

ARE THEY CROOKS OR FOOLS?

– A TIME FOR PLAIN SPEAKING –

by
John Whiting

When a politician undertakes to lead the people to the Promised Land but pushes them in the opposite direction, it must mean either that he knows what he is doing in which case he is a crook, or else that he does not know what he is doing in which case he is a fool. The only other possibility is that he is part crook and part fool.

The Author

Also by John Whiting

Be in it, Mate!
Wake up, Mate!

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to all those people everywhere who believe that governments have become too big, too powerful and too expensive, and who are sufficiently concerned and open-minded to consider new ideas.

BIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHOR

John Whiting was born in Adelaide in 1920 and educated at St. Peter's College and the Adelaide University where he originally studied Law. This course, however, was interrupted by service in World War II when, as a member of the R.A.A.F., he was attached to Bomber Command in Britain and captained Lancasters, operating over Germany and Italy.

After discharge from the Air Force, John Whiting signed on as a deck-hand on a tramp steamer and returned to the U.K. During these restless years he travelled and worked in Europe and the Middle East in an assortment of occupations including that of garage attendant, roughneck and derrickman on oil rigs in Kuwait, and as a publicity man in the British film industry.

Returning to Australia in 1950, he later married and at the age of 34 embarked on a medical course, graduating in 1960. After three years of post-graduate training, he set up in general practice on his own in Adelaide. During this period, he wrote two books, became actively involved in medical politics and helped to form a new political party nationally. He stood (unsuccessfully) for the Senate in the 1975 elections – not because he wanted to become a politician but because he believed that Australia was in deep trouble under the Whitlam socialist government and that the opposition Liberal Party under Malcolm Fraser was only marginally better.

Disgusted with the ever-increasing interference into Medicine by the politicians and public bureaucrats, he decided to call it a day and in 1982 retired from the profession he loved and which he had striven so hard to enter. His immediate post-medicine years were devoted, in association with his wife, to building up a small but successful marketing business.

Today, John Whiting lives quietly in Cairns with his loving wife, good friends, large library of assorted books and dreams of a saner world.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As this book is a book about ideas, it would be impossible for me to acknowledge everyone who has influenced my thinking. In my introduction, I acknowledge some of those who have already made their names on a bigger stage. Here I talk about those who are living, or who have lived, their lives on a smaller stage.

It all began with my parents, George and May Whiting, both now dead, who taught me that the greatest word in the English Language is 'why' and who encouraged me to question what other people take for granted. This is probably the reason that at the age of ten, in the school chapel, I refused to say one particular passage of the Apostle's Creed as it did not appear to me to make sense. I have long since forgotten which passage it was. I would like to think that it was the piece about Jesus being conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary, but I seriously doubt whether, in those days, a boy of ten would have known the meaning of the words 'conceived' and 'virgin'. I also remember, as a schoolboy, defying the headmaster's specific instructions and getting away with it. I later had reason to suspect that he knew of my disobedience but saw some merit in my stand and turned the blind eye to it. As a member of the Royal Australian Air Force in Britain during World War II, I once had strong words to say to my English Commanding Officer at the time, Wing Commander 'Darky' Hallows, who threatened me with the direst of consequences for my insubordination and then promptly promoted me. I also recall, as a junior officer, questioning an order given to me personally by Air Vice-Marshal The Hon. R.A. Cochrane and subsequently being praised by him when my course of action was vindicated. As a young man, I learnt that one does not have to toe the line in order to earn respect. I am eternally grateful to all these people who taught me this lesson so early in my life.

Over the years, there have been many more such people, far too many to mention by name, who have played their parts in helping me to develop as a person and to crystallize my thinking. This does not mean that each of them would necessarily agree with all that I have written for I know that a few of them at least, would almost certainly not. Nevertheless, I should like to mention my brother, Peter, Philip Astley, Andrew Buttfield, Nelson Cartney, Graham Fletcher, Andrew George, Ewan Hutchison, Les Huxley, John and Jill Hyland, Peter and Galina Kalinovsky, Peter Kentwell, John Kerrison, Roger MacBride, Ron Manners, Verna Oakley, Ron Plachy, Bruce and Bell Vyden, Peter Wells, John Weil, David Wigg, Duncan Yuille, Graham Zacker and many more who in their own different ways were either an inspiration, an encouragement or a help.

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To my wife, Millicent, known as 'Buzz', who has been my best friend for over half a century I give thanks beyond measure.

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INTRODUCTION

It is only fair for me to point out in the first paragraph that this is not a book for everyone. If the would-be reader is so firmly set in his views that he is easily upset when someone challenges his long-held opinions, this book is not for him. If he considers straight-talking and calling a spade a spade to be an affront to civilized behaviour, this book is not for him either. If he believes that holy-men, university professors, employers, union representatives, teachers, politicians or newspaper editors are the fount of all wisdom, it would be better for him if he quietly put the book down now and read a comic instead.

Although this book is about politics with some economics thrown in, it is not a book about particular politicians, their petty foibles or the manner in which they may have clawed their way up the ladder only to fall off it when they reached the top. In this book, there is never an attempt made to prove that A is B or that B is A with the help of statistics and graphs. There does not need to be for this is a book about ideas – good ideas and bad ideas – and how good ideas produce good results and how bad ideas produce bad results.

If the reader has an enquiring mind, he will have already begun wondering how it was ever possible for so many politicians, in so many different countries, for such a long period of time, to have made such an almighty botch of their jobs. An engineer, somewhere and at some time, might build a bridge that falls down. A surgeon has been known to amputate the wrong leg. Once in a while, a pharmacist will dispense the wrong medicine and, very occasionally, an airline pilot forgets to put his wheels down before landing. These botches, however, are all rare events. On the other hand, when it comes to politicians, their whole working lives are one huge botch, if a botch is to be measured by the harm that is done to vast numbers of people.

We should never forget that the politicians in a democratic society are put into their positions of power by people such as ourselves, so it is not altogether fair for us to lay all the blame at their feet when most people would probably not have done any better themselves, had they been our 'leaders'. There are, nevertheless, a surprisingly large number of people who would not agree with me on this point, as they believe that they have the answer to bad government and to the shambles that is the inevitable result of it. In fact, they usually find it difficult to understand how anyone could be so stupid as not to see what they consider to be so obvious. Invariably, their solution is, for all practical purposes, the same. It runs something like this :- "what the Country really needs is a benevolent dictator who would put into effect a series of edicts such as I happened to think up this morning whilst I was eating my Corn Flakes." Knowing that the word 'dictator' has an unsavoury ring about it, they invariably prefix it with the word 'benevolent', not realizing that the two words when put together become a contradiction in terms. When these advocates of a benevolent dictatorship are pressed on their subject, we soon learn that all those people of whom they disapprove such as young people with rings through their noses, idlers, 'ferals', spongers, homosexuals, 'druggies', 'greenies' and other 'undesirables' would be rounded up, put into special camps, and made to do useful community work such as repairing roads, cleaning out government sewerage plants and retrieving coal from the bowels of the earth. As for the unemployed, they would be conscripted under another edict and for their own good be put into the army for a

couple of years where they would be properly disciplined and taught something useful in life such as how to march, polish their shoes, fire a rifle and salute their superiors.

All this tells us much about ourselves. It tells us, above all else, that most people do not have the foggiest notion how to get their countries out of the mires into which they have fallen. It also tells us how philosophically bereft so many otherwise intelligent people really are. When most people do not seriously think about such a problem, or else fail to recognize that there even is a problem at all, and when a significant number of others believe that the only way to solve the problem is to set up a dictatorship and put the boots into those whom they do not like, it can mean only that the educational system, world-wide, has done an appallingly bad job of cultivating minds.

This book puts a completely different point of view to that served up by today's educators. I hope it will make some people think as the ideas have made me think. Although this book is mine and I take full responsibility for it, the ideas in it are far from all mine. In fact, most of the good ideas in it are the ideas of people who had far better brains than I. I do not say this from any sense of false modesty for some of these people were mental giants by any objective criterion. On the positive side, some will recognize the input of such people as Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, John Locke, Adam Smith, The Founding Fathers of the USA, Frederick Bastiat, Ayn Rand, Ludwig von Mises, F.A. Hayek, Henry Hazlitt and many others. On the negative side, one may sense the input of such people as Plato, St. Paul, St. Augustine, Kant, Hegel, Auguste Comte, Rousseau, John Dewey, Karl Marx, Lenin, Hitler, John Maynard Keynes, Eric Fromm, Herbert Marcuse, Mao Tse Tung, John Kenneth Galbraith and others.

This is not meant to give the impression that this book is a learned philosophical treatise because it is not. What it is, in essence, is an attempt to explain the fundamental principles of politics and to point out the reasons why politicians do what they do even though their decisions will lead to almost certain disaster.

When I was a final year medical student, I was almost overwhelmed by the amount of material that I was obliged to read and absorb. What I needed, particularly in Surgery, was a book that could get down to the bare bones of a problem and explain it simply. I found such a book. It was entitled 'The Foundations of Surgery' by George Perkins who was at the time Professor of Surgery at the London University. It is a small book both in dimensions and in the number of its pages but it is a masterpiece of simplicity and clarity in which Perkins showed that he had the unique ability to get to the very core of a problem. It helped me to pass my surgery exams. In the preface to his book, George Perkins states that "The title is intentionally grandiose in order that a student need not be ashamed to be seen reading it in a train. It should, of course, be called 'Surgery for Toddlers' ". I would like to think that my book could be called 'Politics for Toddlers' being a simple, straight-forward, 'no holds barred', no humbug exposition of the subject which cuts through all the waffle and nonsensical ideas and gets to the very core of problems.

I should point out now that I believe very strongly that all human beings have equal rights regardless of their sex, race, age, religion etc. I have never considered men

as superior beings nor women as inferior beings. Having said that, let me point out that I refuse to be subjected to all the silly nonsense called 'political correctness' that insists that I abuse the English language merely to appease a few belligerent feminists. I refuse to write 'he and she', 'him and her' and 'men and women' (or should it be 'women and men'?) every time I wish to speak of people in general. I prefer to respect the intelligence of the reader who will know that 'he' means 'he and she' and 'man' means 'man or woman' unless it is otherwise obvious. Nor will I use any of those hideous new words such as 'humankind', 'spokesperson', 'chairperson' and all the other modern monstrosities. If anyone does not wish to accept me on these terms, then that is one more reason for him or her (or is it her or him?) not to read this book. She or he would only be upset by it anyhow.

I have written each section so that it can be read as a separate entity. This means that there may be some minor doubling up of material. On balance, I believe that the advantages of this approach will far outweigh any disadvantages. I have also kept the book small and the sections short for easy reading and easier reference. One of the great advantages for an author in writing a small book, as opposed to a large book, is that he knows that his book will never end up as a doorstop.

THE PROBLEM

THE PROBLEM

.....government, even in its best state, is but a necessary evil; in its worst state, an intolerable one.

*Thomas Paine (1737 – 1809)
(Common Sense)*

The political, economic and social systems of most countries are in disarray. It would not be an overstatement to describe them as chaotic.

