay for* this advertising outlet; and the more they pay, the less the travelers must pay. This is true for both public and private modes of transit. In the case of public transit, this is easy to see. If the public transit authority obtains more from advertisers, it will need less of our money in the form of taxes, other things being equal. (Bureaucrats, of course, being bureaucrats, are heavily subject to Parkinson's famous Law, which predicts that bureaucratic expenditures will always rise to meet the amount of money available, no matter how high.) It is a little less easy to see in the case of private transportation, but it is the more certain for all of that.

Profits, it is well known, always tend toward equality in different industries, given the factor of risk. Any inequality in profit returns over industries sets up pressures to disinvest in the highly profitable industry, thus driving its rate of return down, and to invest in the less profitable industries, thus driving up the rate of profit there. With the profit rates falling in the profitable industries, and rising in the less profitable industries, this tendency toward equality is assured.

Traveling costs would fall in the private transportation industry if advertising were introduced, but *not* because the entrepreneurs would public-spiritedly pass along the advertising revenues to the travelers. Oh, NO! The entrepreneur is not in business to save money for the traveling public. He is in business to make profits, large profits. The reason that traveling costs would fall is because everyone else is also in business to maximize profits. If revenues suddenly increased because of advertising, without any decrease in other revenues or increase in other costs (I assume that the advertiser pays for his own billboards), then profits in that industry must rise. But if profits in the industry rise, then other entrepreneurs will enter to take advantage of the lucrative prospects in the transit industry. And when others enter with their investments, this causes a fall in prices to the consumer, so that profits can fall. If prices do not fall, or do not fall enough so as to bring the rate of profit in the transit industry back toward equality with the other industries, then more entry will take place and prices will continue to fall until equality is approached.

One can only speculate, but it seems reasonable to suppose that if the anti-billboard contingent declared how much extra fares would be required

if billboards were prohibited, or alternitavely how much of an increased fare present advertising is forestalling, they would enjoy much less support for their anti-billboard message.

The second ground for support of billboards is that far from causing accidents, they are an important part of the arsenal supporting traffic safety. One of the greatest causes of traffic accidents is *boredom*. Boredom allows the driver to lose the sharp edge of caution; it allows his thought to wander far afield; it robs him of the attentiveness (even if subconscious) he needs for safe driving. One of the greatest antidotes to boredom, as it happens, is billboard advertising. Especially the garish, attention-demanding, stark, sharp, showy, ostentatious, flashy billboards, the kind most hated by the forces of reaction — the would be billboard-banishers.

The aesthetic issue is closely intertwined with the question of boredom. For a boring landscape can hardly be characterized as aesthetically pleasing. Most aestheticians extol the beauties of the untrammelled landscape. But we must seriously question a theory of aesthetics that takes no account of boredom. Mother Nature may be beautiful to view for landscape painters who may have no need for the pop art that billboards can provide; but for the travel-weary motorist, whizzing along at 65 miles per hour, the nuanced contrast of nature may not be readily apparent. Often, all that is perceivable at that speed is a blur. At 65, it is almost true of nature that "if you have seen one mountain, you have seen them all", except perhaps for the most garish, stark, sharp, showy, ostentatious, and flashy mountains. At that speed, a billboard can provide the contrast necessary for aesthetic appreciation, to say nothing of sanity. But the builders of modern highways go even further. Not only do they not allow billboards; in seeming horror at anything man-made, they have virtually banished everything of interest from view: houses, stores, farms, farm buildings, anything. Thus, the traveler on the modern highway is treated to a view of continuous road landscaping, courtesy of the highway planners. He is deprived of any inkling of how the people in an area live or work seemingly in fear that the traveler may learn something, or become interested in anything other than what the planner has decided he shall see.

Perhaps most important, the placing of billboards at prominent places along our highways allows for the dissemination of information, the introduction of new products to the consumer, and even more, for the exhortation to consumers to try new things. These values have been derided by the planning mentality, which brooks no changes except those it had wrought itself. But the general public need not fear signposts along the road with the maniacal devotion shown by the billboard banners. There is nothing to fear except fear itself.

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