On the National and State levels, it is virtually impossible to find anything associated with governments that works properly. Periodically, we experience massive unemployment (especially amongst the young). Taxation in all its manifold forms is at crippling levels so that for many people there is very little incentive for them to work hard. Inflation, or the threat of it, is for ever with us and this, in the short term, benefits some people and harms others but, in the long term, harms nearly everyone. Interest rates go up and down at the whim of politicians and public bureaucrats, once again benefiting some people and harming others. There is barely a person in our various countries who is not, either directly or indirectly, benefiting from a government hand-out of some sort. Hundreds of thousands of laws, rules and regulations embrace all aspects of people's lives and slowly throttle commerce and industry. Government medical schemes stumble from crisis to crisis. The legal and judicial systems are decaying and the Law Courts, only sometimes, dispense justice. The teaching system (I'm loathe to call it an educational system) is third-rate and has become largely a medium for the indoctrination of the young. Large numbers of small businesses struggle to survive. Serious drug-taking is rampant. Crime (much of it violent) is escalating. Corruption in government circles is commonplace. One could go on and on.

In spite of this appalling record, the myth is perpetuated that our present system of politics, although far from perfect, is nevertheless highly successful and far superior to anything that has ever previously been considered. Current economic doctrines are rarely questioned; in fact, the whole subject of economics is considered to be little more than a necessary appendage to politics.

Very few critics ever seem to ask why it is that, today, scientists and technologists have devised ways to conquer space; to fly faster than the speed of sound; to listen to voices spoken and view events occurring, almost immediately, thousands of miles away; to design and manufacture complex computers; to derive power from atoms and the sun; to perform complex heart surgery, organ transplants and so on, yet the best that those in the so-called humanities can do is to flounder in their understanding of philosophy, politics and economics which as branches of learning are as child's play compared to the pure sciences and advanced technology. Yet it is these university academics in the philosophy, politics, economics and the so-called 'social science' faculties who have the profoundest effect on our politicians and public bureaucrats. If, therefore, these teachers should flounder in their respective subjects, it should not surprise us that most of their pupils and followers should flounder also.

If government is the creator of social chaos, why do we not simply change the government and let the opposition try its hand? As we all know, not so long ago the opposition did try its hand and the same sort of disasters prevailed as they did with the government before that and the one before that. Nothing of significance ever really changes. Why should this be so? Could it possibly be that all governments – in fact, all political parties regardless of their distinctive titles – accept the same philosophic principles, the same political ideals and the same economic doctrines? Well, believe it or not, they do. They all accept a philosophy deeply rooted in the concept of altruism. This philosophy does not mean merely kindness and regard for others. It means much more than this. It means that the welfare of others must become the highest value and overriding purpose of every man's life. Altruism is a secularized version of the Christian concept of self-sacrifice. Whereas Christianity maintains that man is obliged to sacrifice himself to God, altruism maintains that man is obliged to sacrifice himself to 'society'. Altruism maintains that a man does not have a right to exist for his own sake but that service to others is the only justification for his existence. Altruism raises self-sacrifice to the level of a moral duty. To put the philosophy of altruism simply, one could say that any action taken for the benefit of others is noble whereas any action taken for one's own benefit is devoid of virtue; or to put it even more simply – man is his brother's keeper and don't you dare forget it!

The concept of altruism has given rise to the 'do-gooders' of this world. Here I am not referring to people who do good but to those people who feel obliged to push other people around because they claim to possess some special insight which enables them to know what is best for everyone! It is no accident that the philosophy of altruism also laid the foundations for the cults of Socialism, Communism, Fascism and Nazism – the cults that left behind them a trail of brutality and death unparalleled in the history of mankind. It would probably not be unrealistic to assert that all the tragedy occasioned by all the individual criminals who have ever lived would not come anywhere near the extent of the tragedy that was inflicted upon people by the altruistic 'do-gooders' of the twentieth century.

It is the philosophic concept of altruism that also gives us the Welfare State and the Mixed Economy which is the method by which governments finance it. It is the philosophic concept of altruism that also gives us two other madcap ideas that have captured the meagre minds of most of today's 'intellectuals'. The first of these is the meaningless concept of 'the common good' (or 'the public good' or 'the national interest'). It is meaningless because the 'common good' of a society is regarded by its advocates as something different and superior to the individual good of its members. This means that the good of some people must take precedence over the good of others, with 'the others' being considered as people of lesser consequence or even at times as human trash. If the reader should hesitate over the wording of this statement, let him reflect upon the motivation that lay behind the cold-blooded mass extermination of many Poles, Ukrainians, Russians, Jews, Gypsies and other such so-called 'undesirables' by the German Nazi Government mainly during the Second World War. These vile acts were perpetrated and condoned 'in the national interest' not necessarily by animal-like monsters but by men and women who believed that the German race was in danger of being polluted by 'lesser breeds'. Many of the perpetrators and those who condoned these heinous crimes were not essentially any different from those men and women today who claim not merely to

know what is best for the country but who claim a 'right' to put their ideas into effect and sacrifice anyone who stands in the way of the attainment of their goal. That the present-day advocates of 'the common good', 'the public good' or 'the national interest' should stop short of mass extermination and confine their ruthless activities 'merely' to depriving others of their liberty, or ruining them economically, or stealing their property, is supposed to be indicative of a more civilized behaviour!

The second silly and ultimately disastrous philosophic concept that has its origins in altruism and has emerged in recent times is that which brings into being a steady stream of isolated, contradictory and pragmatically inspired 'rights'. 'Rights', today, have become almost anything that people want them to be. When people want a house, their politicians tell them that they have 'a right to a house'. When they want a job, their politicians tell them that they have 'a right to a job'. So it goes on – 'a right to education', 'a right to good health', 'a right to three square meals a day', 'a right to a fair wage', 'a right to social welfare', 'a right to the dole'. It is only a matter of time before it will be claimed that people have 'a right to own a pet', 'a right to have a wife', 'a right to have a husband', 'a right to have children', 'a right to own a motor car'! Let us consider all these so-called 'rights' for a moment. If a person does not have some of these 'things' but wants them, and if governments tell him that he does, indeed, have a right to such 'things', then that person can surely demand them. This means that some other person, or persons, must supply the 'things' even if they do not wish to supply them or else are able to do so only at the cost of great personal hardship. It means that some people must be forced to supply money, goods or services (or all three) against their will, and then on terms arbitrarily set by the government. In plain language, this makes the enforced supplier of the good or the service the other's slave. Children are now being taught that they have almost limitless rights. What they are not being taught is that these so-called 'rights' can only be had by trampling on the rights of other people – by pushing them around and by stealing their property. Some philosophy – and all carried out in the name of what is hypocritically called 'a free society'!

If people want to know whether 'a thing' is a right or not, they should ask themselves this question: 'if it is my right, is it obtained at someone else's expense?' If the answer is 'yes' then it is fatuous to claim 'the thing' as 'a right'.

If people are ever to live in a civilized society, it must be legally recognized that a person has a right to his or her own life and, as a consequence, the right to sustain that life and all the other rights that follow, in logic, from it. To conceive of rights in any other manner is destined to create a philosophic, political and economic nightmare of gigantic proportions.

As the intelligent reader will, no doubt, have now deduced, principles (as guiding rules) are not rated highly in the 'intellectuals' moral code and this introduces us to yet another philosophic concept that is accepted by all political parties not only in my own Country but in most, if not all, others as well – and that is the concept of 'Pragmatism'. In simple language, the pragmatist shuns principles and assesses the value of ideas and actions by the practical results that they achieve. If the immediate end-result is deemed to be good, then the idea or action that prompted it is considered to have been good also. Were you to give a man dying of thirst a glass of water, the fact that he survived would 'prove' to the pragmatist that your action

was the correct one. So far – so good, but by similar reasoning, we could argue that were the government high-handedly to take control of your home and then demolish it in order to build a children’s playground on the site, the fact that the children were now enjoying themselves would ‘prove’ that the government’s action was the ‘correct one’! Or was it? I would suggest that after that experience most people would not be so enamoured with the philosophy of pragmatism.

In a society largely dominated by the philosophy of pragmatism, no-one can be sure what tomorrow will bring. Without principles to guide them, the pragmatic politicians ‘govern’ by a series of ‘ad hoc’ and unrelated decisions – each new decision liable to conflict with any number of previous decisions. The pragmatic politician is the expert at playing things off the top of his head and adopting a course of action that always appears to him to be a good idea at the time! Sadly, in the longer term, it is other people who must suffer the consequences of this shoddy philosophy.

So much for philosophy for the moment. Let us now look at politics (which is actually a branch of philosophy). Politically, all parties accept the doctrine of unlimited majority rule which they call ‘democracy’. They then shroud this ‘democracy’ in an aura of mystical purity. Slicing through the humbug, however, we find that, in actual fact, unlimited majority rule really means rule by those men and women who have the biggest gang behind them, or to put it another way, it means that there are virtually no restraints placed upon the actions of politicians so long as they have sufficient numbers of people supporting them. They can do virtually whatsoever they wish. They can and do extort vast sums of money from some people and give it away in lavish schemes to others. They can molly-coddle some people and push others around. They can help some businesses and destroy others. They can perpetrate fraud, break contracts, fiddle the books and pilfer the till with impunity. They can take people’s homes and livelihoods away from them if and when it suits them. They can threaten innocent people. They can incarcerate them for a thousand different non-criminal reasons such as daring to protect what is rightfully theirs; refusing to fill out a census form; smoking a particular type of cigarette; choosing to give their children a better education at home than they would otherwise get at a State-run school; baking bread on someone else’s holy day; telling the truth about politicians and public bureaucrats. In fact, politicians spend most of their time doing just two things – devising new ways in which to push people around and finding new methods of robbing from Peter in order to give the loot to Paul. That, in essence, is what politics today is really all about.

Just as all major political parties follow the same philosophical principles and the same political ideals so they follow the same economic doctrines which are largely influenced by economic theorists whose theories have long-since been debunked. If the Welfare State is the ‘in-thing’, then obviously vast sums of money are needed to feed it and one of the main ways the politicians use to get this sort of money is by crippling taxation (or in plain language, by legalized extortion). They also resort to the creation of new money and credit. In other words, they resort to inflation or to the debasement of the currency which is legalized fraud. The politicians can also resort to borrowing from ordinary decent people by way of government bonds etc, in which case this money will invariably be paid back to them in debased currency (and hence once again – fraud). Governments can also borrow from overseas, in which

case future generations will probably be lumbered with the huge interest debt as well as the principal itself for ever and a day.

Things like fiddling with interest rates and the passing of tens of thousands (maybe hundreds of thousands) of laws, rules, regulations and sub-regulations at all levels of government in order to control the people, their businesses and their other activities are all considered a necessary component of their economic doctrines. Were governments not to do this, their economists tell them, the market-place would not work properly, fairly and efficiently. When, however, the market-place becomes hopelessly distorted as a result of this interference, the same politicians and the same public bureaucrats now point to the mess that they themselves have created and tell us that this mess surely proves, beyond all doubt, that the market cannot work unregulated and that still more regulations are needed to make it work properly, fairly and efficiently! And so it goes on – one law following another – each law intended to correct the chaos created by the previous law! This is called ‘economics’.

If certain philosophic concepts, certain political ideas and certain economic doctrines can create such havoc, why do we allow our politicians to persist, year after year, decade after decade, with ways of thinking that consistently produce results that cause untold harm and misery? This does not make sense. The answer, in principle at least, is simple. Politics, today, is largely about governments forcibly extracting money from people and with that money buying votes. One does not have to be a genius to understand that when people are on the receiving end of these government hand-outs, or when they have been granted special privileges by governments, or when their livelihoods are dependent upon governments, many of them will be hesitant to listen to new ideas, let alone advocate some other political system that would take their perks and privileges away from them. Most of them will find it less disturbing to treat most of that which they hear on their radios and television sets and read in their newspapers as holy writ, so remaining oblivious to the fact that a large percentage of it is nothing more than a rehash of worn-out ideas that are ready for the intellectual scrap-heap.

It is important for us to understand that it is ideas – good ideas and bad ideas – that will determine our futures and those of our children and grandchildren. If we tacitly accept bad ideas and close our minds to good ideas, then the immediate future will be bleak for our young people and it will continue to be bleak unless, when their turn comes, they prove themselves to be more open-minded, wiser and braver than their parents and grandparents.

None of us should discount the importance of ideas for it is ideas that have made the world what it is today and which will shape the world of tomorrow. It would have been a far different world had it not been for the ideas, both good and bad, of such men as Buddha, Plato, Aristotle, Jesus, St. Paul, Mohammed, Thomas Aquinas, Galileo, John Locke, Isaac Newton, Adam Smith, Karl Marx, Lenin, Albert Einstein, John Maynard Keynes and Adolph Hitler to mention but a few.

If we are to reverse the present sorry drift to even greater chaos, we must first challenge the many faulty ideas that make up our culture and begin adopting sound ideas. If governments take it upon themselves to control all aspects of the economy

and if the economy is in a constant state of chaos, why do we not take the running of the economy away from them? If a child begins wielding a baseball bat about the home breaking furniture, crockery, walls and his younger brother's head, would not a responsible parent grab the baseball bat and discipline the child? [In today's climate, however, this would probably be considered inappropriate treatment likely to cause irreparable damage to the child's psyche!]

Why is it taken for granted that governments must control 'the economy'? Historically, this has come about because people have accepted without question that there must be 'rulers' and there must be 'the ruled' – or, to put it another way, there must be people to do the pushing around and there must be people to be pushed around. I would suggest that this is a fairly primitive concept which had its origins in the year dot when the toughest man took over the leadership of the tribe and demanded absolute obedience from all the other tribesmen. For better or for worse, the tribal chief made the decisions and the tribesmen were obliged to follow. If the chief thought it would be a good idea to step off the edge of a cliff, he led by example and directed his tribesmen to follow him. That, then, was the end of the tribe unless a few tribesmen with a few more brains and a different type of courage than the rest, decided to make their own decisions and hide in the bushes until the last man had gone over the edge. [Now don't get me wrong. I don't mind in the least if people want others to make their decisions for them and be pushed around by them and even follow their leaders over the cliff, but there are many people (and I am one of them) who want to make their own decisions and don't want to be pushed around by every Tom, Dick and Harry and don't relish the idea of being ordered to follow the leader over the cliff.]

Umpteen centuries later, our tribal chief moved out of his cave and into a tent but when he began to acquire servants, mistresses and war trophies, the tent became too small for him so he moved once again, this time into a castle and then, a little later still, into a palace. Now whereas once upon a time, trade was little more than swapping spears for the very latest in earthenware pots, it had now become more complex and, as a consequence, some bright lad thought up the idea of money to simplify the many transactions that more and more people were now making in their daily lives. For very good reasons, gold and silver, in particular, were found to be excellent substances for use as money. Now, to bring ourselves fully up to date, I should mention that when the tribal chief moved out of his tent and into his palace, his title 'chieftain' no longer seemed appropriate. After all, he had gone up a notch or two on the social scale and in keeping with his new status he now called himself a Caesar, an Emperor, a King or some other grand title. So, accordingly, we will now address him as 'King'. Being the cunning fellow that he was and having the power to back up any decision that he made by physical force, the King promptly decided to control all this money himself. He therefore announced that, henceforth, he, and only he, could issue coins, and in order to let everyone know that he meant business, he had a picture of himself stamped on all the coins of the realm. It then became an offence for anyone except the King to issue coins. The reader may perhaps see the cunning in all this. If not, let him not worry as soon all will be revealed.

Now the King, like everyone else, wanted money but not being skilled in the arts of weaving or metal-working, he found it easier simply to extort the money from his

subjects. After all, a king had to have palaces and castles and dress himself in fine clothes and wear a crown studded with rare stones. Furthermore, the King needed money for his proposed wars against such dastardly fellows as that horrible foreign chap who happened to have run off with his favourite sister. The King soon found, however, that the spending of money was easy. It was the acquisition of money that could be more difficult. As we've heard, the King did not produce anything himself and up until now he had found himself totally dependent upon what he could extract from his subjects by force or by the threat of force. Unfortunately, the Royal Chancellor had only recently warned him that if he wrung the goose's neck with too much gusto there was a distinct possibility that soon there would not be a goose around to lay those gorgeous golden eggs; or else perhaps, if he was not careful, he would push his subjects to rebellion.

One day, possibly whilst the King was supervising the polishing of his armour, he hit upon a brilliant idea. He would throw thousands of gold coins into scores of hessian bags, shake the bags frantically so that bits of gold dust would sink to the bottom of the bags. He would then collect this dust, melt it down, and turn it into ingots of gold. Then the King found an even better way to get rich. He simply snipped off the edges of the gold coins so that instead of the coin weighing, say, an ounce, it now weighed a little less than an ounce but by royal decree it was proclaimed still to be an ounce in weight! These off-cuts were then melted down into further ingots and soon found their way, once again, into the King's coffers. This was known as 'debasement of the currency'. It was a great idea if the King didn't have any scruples or if he knew that he could get away with it because his subjects were unlikely to be silly enough to openly accuse him of shifty dealings.

Another little bit of history must also be mentioned as it, too, was to have serious repercussions later on. As scores of gold and silver coins were fairly chunky objects for a gentleman to carry in his pocket, particularly in an age of highwaymen and street thugs, it was customary for the more affluent to deposit their gold, for a fee, with a 'reputable' goldsmith for safekeeping. The goldsmith would issue the gentleman with a receipt. It was then found that people were happy to trade these receipts which, after all, represented gold. Paper money had arrived. In time, the goldsmiths found that only a small percentage of their customers' gold was redeemed at any one time so that they always had large stocks of gold lying 'idle' in their vaults. The goldsmiths then realized that they could make money on the side by lending out this gold to other people and charging interest for it (even though it was not their gold to lend). The chances that they might be caught out were relatively slight. The next step was for the goldsmith to print a large number of bogus receipts and lend these out to new customers claiming that they were redeemable in gold, in the full knowledge that if there were a run on 'the bank' his fraud would be exposed and many of his customers would lose their money. Such behaviour was crooked but nevertheless, in time, it became accepted banking practice and was duly approved by governments. [It continues today – being known as 'fractional reserve banking.']

When the kings and emperors duly went out of fashion and gave way to politicians, parliaments and governments, the leaders, now in a different guise, continued to play the same tricky little games and guess what – they even improved upon them! Their next step was to get rid of the gold coins altogether and get rid of the silver in

the silver coins and replace it by cheap stuff like copper and nickel but, very smartly, they made the coins so that they still looked pure and shiny just like silver! So now the coins were virtually worthless but the politicians passed a law which stated that you could pay your debts with this cheap stuff because “ it was just as good as the real thing”! So if you sold a pair of shoes to Joe and Joe paid you in this cheap stuff, there was nothing you could do about it except, perhaps, palm off the cheap stuff you received from Joe on to Fred for a new hat. The great thing, as far as the politicians were concerned, was that they could make as much of this cheap stuff as they liked and get in return things of real value such as men’s and women’s productive labour. The politicians now realized that if they could so debase the coins, what could they do with paper money? They could have a bonanza. All they needed to do was to buy more paper – perhaps toilet-paper might do – and if they wanted more money in order to buy votes, all they had to do was to feed in this paper, turn the handles of the printing presses, and out would come the paper stuff – miles of it – the other end. Brilliant! This is what inflation is all about – flooding a country with new money or debasing the currency. This is what the popular economic gurus often advise the politicians to do if they want to cure the recession or depression that a previous government caused when it contracted the money supply. This previous government will have contracted the money supply in order to curb the escalating prices brought about by the inflationary policies of yet an earlier government. If a country is flooded with new money, guess what happens to its value. If you are not sure, try thinking in terms of tomatoes. If we have a bumper year for tomatoes – so good, in fact, that even ten-year-old children can grow prize-winning tomatoes, what happens to the price of tomatoes? You guessed it. This tomato glut causes the price of tomatoes to plummet. Tomatoes are not worth much. Well, neither is the inflated money. Any money that you may have in your pocket or in the bank is now worth less than it was a year ago. You’ve been taken to the cleaners, chum! What is more, if you have a business, big or small, how can you plan ten years ahead or five years ahead or even one year ahead, if the value of your money is for ever changing at the whim of politicians? So we have now learnt an important lesson – entrusting one’s money to governments is rather like entrusting one’s baby daughter to a pet python. You should not do it.

If you are a business man or a business woman, big or small, how can you satisfactorily plan ahead if you are never sure how much money is going to be extorted from you and which areas of your business will be hurt next? How can you plan long term if you do not know what the rules will be six months from now or what new bits of red tape you will be wrestling with next week? How can you satisfactorily prosper in business if the government employs an automaton with a hundred arms which puts its hundred hands into your till before you are allowed to take out any money for yourself? So, hopefully, we have now learnt two more lessons – allowing governments to extort money from you so that they can throw it around whenever and wherever they choose to do so, is rather like allowing your next door neighbour’s children to steal from you so that they can become popular with their little friends by buying them sweets and fire-crackers. The other lesson we have learnt here is that if you allow governments to interfere into your business, you should not be surprised if, sooner or later, you do not have a business. It is rather like allowing your neighbour to breed white ants in the basement of your home. You soon do not have a home. It is as simple as that; not all that intelligent, is it?

Now that we have some understanding of the many false concepts, dangerous ideas, fundamental flaws and silly notions that are generally accepted by most of today's 'intellectuals' and those who blindly follow them, let us turn our attention to certain specific areas of politics, economics, and kindred issues that may, at various times, take centre stage in our lives.

FUNDAMENTAL MATTERS

Individual Rights
Property – Private and Public

INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

Some excerpts and paraphrasing from the United Nations 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights'.

Everyone has the right to social security; to work; to equal pay for equal work; to rest and leisure; to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself (sic) and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control. Motherhood and childhood are entitled (sic) to special care and assistance. All children at the elementary level have the right to free and compulsory education!

(Exclamation mark – mine.)

It is interesting that today's intellectuals make no serious attempt to analyse the subject of 'rights'. They invariably take the word 'rights' for granted and apply it pragmatically whenever people think that they are hard done by, need something or merely want something. It is assumed that so long as enough people want something badly enough then that 'something' should become a 'right'. In the spirit of the Welfare State and being ever alert to the bonanza of votes that may be just around the corner, the politicians are always ready to submit to any pressure group and pronounce almost anything to be a 'right'. As a consequence, we are afflicted with such philosophic nightmares as the 'right to a decent home', the 'right to quality medical care', the 'right to a fair wage', the 'right to a good education', the 'right to a job', the 'right to buy at a fair price', the 'right to have this and the right to have that'. Not satisfied, however, with this mad plethora of so-called 'rights' applicable to individuals, the intellectuals have now come up with group 'rights'. We have had for a long time what are claimed to be 'State Rights' and 'Federal Rights' but now we have also the 'rights of women', the 'rights of consumers', the 'rights of homosexuals', the 'rights of the indigenous peoples', the 'rights of the handicapped' and so on. As if all this were not enough, the latest breed of intellectual impostors now talk glibly about 'animal rights'!

We should realize that all those things and services that are to be provided to people in order to satisfy their so-called 'rights' can be provided only if they are first expropriated from other people. Governments could plead with people to voluntarily donate their money, goods or services to others but politicians have found that it is simpler merely to threaten innocent people with physical force in order to get what they want, provide the 'right' and scoop up a bucketful of new votes for themselves in the process. This, of course, has nothing whatsoever to do with 'rights' but it does have much to do with politics. The concept that one man's rights can be satisfied only at the expense of another man's rights is so obviously inane and immoral that one might be tempted to wonder what goes on in the minds of some of our so-called intellectuals who are the driving force behind the propagation of these screwball ideas. Why is it that these men and women have shown themselves to be so unwilling to look more closely into this subject of 'rights'? The answer, I hope, will soon become apparent.

In a discussion on 'rights' the first thing that we should ask ourselves is – "What is a right?" When a man lives alone on a deserted island, rights are not necessary. It is only when he lives in a society with other people that the concept of rights becomes important for a right pertains to a person's freedom of action within a society. A right is a moral principle that defines and sanctions that freedom of action. It tells a man what it is moral for him to do and, as a corollary, what it is immoral for him to do.

The heading of this Section is 'Individual Rights'. The word 'individual', however, is really redundant as to make sense, rights must apply only to individuals. Nevertheless, the word 'individual' is inserted here purely to press home this point. There can be no such thing as group rights such as the 'rights of the old' or the 'rights of the young'. Old people and young people certainly have rights, not because they are old or young, but because they are individual human beings. Similarly, consumers and the handicapped have rights, not because they are consumers or handicapped but because they are individual people.

The next thing that we should understand is that all people have equal rights. To postulate a concept, as do our 'intellectuals' today, that some people have different and greater rights than others is a philosophic abomination unworthy of the word 'philosophy'. Such a concept of selected and graduated rights is guaranteed to pit one man against another, not just over one issue but over many issues. It is the perfect formula for civil war.

Now let us ask ourselves why it is essential that this concept of 'man's rights' be recognized, understood and respected. To do this, let us first look at the origin of rights. Rights are not something endowed upon us in some nebulous fashion by a deity nor are they granted to us by governments. The source of rights is far more fundamental than that. To help us understand, let us look at nature. Everything in nature is what it is – a stone is a stone; a tree is a tree; a wild dog is a wild dog; a human being is a human being. A stone can never be a tree; a tree can never be a wild dog; a wild dog can never be a human being. All things, animate and inanimate have their own particular characteristics; and all living things can survive only if the 'demands' of their particular characteristics are met. A tree needs water, nutrient and light. As according to its nature it is anchored to the ground, it is not able in a prolonged drought to move to a better area. It may, therefore, die. A wild dog relies on its sight, sense of smell and hearing to locate its prey and so survive. Blind it or plug its nostrils or ears and it will not be able to perform as a wild dog should by its nature perform, and hence it will almost certainly die.

What, then, about man? What are his particular characteristics – those that are necessary for him to survive as man? [Note here that I am not talking about his survival as a wild animal for which he is not adequately equipped, but as a human being.] To enable us better to identify the requirements necessary for man's survival, let us consider him as a lone castaway on a small uninhabited island. For him to have any chance of survival he must do two things. He must firstly use his mind intelligently and, secondly, he must be prepared to perform useful work, or to put it another way, he must think rationally and produce. He must find water, forage for food and work out which foods are safe for him to eat and which are not; he must collect firewood and devise a method of making fire; he must find a way to determine which foods are best to eat today and which foods he can store for next week or next month. He must learn how to preserve his stored food. He will have to work out where best to build a shelter and collect the most suitable materials available to him for that purpose. Depending upon the degree of his rationality and the quality of the productive work that he carries out, so his chances of survival and the quality of his life will increase or decrease.

It makes no difference, however, whether our man is living alone on a deserted island or whether he is living in a society of people, his basic tools of survival are the same – a rational mind and productive work. Without these attributes our man will not long survive, even in a society, unless he is able to attach himself as a parasite to another person or persons who do think rationally and who do produce those things that are necessary for his survival. It is the recognition that man must be free to do those things that are essential for his proper survival that is behind any sensible concept of rights. We are not talking about the survival of a tribe or a society of people but the necessary conditions for the survival of an individual – any individual. As a tribe or a society or a country or the planet itself is made up of a collection of individuals, each person everywhere, whatever his or her colour, race, creed, age, nationality etc., has rights identical to those of every other person. Each person has the right to do those things that are necessary for his or her proper survival as a human being. These rights cannot be taken away at the whim of governments. They can merely be contemptuously ignored.

Man's primary right must be the right to his own life for without that right, it does not make sense to talk about other rights such as those that are necessary for a person's proper survival. The right to one's life means the right to one's own body. One's body includes one's brain which is the organ involved with a multitude of physical and mental processes. The right to one's own life, therefore, means the right to use one's mind in any way one wishes, to make one's own decisions and to take whatever actions are necessary to maintain one's life and to do all those things that one believes are necessary for the attainment of one's goals in life. We must always bear in mind that all other people have exactly the same rights as we have and so it would be morally wrong for us to physically prevent them from living their lives in the manner that is essential for their survival, fulfilment and happiness. This right to a man's own life is the most fundamental of all his rights. All other rights that he possesses are mere consequences or corollaries of this one right. As man has the right to his own life he must have the right to sustain his life and this brings us to the concept of property rights, for without property rights no other rights are possible. Since man has to sustain his life by his own effort, the man who has no right to the product of his effort has no right to sustain his life. The man who produces while others dispose of his product is a slave.

It is important to realize that the right to property is not the right to an object but the right to act productively and honestly in order to acquire that object. It is the right also to keep, to use and to dispose of that property as one sees fit provided always that one does not infringe upon the equal rights of others.

To violate a man's right is to compel him to act against his own judgement or to expropriate his property. The only ways in which this can be done are by the use of physical force, by the threat of physical force or else by fraud. The only people capable of such violation are criminals and governments. That governments today do not recognize man's rights is not a reflection on the concept of rights but a reflection on governments, which means on politicians, on public bureaucrats and on all those who influence their thinking.

Rights are a moral concept and are the means of subordinating society to moral law. It is an essential concept to grasp if people wish to live in a free society protected

from all those who would control their lives and steal their property. This is why the initiation of physical force, the threat of it, and fraud, must be outlawed if we are ever to live in a civilized society.

It is interesting that, historically, the ordinary people have been expected to live moral lives whereas their rulers (the Emperors, the Kings, the Tyrants and, more recently, their democratically elected governments) have always considered themselves to be exempt from such moral laws. Acts such as theft, robbery with violence, fraud and murder when perpetrated by individuals against other individuals are very correctly considered to be crimes and the perpetrators of those crimes are hopefully apprehended and punished. When it comes to governments, however, there are no moral restraints imposed upon them at all. The result is that governments run wild and freely commit untold acts of theft, robbery with violence, fraud and even murder against the very people over whom they preside. Historically, high on the list of human attributes expected of all people are those of obedience, loyalty and duty – obedience, loyalty and duty towards the State – driving home to every individual the collectivist notion that all that is good resides with the State – that the State knows best and that the individual is a very minor player in the grand scheme of things!

Current thinking is that a man's life belongs to 'society' or the State and, hence, 'society' or the State can dispose of him in any way it pleases. This was, and is, the rationale behind conscription, the 'resumption' of land, the gaoling of people for upsetting the susceptibilities of others by performing such acts as drug-taking, homosexuality, prostitution, blasphemy, criticizing governments too vigorously and thousands of other such acts. It is the rationale behind the present-day idea of 'freedom' – that any freedom people may have is granted to them by the State and because it is a favour bestowed upon them, it can be revoked just as easily and as quickly as it was granted!

The legal recognition and implementation of the moral concept of man's rights is essential if the power of the State is to be curtailed and limited; if people are to be able to protect themselves not only from the brute force and fraud of criminals but from the far more dangerous power of the State. If might is ever to be subordinated to right, it is the concept of rights that must be understood and implemented.

There is only one political and economic system that is consistent with a society built on a moral base fully consistent with man's nature and that political system is a 'limited government' which means a government whose powers are limited to those necessary to protect people's rights. The only economic system consistent with a 'limited government' is laissez-faire capitalism. A limited government and laissez-faire capitalism are opposite sides of the same coin. To put it another way – individual liberty and laissez-faire capitalism (or pure free enterprise) are interchangeable terms. We cannot have one without the other. It is now that the reader may begin to understand why a left-oriented intelligentsia has, in the past, been so reluctant to explore all aspects of the concept of 'rights'. The reader may also understand better why such terms as 'capitalism', 'laissez-faire', 'individual liberty', 'limited government', 'individualism', the right (as opposed to the left) of the political spectrum, have all become derogatory terms – terms to be disposed of as quickly as possible by the simple but effective technique of smearing the ideas and

those who propose them. So much for the people who have taken it upon themselves to be the trend-setters in current philosophic thought!

PROPERTY – PRIVATE AND PUBLIC

Paraphrasing 'The Communist Manifesto' of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels:- "The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie to centralize all instruments of production in the hands of the State. To accomplish this it will have as one of its objectives the abolition of property in land".

Private property, usually but not exclusively, takes the form of such things as land, buildings and objects such as motor cars, clothes, books and so on. The reader may be interested to learn that some of these bigger items such as land and the buildings on it are not owned by the person who believes that he owns them. Certainly, he may hold a title to the land but 'title to land' is not ownership. Nevertheless, most people in authority go to great lengths to make others believe that they do, in fact, own their land and the buildings on it. This is but one of many examples of the confidence tricks that are regularly played on people by their masters – meaning all those people who hold positions of authority over them within our political system.

The concept of ownership, in logic and in common law, implies the right to use and dispose of that which is owned in any way one wishes provided the owner does not infringe upon the equal rights of others. Anything less than this is not ownership. Now, you and I know that if we really did own our land and the buildings on it, governments would not be allowed to take our property from us against our will, knock down our buildings and put up in their place a car park, a new road, a public toilet block, a government kindergarten or an old folks home. Furthermore, they would not be allowed to declare our buildings 'heritage' buildings and so prevent us from knocking them down if we so wished, or renovating them in the way that we wanted them to be renovated, or else using them for purposes for which we wanted to use them. The assumption of governments is always that people do not own the land and the buildings that they think they own. This is why governments evade the words 'ownership of property' and, instead, use the words 'title to property' in its place so that whenever they want to grab someone's land and the buildings on it, which they are able to do at any time they wish as they have the necessary physical force at their disposal, their action appears to be merely a legal formality rather than a straightforward act of extortion. The legal word 'resumption' is specifically designed to give this high-handed act an aura of respectability. In the government's eyes, it is merely taking back or 'resuming' the land and the buildings that it has claimed all along (albeit secretly) to be its own and not yours! It is of considerable interest to note just some of the legal evasions used by governments to skirt around this embarrassing word 'ownership'. We have 'title to land', 'fee simple', 'freehold title', 'tenancy in common', 'joint tenancy', 'resumption of land' and, no doubt, many more.

The reason that governments do not allow people to own land and the buildings on it is that they know only too well that, at some time in the future, they may want to steal it (or to use their word – 'resume' it) 'in the public interest' or 'for the common good' or 'in the national interest' or in the name of some other devious dictatorial slogan. The reader may remember what was said about these terms in an earlier section.

If the reader is still unconvinced that he does not own his property, what would he say if he knew (or perhaps he knows already) that when he buys land and blissfully imagines that it is his, he finds that his next-door neighbour, or a developer in

another area, or an established tradesman a few streets away, or even a group of unwashed ferals, can apply to the government in order to prevent him from building on his own land the type of building that he wishes to build! Whatever people may think about allowing others to dictate what will or will not be built on someone else's property, the fact remains that if government restraints are imposed upon property, that property is not owned but is merely possessed by virtue of a political or bureaucratic whim. That must make one wonder how safe vacant land is as an investment proposition.

Just as people are unable to own their own land and the buildings on it, so they have been unable at various times to own such objects as guns, drugs, magazines, books, coins, pets, family heirlooms and a whole host of other such personal belongings.

Now let us look at yet another extraordinary political concept that has found its way into our Australian system at least, and which highlights, once again, the general contempt that is shown for individual rights including property rights. Let us say that you buy a small property not far from the town in which you once lived. On it there is a charming little cottage, grand views and enough land to sustain a few sheep, some cows, a goat or two, horses and room for the fowls to run free. This is to be your retirement haven after a lifetime of conscientious work. For a year or two all goes well. You plant more trees; you fertilize the soil; you double your stock, grow some grain and then disaster strikes – not a drought, not a bush fire, not a flood – but a politico-legal disaster. Someone believes that there may be oil or some mineral such as gold, silver or coal on your property which the government has already claimed as its own, even though the substance has not yet been found. This fellow duly trots off to the appropriate government department, pays it some money and, in return, receives a licence to mine on what you had taken to be your property! You now know that it really is not your property at all and never was but the government's property (as are all the minerals to be found on it). So you now have to put up with drilling rigs and trucks and tractors and noise and scores of strangers stomping all over 'your' little retirement haven. Some political system! Some legal system! Would it not be ever so simple to make some fundamental changes compelling governments to recognize your right to your property because you actually own the land to a certain depth below the ground and to a certain height above it? If anyone wanted to mine on your property, that person would then have to negotiate terms with you – ever so simple, ever so sensible, ever so just. The sole reason that governments, at least in Australia, do not do this is for fear of losing control over 'your' land and any possible minerals that there may be below the surface of it.

Now let us take a look at the concept of 'public property'. This so-called 'public property' may take the form of land, water, buildings or things such as books in a public library, picks and shovels or a whole range of other objects. Leaving aside the finer philosophic points of government buildings and government 'things', let us concentrate our attention on 'public property' meaning land and water and we will see that there are huge tracts of this 'public property' in all countries e.g. roads, lakes, beaches, rivers, mountains, national parks, oceans and, in some countries, vast areas of land that are leased out to individuals and corporations for such purposes as farming, grazing and mining. If all this is public property, one might assume that the public – that is people such as you and I – would have a stake in all this land and water. All we would need to know is which parts of it were yours, which

parts were mine and which parts belonged to Joe, Mary, Fred and Nancy; or perhaps we might own it jointly between us. We soon learn, however, that the system does not work like this. We are told that, as individuals, we do not own any of it at all. Well, if we do not own it, who does own it? The only people who can claim to own it are those who have the authority and power to use the land in any way they wish and to dispose of it in any way they wish. That, of course, is not you, me, Joe, Mary, Fred or Nancy but government at one of its levels – Federal, State or Local – not last year's government, not next year's government but today's government. Today's government is the politicians and their public bureaucrats who are in their positions of power at this moment. It is now that the reader may begin to understand why so many insoluble problems are created by this extraordinary concept of 'public property'.

Let us look at the sorts of problems that arise. Jack, being led to believe that he, like everyone else, owns the public land, begins chopping down trees. Charlie gets upset because he is led to believe that it is his land also and he wants the trees to remain where they are. Charlie attacks Jack and Jack retaliates by striking Charlie. Then Geoffrey, who sides with Charlie, approaches his Member of Parliament and asks him to stop Jack; and Jack organizes a lobby group headed by Mary to oppose Charlie. Now thousands of people have taken Jack's side and thousands have taken Charlie's side. Tempers rise; someone gets hurt and the Media whip up the mob. The politicians become scared of losing votes and shelve the problem by organizing a Special Senate Inquiry or a Royal Commission or a Special Judicial Investigation or some other high-sounding stalling tactic and that is the last we hear of that for a while. Next week, amateur fishermen are fishing in public property – the sea – and the professional fishermen, also fishing in public property, get angry because the amateurs are taking too many fish. The story repeats itself. Charlie attacks Jack and Jack retaliates. Charlie appeals to Geoffrey and Geoffrey appeals to his Member of Parliament. Jack organizes a lobby group headed by Mary and we have one more Public Inquiry set up by the politicians, once again to defer a decision for as long as possible.

Now the indigenous people and their hangers-on see their opportunity and they claim the land that the cattle-men are working as lessees of the State. Naturally, the cattle-men resist and we are about to have another gigantic feud when the government sets up yet another Special Inquiry to sit for as long as it takes to find 'a satisfactory solution'. The following week, Dennis, who is in the leather business, wants to kill crocodiles on public property but Maud loves crocodiles and begins a 'Save the Crocodile Campaign'. With twenty thousand signatures, the politicians panic and tell Dennis that if he does not stop killing crocodiles, they will throw him into gaol. He does not stop. Four months later, two women are eaten by crocodiles on public property and Angela organizes a 'Down with Crocodiles Campaign'. She gets thirty thousand signatures and the government donates a million dollars to cull crocodiles! Then George, who is Dennis' business partner, decides that he will breed crocodiles for their leather on his private land but he is told that there is a by-law preventing him from doing this and, furthermore, if he takes any crocodiles from public property to begin his breeding program, he will join Dennis in gaol. So crocodiles continue to be slaughtered by the government; Dennis' and George's leather business collapses; Maud decides to become a politician; Dennis remains in gaol; and the politicians go home to rest after a hard week at the office.

Before we move on to the next section, it is worth mentioning that none of us should really be surprised if 'public property' is abused for the logger, the fisherman and the crocodile-hunter may as well grab as many of the trees, fish and crocodiles as they can whilst the going is good. After all, if these men happen to kill the goose that lays the golden egg, so what? Better that they have the golden eggs than someone else! So long as the 'public property' concept persists, the only way to prevent the trees, the fish and the crocodiles from disappearing is by more government laws and then more laws and still more laws – each law helping some people and penalizing others – for ever pitting Jack against Charlie and Angela against Maud. Even then, such laws are effective only until they are reversed or altered by some future government. Great system!

It is only when property is privately owned that people have a satisfactory incentive to look after it. Who but an idiot would buy an expensive motor car and never check the oil, the water, the brake fluid or those parts that need regular checking? There are always, of course, people who make errors of judgement or who act through ignorance. That is human, but only a fool, consciously and consistently, destroys his greatest asset. To enlarge on this theme would take many chapters and that is not the type of book I want this to be, so I will leave the subject of 'Property --- Private and Public' here by asking five rhetorical questions.

1. Is it not time that we insisted that our governments recognize that we have a right to our own property?
2. Why do we persist with the concept of 'public property' when it is shot through with holes?
3. What makes us think that politicians, essentially motivated by political considerations such as votes, should be wiser in managing property than large numbers of individuals making their own decisions about their own land for a wide variety of different reasons?
4. Is it not time for us to realize that if cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, fowls and so on can be bred for their commercial value so can fish, crocodiles, elephants, rhinoceroses, tigers, parrots and rare trees, so hopefully ensuring each of their survival as a species? It is, however, only the stability of privately-owned property and governments severely limited in their powers that will entice entrepreneurs into such ventures.
5. Is it not time that we began to consider dumping the concept of 'public property' and to think seriously about a society in which all property is privately owned except for that which it is necessary for a government to hold in order to protect people's rights?

DISTURBING MATTERS

The 'Educational' System
The English Language
The Political Spectrum

THE 'EDUCATIONAL' SYSTEM

Paraphrasing 'The Communist Manifesto' of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels:– 'The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie to centralize all instruments of production in the hands of the State. To accomplish this it will have as one of its objectives free education for all children in public schools'.

If my own country, like most others, is in a mess – philosophically, politically and economically – what does this tell us about our so-called educational system – the system that has trained our leaders in all walks of life? If anyone should need evidence to show that there is something radically wrong with our schools and universities, then surely here is that evidence. The screwball philosophic concepts, political doctrines and economic theories that are tearing our societies apart are the very same ideas that are still being drilled into our children's heads, year after year, decade after decade, by teachers in universities, other tertiary institutions and schools all over the world.

Curiously, this should not surprise us for if we stop to consider for a moment, we will realize that the schooling system (from primary to tertiary levels) is almost exclusively either a branch of government or else is controlled by it. A huge 'educational' bureaucracy has evolved that lays down its rules for nearly all children. It determines the methods of teaching that will apply; the subjects that will be taught and their content; the types of schools that will be allowed; the qualifications needed by the teachers; the forms that the examinations (if any) will take; the teaching philosophy that will be adopted; the grading methods (if any) that will apply; the punishments that will be permitted; the form that religious instruction (if any) will take; if there is religious instruction, whether atheism will be discussed along with religion. Will girls and boys be taught separately or together? Will sex lessons be given? If so, what will be their content? Will condoms be supplied at the schools? If so, to students of what ages? Should the blind eye be turned to drug usage? If so, to which drugs? Should students at school be allowed to adorn themselves with rings through their eyebrows or sticks through their noses? Should the children be taught trades? If so, should the girls be allowed to learn metal work and the boys embroidery? Should Latin or History or French or Chinese be taught? If Chinese, what dialect of Chinese? Should reading be taught this way or that way? How should writing be taught? How should arithmetic be taught? Should English grammar be taught? If not, why not? How long should children be forced to stay at school against their will and against the will of their parents? The answers to all these questions and many more are determined by a few public bureaucrats at the top of the 'educational' pyramid.

It is not a mystery why so many children cannot write properly even by the time they have reached the university level. It is not a mystery why, for so long, socialist ideas have permeated the teaching system. It is not a mystery why certain economics books are a part of a syllabus and not others. It is not a mystery why history is so often distorted or why radio and TV commentators and news-readers frequently fail to understand the tools of their trade viz. words – so giving us poor grammar, incorrect pronunciations and the frequent improper use of words. It is not a mystery why so many people whose cats have died or who see a smidgen of spilt blood are urged by 'do gooders' to undergo 'trauma counselling'. It is not a mystery why mobs yell, hurl abuse and become violent. All these matters have their origins in the

‘educational’ system, for here so many of the ideas that constitute our culture are first implanted in an organized manner into the minds of our young people.

So long as government-imposed conformity is the framework on which the ‘educational’ system is built, we are not likely to see many original thinkers (outside the pure sciences) emerging from the system. What we will see, in its place, is a repetition of past silliness and a tendency towards the development of ‘intellectual clones’.

Another aspect of this government-controlled ‘educational’ system is the element of compulsion. The government decrees that all children, at a certain age, will attend at a government school or at one approved by the government. If the parents of a child disagree, believing that the age set by the government is too low and if they refuse to comply with the edict, they will probably find themselves threatened with incarceration in a government prison. If parents refuse to hand over their child to a government-appointed teacher who will teach what he is instructed to teach, regardless of whether the parents approve of it or not, then once again they will probably be threatened with imprisonment even though they may be prepared to educate the child themselves in their own home. This, we are led to believe, is what is meant by ‘living in a free society’!

Let us now look at yet another side of government schooling. You may like to send your child to a private school – one that you have good reason to believe provides the type of education that you would prefer for your child but, unfortunately, you cannot afford to do so as for years, even before your child was born, you were compelled to give up a substantial portion of your income to help pay for the government-run schools and the pupils in them. Consequently, you do not have the money required to pay for your own child’s education at the type of school that you would prefer. If you do not have any children, either because you are unable to have any or else because you do not choose to have any or else because you are too old or for some other reason, you are still obliged, under duress, to pay for the education of someone else’s children! If you are a responsible person and decide to have no more than two children as you wish to give them both what you consider to be the best possible chance in life, you will soon find that you are prevented from doing this because the State has already decreed that you must first help to pay for the schooling of the twelve children who live next door to you and whose parents have bred like animals in order to claim massive government hand-outs for themselves.

If you have elderly parents whom you love and wish to care for, the State decrees that you may not be permitted to save the money necessary to help them in the way that you would wish. It claims that it knows better than you in such matters and that your money will be more wisely spent by sending someone else’s children to a government school! If you have children who are not interested in higher education or who are not scholastically inclined, you will be forced to pay money every week to the parents of other children in order to help them pay for a tertiary education for their children. The fact that you would have preferred to have saved the money to enable you to give your children a trip overseas to broaden their education or else to set them up in a business of their own, counts for nothing. This high-handed governmental behaviour is known as ‘social justice’! The recipient of the money that was extorted from you may have been your boss so that he, whose income is double

yours, will be able more easily to send his children to a university. When your boss' children duly graduate as doctors, lawyers or engineers and become successful, your children now a butcher, a baker and a candle stick maker will, in their turn, be obliged to finance their children. This is yet another example of that concept of robbing from Peter to pay Paul under the pretext of the 'common good' or the 'public interest' or the 'national interest' that we have discussed already.

'Free', compulsory, State-run education had its origins in the Protestant Reformation of the Sixteenth Century. Martin Luther looked at the way in which the State conscripted the youth of the day for military service and argued that if the State could acquire the bodies of these young people, why should not God (as interpreted by Luther) conscript their minds through compulsory public schooling. Another leading reformer of the era, John Calvin from Holland, had similar ideas about 'free' compulsory State-run education. His motive was to inculcate obedience to a Calvinist-run government. By so doing he was able to play his part in suppressing religious and political dissent. The early Puritans took this concept of a 'free' compulsory, State-run educational system with them to America for similar reasons. Although the State has now supplanted the Church as the dominant educational power, the system and its general purpose have persisted to the present day. The system is now so deeply entrenched in our culture that criticism of it is tantamount to the heresy of earlier times; but criticism there must be if we want the best for our children.

Why should older children be compelled to sit in class expected to show an interest in subjects that have little bearing on their lives? Why do we assume that education ceases at school when every student, once he can read, has access to a huge range of books, specialist magazines, computers and other such material and learning opportunities? Why do we force older students who are not interested in academic study just to sit there in class and, being bored, disrupt the others and develop into delinquents? Why do we not recognize that some students would be better off at an earlier age apprenticed in a trade of their own choosing? Why do we blissfully, on demand, hand over our children to the State without any show of resistance when we should know that whilst some aspects of their schooling may be good, other aspects are very bad? Why do most people check out the market first before buying a motor car or a refrigerator or a pair of shoes but automatically take the apparently 'cheapest' product when it comes to their children's education? (It is not cheap but very expensive as anyone who cares to check it out will find.)

When private (as opposed to government) education is proposed, many people are prone to throw up their hands in horror as the cost of such schooling conjures up mental pictures of schools such as Eton, Harrow, Geelong Grammar, the King's School (Sydney) or St Peter's College (Adelaide). A private school, however, is a school which is run privately and not by the State. A private school is one in which the money for attendance is given voluntarily by the parents or by some other person who wishes to help the child. It is not extracted by force from users and non-users alike as is the case with government schooling. A private school is one in which the school must supply the service required and run efficiently and economically or else not survive. The government school, on the other hand, does not have to supply the service required nor does it have to run efficiently and economically for it will survive

whatever it does. All it needs to do is to call for more and more of the taxpayers' money.

Private schooling without government restraints means diversity and diversity means excitement and progress. The market-place has a way of quickly determining which goods and services, at any one time, are wanted by the buying public and which suppliers will survive and prosper and which will fail unless they change their ways. The market will quickly determine the types of syllabuses and the quality of teaching that parents believe are in their children's best interests. With competition between schools, as with competition in any field of endeavour, quality rises and prices fall. If one wants not merely the good and the very good but the exceptional then one must be prepared to pay more for it just as one does today for an exceptional motor car or a luxury home.

The fact that, today, other people are paying for our children's education just as we are paying for the education of their children leads many people to believe that education is free. It is not. Whether we are talking about a government-run educational system or a private system, the bottom line is that, in both cases, someone has to foot the bill. From a financial point of view, history has repeatedly shown that a private system will invariably be cheaper than a public one if for no other reasons than that it is competitive, does not have to support a huge counterproductive bureaucracy and that it must run efficiently or else go out of business.

One of the most dangerous aspects of a government-controlled educational system is that it is a ready-made vehicle for the mass indoctrination of children. There is no denying that a private school or its individual teachers can also set out to condition children along lines of their own choosing as is the case today with many church-run schools. In a private system, however, parents have the opportunity to shop around if they are dissatisfied and find a school more to their liking. A system in which one may choose between a number of alternatives will always benefit consumers. Which teaching methods are considered to be superior and which inferior are determined not by the arbitrary pronouncements of a few public bureaucrats but by the buying public – millions of different men and women with different shades of opinion and with different expectations for their children. It is this unimpeded diversification in education and the free flow of new ideas that will be found necessary in the years ahead if our children are to take full advantage of the exciting prospects offered to them by modern science and technology.

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

"You are told by experts," Dorothy Green has written, "that language has to change. To which the only retort is that it does not necessarily change for the better and there is no reason it should change overnight because some illiterate ass has a microphone in front of his mouth".

Quoted by Stephen Murray-Smith in his book, 'Right Words – A Guide to English Usage in Australia'.

On the face of it, this may appear an odd topic for a book of this nature. It is not. Since World War II, there has been a steady decline in the standard of the spoken and written word.

Once the public bureaucrats in the Education Departments decided that the English Language was not a discipline to be taught by a system of grammar with its 'parsing and analysis' but was better treated as a hotchpotch of words to be strung together in almost any way that made a child feel comfortable, the writing was on the wall for the English language. One may be tempted to say – 'So what?' On a casual day to day basis it may not be important but standards become very important when one is writing a business letter, a contract, a will, an Act of Parliament or some other letter or document that could have serious implications in people's lives. When the writer is unable to express himself properly; when he does not fully understand the meaning of the words that he is using or when his writing does not make sense or else is ambiguous, the ramifications can be devastating. One could argue that if a document is sufficiently important, one should consult a solicitor, but the solicitor is probably a product of the same schooling system himself so that he, too, may be severely limited in his understanding of the language.

The consequences of this frightening change of direction in our schooling system are far-reaching although not always apparent to those who are not used to relating cause to effect. There are now generations of teachers who have been taught to despise English grammar with its 'parsing and analysis', who are turning out students in ever-increasing numbers who have very little real understanding of the language. To compound the problem, there are now new generations of lexicographers who are editing dictionaries so that their contents conform with the 'anything goes' philosophy of most English teachers. Using the argument that a language is constantly changing, they all too readily follow the mob so that the spellings, pronunciations and meanings of words in their updated dictionaries are liable to change so that they will keep pace with the ever-growing number of mistakes that are being made by the man in the street. No longer are many dictionaries authoritative works to which one may refer to distinguish the correct from the incorrect. No longer do they set consistently reliable standards for us to follow. All that many of them often tell us is how our next-door neighbours, who are no better versed in the English language than we are, spell, pronounce and use the words! Even some of the most 'eminent' judges in the land have now declared that, as far as their courts are concerned, words will be interpreted to mean that which the 'average man' thinks that they mean!

When a sloppy or ill-conceived decision is arbitrarily made by a few senior public bureaucrats, it can have disastrous consequences. Such is the case when such men and women decide to relax standards in the teaching of the English language so ensuring that generation after generation of children grow to adulthood with only a

meagre understanding of their own language. This is yet another example of what happens when people allow governments to dominate their lives.

THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM

“Left & Right. Since these terms were first used during the French Revolution, each has undergone so many shifts of meaning and been used to include so many, often contradictory, political tendencies that no precise definition is possible.”

*A Dictionary of Politics
Edited by Walter Laqueur*

So far in this book, the ‘intelligentsia’ has not scored many marks. Many teachers, university academics (mainly those in the so-called humanities), men and women of the Press, Radio and Television, writers, clerics and other such mind-benders have so distorted people’s thinking that it is rare to find a man or a woman today who is capable of seeing through the most elementary of fallacies. There is no better example of this than the political spectrum.

Conventional ‘wisdom’ has it that there is a ‘left’ and a ‘right’ on this spectrum. There is nothing wrong with this as ‘left’ and ‘right’ are merely terms which are meant to denote opposites. Opposites could just as readily be expressed as ‘black’ and ‘white’ or ‘high’ and ‘low’ or ‘thin’ and ‘fat’. What is of interest is not that opposites should be expressed as ‘left’ and ‘right’ but that for over half a century our ‘intellectuals’ have been so confused in their thinking that they have come to believe and then to teach that ‘left’ is ‘right’ and, by implication, that ‘black’ is ‘white’, ‘high’ is ‘low’ and ‘thin’ is ‘fat’.

This nonsense may well have had its origins in the days when Hitler was struggling for power in Germany. At that time, the Communists were also hoping to gain control of the Country. So there were, in effect, two gangs of thugs fighting amongst themselves in order to determine which gang would ultimately acquire power. As the Communists called themselves the ‘left’, it was understandable that to them their arch enemies, the Nazis, should become the ‘right’. This made sense only in so far as the Nazis were at the time the Communists’ local enemies. It did not make sense, however, in any philosophic or political way because both groups, Communist and Nazi, had a similar goal – total control over the German people. Admittedly, there were minor differences in their respective doctrines but the salient factor common to both of them was their commitment to authoritarian rule or ‘total government’. The essential difference between the two systems of government, Communist and Nazi, was in their different attitudes towards property. The Communist believed that the means of production (land, labour and capital) should be owned and hence controlled by the State, whereas the Nazi (and his soul-mate, the Fascist) allowed private individuals to ‘own’ the means of production but decreed that the State would control it. [If one should imagine that one can own something whilst another person is controlling it, one is surely living in cloud-cuckoo-land!] An understanding of this simple state of affairs was too much for so many of our ‘intellectuals’ who, for most of their lives, have been chasing their dream of a Communist/Socialist Utopia! If the leaders of the Communist/Socialist movement decreed that Nazism/Fascism was at the right of the spectrum, then so it would be. Who were the disciples to question the wisdom of their intellectual heroes?

The concept of having one brand of total government (Communism/Socialism) at one end of the political spectrum (the left) and another brand of total government (Nazism/Fascism) at the other end (the right) indicating opposites is obviously inane.

What the 'intellectuals' were attempting to do (and still continue to do) was to convince us all that totalitarianism is the opposite of totalitarianism or that black is the opposite of black!

[As I have introduced here three new terms to the discussion, it is only right that I should enlarge a little on them. The Italian term 'Fascism' is generally, today, a more common term than the German term 'Nazism'. Although there are certain minor differences between them, they are, for all practical purposes, the same thing. Similarly, Communism and Socialism are the same thing philosophically, but whereas in practice the Communist advocates bloody revolution to attain his goal, the Socialist is content to bide his time and achieve the same goal by less physically aggressive means. The means of production that I have referred to usually denote land, labour and capital i.e., land, people, money, tools, factories, business enterprises – all those factors involved in the production of wealth.]

The next problem for our 'intellectuals' was where to put Capitalism on their political spectrum. As Capitalism or Free Enterprise is the dreaded enemy of the Socialist/Communist and as Socialism/Communism is at the left of the spectrum, then Capitalism/Free Enterprise had to be placed at the right of the spectrum. So far – so good, but the reader will recall that, according to these same 'intellectuals', this position has already been taken by the Fascists and Nazis. So apparently we are expected to believe that Fascism/Nazism and Capitalism/Free Enterprise are, in substance, the same thing! This is the type of rubbish that has been, and no doubt will continue to be, served up to people on a daily basis by the Media, by teachers, by university professors, by clerics, writers, and a whole host of other like-minded sloppy thinkers.

In reality, the only spectrum that makes sense is one that groups together all those political systems that have as their goal 'total government' and places them all at the same end of the spectrum. It does not matter which end it is, but if we are to persist with the left/right terminology then, by convention, the left is the preferred end. This means that Communism, Socialism, Nazism, Fascism, the Divine Right of Kings and all other such totalitarian systems should be grouped together at the left and this conforms with the views of both Adolph Hitler and Benito Mussolini, the founders of the Nazi and Fascist movements respectively, who made no bones of the fact that their governments were, indeed, socialist in ideology.

If 'total government' is at one end of the spectrum, its opposite number must, in logic, be 'no government'. A 'system' of 'no government' is 'anarchy'. When most people think of an 'anarchist', they are likely to conjure up a mental picture of a man with a foreign accent who wears a woolly hat and an ankle-length overcoat concealing an assortment of hand-grenades that he is planning to hurl at some politician or public building. This mental picture is, once again, the work of the same 'intellectuals'. In actual practice, some people have become so disgusted with the manner in which governments behave, particularly in the way in which they abuse the power that is reputedly granted to them, that they say, in effect, "if governments are this bad and if they are so destructive and cause so much distress, why do we bother with them at all? Why do we not have a society without governments?" This is a fair question for anyone to ask for if one is observant one will have noticed already that just about everything that governments touch is either very badly run, grows like Topsy, costs a

fortune or else ultimately collapses under its own weight. There is not a glorious record. Anarchy, however, is far from an ideal state of affairs for if people have rights, which they have, then there must be some body or institution to protect those rights. It is this body or institution that we may call 'government'.

Sadly today, all major governments of the world are of enormous size, frighteningly powerful and hideously expensive. Furthermore, they are all, without exception, persistent violators of people's rights. There is, however, a political concept which is known as a 'limited government'. This is a government whose rôle is to do no more than protect people's rights and freedoms. It is a small government – a government limited in its powers to those areas necessary to protect people from external aggression (by means of armed forces), to protect people from internal aggression (by means of police forces) and to settle disputes amongst people according to objectively defined laws (by means of law courts). Anything else is deemed to be outside its province. In today's climate in which people have been conditioned to turn to governments rather as a child turns to its parents for guidance, control, care and pocket money, such a concept may be foreign but the concept is a sound one and has great merit both morally and in practice. Its day will no doubt come.

If one rejects anarchy as a 'political system', it is this 'limited government' that should, in logic, occupy the right of the spectrum. A limited government merely means that a government's powers are limited by the constitution so that it is a protector of people's rights and not a violator of them as is the case today. The only economic system consistent with a limited government is laissez-faire capitalism or pure free enterprise. In fact, the terms 'limited government', 'laissez-faire capitalism', 'capitalism' and 'free enterprise' are all interchangeable terms. When the 'intellectuals', however, refer to the right of the spectrum, they are invariably referring either to Nazism/Fascism, something that they wish to smear, or else to the mixed economy which to them is synonymous with capitalism. This mixed economy, however, is a hotchpotch of free enterprise overladen with a plethora of government controls. This mixed economy is the economic system that is accepted today, without question, by nearly all the major governments of the world and by most of their people. As we have seen, most 'intellectuals' have only a vague idea of the difference between the Mixed Economy, on the one hand, and Capitalism/Free Enterprise on the other and, as a consequence, they have allowed themselves to fall deeper and deeper into a philosophical mire. Because of their confusion they have found it necessary to coin a new position for Nazism/Fascism (total government) and a Limited Government (very small government). This position is no longer merely 'the right' but has now become 'the extreme right'. Once again, note how the 'intellectuals' have persisted in grouping opposite concepts together implying that they are, in essence, identical. By 'intellectual decree', 'black' and 'white' are the same and, therefore, henceforth both will be known as 'black'!

The words 'extreme' and 'extremist' are interesting words also, particularly in the hands of our 'intellectuals'. If an 'intellectual' wishes to smear an opponent because that person's views do not conform with his own left-oriented views, then he will probably refer to his opponent as 'an extremist' or as one with 'extreme right views'. This is meant to be the supreme put-down. As we have seen, the 'intellectuals' have no clear idea of what they mean by such terms but the two words 'extreme' and 'right' when expressed singly or preferably together, are guaranteed to completely

demoralize an opponent in a public debate and turn an otherwise tolerant audience into a swarm of bloodsucking vampires. For years the 'intellectuals' have taught that 'a reasonable man compromises'. The implication here is that if one takes a firm stand on a matter of principle, one is behaving in a socially unacceptable manner and one should quickly jettison one's principles and shift ground to a more central and civilized position. Any man who does not do this is to be damned – damned for sticking to his principles! This is a measure of the immorality of those who have taken it upon themselves to tell us all how we should think and behave.

Without clearly defining what they mean by 'an extremist', the 'intellectuals' are able to create an atmosphere of hatred against anyone with firm ideas or character traits – whatever those ideas or character traits might be. In a spectrum of the 'intellectuals' making, one cannot but wonder whether people should condemn the best along with the worst on the grounds that they are both extremes! Are a generous supply of goodness or great heroism or great kindness or great generosity or great honesty to be condemned solely because they are extreme examples of human qualities? If slavery is an extreme political condition, then so is freedom. Does this mean that, like slavery, freedom is also evil? The depths of depression and unbounded happiness are extreme emotions. Does this mean that unbounded happiness is bad? If it is wrong to hold extreme positions but right to compromise, does this mean that a mixture of honesty and dishonesty is preferable to all honesty; that a mixture of kindness and cruelty is better than all kindness; that a mixture of freedom and slavery is better than all freedom? Once again, the 'intellectuals' have clearly shown themselves to be unworthy of the rôle of our intellectual and moral mentors.

There is nothing wrong with compromising when one is searching for a practical solution to a problem. If you wish to travel from San Francisco to New York by train and I wish to go by air we could easily arrive at some mutually acceptable compromise, if not by tossing a coin, then by agreeing to travel half way by train and half way by air. When principles are involved, however, an honorable person does not compromise his principles. It may so happen that after serious reflection a man may change his principles. For example, a one-time advocate of socialism may become a champion of capitalism or even the other way around! The person of integrity, however, does not waver and wobble this way and that as he imagines circumstances demand. This is the way in which the unprincipled pragmatist behaves.

The man or woman of principle makes his or her stand and sticks to it. This does not mean, of course, that one is morally obliged to throw oneself in front of the State Juggernaut and be crushed by it or defy any villain with a gun or a baseball bat in his hand.

So far we have discussed both ends of the spectrum but what about the middle? It is here that the major parties of the non-totalitarian countries of the world find themselves, shifting marginally to the left or to the right as their pragmatism ordains. One could argue that the United States Republican Party, the British Conservative and the Australian Liberal and National Parties are slightly more to the right than are their opponents, the US Democrats, the UK Labour Party and the Australian Labor Party but there is really little to choose between them. They all believe in big

government, the Welfare State ideology and the Mixed Economy and should, therefore, all be placed somewhere to the left of centre. What differences there may be between the parties in power and their opposition are, in reality, trivial. Tweedledum and Tweedledee is as fitting a description as any. Admittedly in all parties there may be men and women who are philosophic Socialists and philosophic Capitalists but the majority are capable of advocating almost anything provided it will bring them votes. The ultimate determinant of policy is the voting public and it is the voting public whose opinions are moulded by the 'intellectuals' who have the final say. It is these 'intellectuals' as a group who must, therefore, bear the brunt of the blame for the sorry state of affairs that we call 'politics'. The political spectrum as presented by them is surely as damning an indictment as any of the mischief propagated by these people. For blaming capitalism or free enterprise for the failures of the mixed economy; for allying Capitalism/Free Enterprise with Nazism/Fascism; for damning 'the right' without bothering to identify the true nature of 'the right'; for castigating all forms of extremism regardless of their substance, quality or moral attributes; for raising 'compromise' to the level of a supreme virtue; for elevating slavery to a noble ideal; and for belittling individual liberty, the 'intellectuals' have succeeded in turning the excellent word 'intellectual' into a word that is virtually synonymous with left-wing politics, rabble-rousing, emotionalism, smearing, character assassination, ignorance and frank stupidity.

THE INTELLECTUALS' PHONEY POLITICAL SPECTRUM

LEFT			RIGHT	EXTREME RIGHT
Communism	Socialism	<u>Somewhere Here – Positions Unspecified</u> US Democrats UK Labour Party Australian Labor Party	US Republicans UK Conservatives Australian Liberals & Nationals	Nazism Fascism Limited Government Free Enterprise Capitalism Anarchism Sundry US Republicans Sundry UK Conservatives Sundry Australian Liberals & Nationals

THE TRUE POLITICAL SPECTRUM

LEFT		RIGHT	
Total Government e.g.	← US Republicans →	Limited Government	No Government (Anarchy)
Communism	← US Democrats →		
Socialism	← UK Conservatives →		
Nazism	← UK Labour →		
Fascism	← Australian Liberals →		
Totalitarianism under other names	← Australian Nationals →		
Slavery	← A Mixture of Slavery and Freedom →	Freedom	
← The Welfare State →			
Fully Controlled Economy	← The Mixed Economy →	Free Enterprise (Laissez-faire Capitalism)	
Ultimate Economic Collapse	← Economic Instability →	Economic Stability and Prosperity	

UNNECESSARY MATTERS

“Why Doesn’t The Government Pass A Law?”
The Department for Toilet Training
The Welfare State

“WHY DOESN'T THE GOVERNMENT PASS A LAW?”

An historic 1991 ruling by federal judge Howell Melton officially designated as ‘workplace misconduct’ the display on one’s desk or office wall of a picture of one’s wife wearing a bathing suit or any other outfit ‘not suited to or ordinarily accepted for the accomplishment of routine work’.

*Henry Beard and Christopher Cerf
(Sex and Dating – The Official Politically Correct Guide)*

How many people when confronted with a situation that disturbs them are not tempted to remark, “why doesn’t the Government pass a law?” This question has become so familiar that it has surely earned its place amongst the great clichés of our times. Although the question is simple and slithers off the tongue with thoughtless ease, it is nevertheless a question that can have the direst of consequences particularly if it is asked by someone who has more influence than most. If people should marvel at the mess that goes by the name of government, they would do well to follow the course of events that is likely to follow in the train of this apparently innocuous question. It is a sorry fact of life that politicians do not need encouragement to pass laws, for to them, the number of laws that they pass in a particular parliamentary session is an indication of the success of that session and of their government’s performance! The objective quality of the legislation is largely irrelevant.

We should never forget the old adage that ‘behind every law there is ultimately either a policeman’s baton or a soldier’s bayonet’. This is merely another way of driving home the point that behind the bland mask that gives the State apparatus its benign appearance, there lurks its real face – the face of an ugly, cynical, tyrannical monster. In a society in which the government is limited in its powers to those necessary to protect people’s rights rather than to violate them, it is criminals and criminals alone who break the laws. In a society in which the government wields an inordinate degree of power, however, it is not merely criminals but innocent people as well who break a large percentage of the laws. As the law-breaker is subject to the full force of the Law regardless of the type of law and the motivation that prompted it, large numbers of innocent people inevitably find themselves incarcerated in gaols or else threatened with it. In a system of unlimited majority rule in which, for practical purposes, there are no effective constitutional restraints imposed upon government legislation, the expression ‘freedom within the law’ is meaningless for freedom within the law was possible to everyone in both Nazi Germany and in the old Soviet Union. It was merely an unfortunate fact of life that the laws in those countries, at the time, were so all-embracing and restrictive that little worthwhile freedom was left over for the individual to enjoy. Should one wish to project the outcome of ever-increasing legislation in a limitless array of areas, let him look at those regimes and ponder his own future and that of his children and grandchildren. It is being unrealistic to maintain that such loss of liberty does not or could not occur in our own countries as it is already happening and has been happening consistently for a long period of time. It is because we are losing our freedoms little at a time that most people do not appear to notice the loss. Whenever a person says, “why doesn’t the government pass a law?” that person is either, consciously or unconsciously, advocating that one more nail be driven into the coffin of liberty for laws can never be directed at inanimate objects. They can only be directed at people. A law aimed at bicycles is not a law against bicycles but one

against those people who manufacture bicycles, who sell them, repair them or ride them. Similarly, a law 'to improve' the standard of medical care has nothing whatsoever to do with 'improving the standard of medical care' but all to do with controlling those who supply the medical care such as the doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, hospital workers and so on. All those laws controlling books, magazines, guns, alcohol, gambling, drugs, sexual aids, imports, exports, industrial relations, the manufacturing industry, the retail trade, the banks, primary production, sport, the arts, the environment, mining, discrimination, unfair dismissal and so on are not laws that control these inanimate 'things'. They are laws designed to control the people who are involved with these 'things'. "Why doesn't the government pass a law?" is just another way of saying "why doesn't the government deprive more and more people of more and more of their liberty?" There are, of course, people who are always happy to see other people deprived of more of their liberty but, curiously, these people always seem to object when they, themselves, are threatened with the loss of their liberty. One of the better-known examples is that of many university academics who preach and teach the blessings of ever-increasing government controls over people's lives but fight tooth and nail whenever they believe that their academic freedoms are being threatened!

Once the lawmaking progresses beyond the point at which it is designed solely to protect individuals and groups against physical force, fraud and coercion, it is only a matter of time before the laws proliferate to such an extent that some laws begin to contradict other laws. So long as pragmatism is the guiding philosophic rule in lawmaking, a whole series of 'ad hoc' laws will be passed. When these laws are found to be wanting, the politicians invariably find it 'necessary' to pass further laws to correct the deficiencies of the previous laws and to forestall their 'unforeseen' consequences. There is no end to this 'need' to legislate in order to 'correct' the harmful effects of the previous bad legislation. The greater the number of laws that are passed on an ever-widening range of subjects, the greater will be the possibility of one law clashing with another. The more complex the law becomes, so will the confusion surrounding it. With the ever-increasing volume of legislation, standards of drafting inevitably decline. Left to wrestle with this legislative nightmare, the lawyers have a field-day arguing amongst themselves as to the true meaning of the legislation and its real significance. Chaos leads to further chaos. People have no hope of knowing what the law on any particular subject really is. Only the lawyers can help but their views, too, are at best only opinions! In more and more cases, people are obliged to spend small fortunes on legal and court fees in order to find out from the Judges in their Law Courts what the law on a particular subject really is. As if this were not enough, an Appeal Judge may rule that the law does not mean that which the first Judge said it meant but something quite different. And who knows how the law will be interpreted once the Judges of an even higher court have looked at the legislation and given their opinions – opinions that will probably not be unanimous! No business man or woman can hope to run a successful business in this muddled uncertain climate as no-one has any way of knowing where he stands at any one time in relationship to the Law. Nor does he know when he might be charged with an offence – an offence about which he may never have even heard. Nor can he feel reasonably confident that he will not be sued by someone whom he does not know, for a reason that he does not understand, concerning a topic that does not make sense, which has nothing whatsoever to do with honest or dishonest trading, and which is not even marginally related to justice. Once a man has been

pushed on to this legal merry-go-round there is no way for him to know how long the ride will last. The man doing the suing may have unlimited funds at his disposal or he may be receiving government legal aid and hence be using his victim's own money to bring him down. As the recipient of government legal aid will have all to gain and nothing to lose, why should he not utilize the Law to the limit and get out of it as much as he can? When your case commences, if you have more money than the fellow bringing the action against you, as almost certainly will be the case if he is the recipient of government legal aid, then the chances are that the Judge will be emotionally drawn towards him rather than towards you. Having been dragged into the Court system you may not now be able to get out of it should you wish to do so without capitulating, for your life is now in someone else's hands. You are in this plight not because you have done anything morally wrong but because you have possibly infringed one of those many laws brought into being because of the people who said, "why doesn't the government pass a law?"

There are now so many laws covering so many different aspects of life that the legal system has evolved into an ugly game of Russian Roulette in which no-one can be certain when the hammer will fall on a live cartridge and destroy a life, for the cost of a prolonged Court Case, either criminal or civil, is guaranteed to cripple financially all but the wealthiest of people. Although most Judges obviously have a personal philosophic bias, their prime duty is to interpret the Law, however silly, dangerous or unjust a particular law may be. When a law is poorly conceived or badly drafted so that it does not make sense, then the Judiciary will find itself in the position of lawmaker! In this uncertain and unsafe legal climate, there is no way in the world that commerce and industry can consistently prosper. The only hope for their management and shareholders is for them to uproot their enterprises and move them overseas out of the clutches of the interfering politicians and their armies of counterproductive public bureaucrats. Sadly as more and more countries follow the pattern set for them by the Western mixed economy democracies so the number of safer havens shrinks.

Meanwhile, many of the younger men and women of ability will have had second thoughts about starting new businesses of their own so that the field is largely left to those who have learnt to adjust to the System and to rely on political pull and government hand-outs rather than on innovation and business acumen.

THE DEPARTMENT FOR TOILET TRAINING

And he gave it for his opinion that whoever could make two ears of corn or two blades of grass to grow upon a spot of ground where only one grew before, would deserve better of mankind, and do more essential service to his country than the whole race of politicians put together.

*Jonathan Swift (1667-1745)
(Voyage to Brobdingnag – Gulliver's Travels)*

As far as I am aware, there is not as yet a Department for Toilet Training in my own Country, but at the rate that new government departments are emerging, it is surely only a matter of time.

This section has been inserted to highlight the manner in which politicians and public bureaucrats build empires for themselves at the expense of those whom they pretend to represent and to serve. There is barely a human activity that modern day politicians and public bureaucrats do not claim to be within their orbit of control. We have already seen how the early rulers acquired power for themselves and how they reinforced this power by usurping control over the supply of money. The concept of Law Courts is an old one as is the concept of armies for defensive purposes (although that of armies for aggressive purposes is even older). The concept of a Police Force to protect people from thugs, confidence tricksters and the like is a fairly recent innovation. In the more modern world, things such as roads, water supply and sewerage systems soon came under the government umbrella as did education, power, transport, the postal services and telecommunications. Even at this stage, governments wielded enormous power but it was still little compared to that which was to follow.

Although Otto von Bismarck in the 1880's had created in Germany the world's first Welfare State, it was not until just after the Second World War that this socialist concept burst on to the world scene as a full-blown political ideology in most of the major democratic countries of the world. From that time onwards, there were virtually no limits imposed on governments in their mad scramble to find new areas into which to spread their power and influence. Should the reader have any doubts on this subject let him pore over a big city's telephone directory and note the number of government departments, subdepartments and sections of subdepartments for himself. If they are not listed, perhaps the activities undertaken by them are. It can be an illuminating and frightening exercise.

The assumption of our rulers and their advisers is that most individuals are incapable of organizing anything for themselves whilst, at the same time, behaving in a civilized manner. It is for this reason that the politicians and public bureaucrats (most of whom will never have made an honest productive dollar in their lives) feel obliged to create a series of government departments in order to show people how they should go about their activities. They do this by laying down strict guide-lines to be followed and instructions to be obeyed with a set of punishments listed for those who venture to show their independence and step out of line. The nature of the topic for which the government department has come into existence is not really important for the assumption of governments is that so long as there is a topic, the government should be in control of it. This is why we have government departments, subdepartments and sub-subdepartments for just about everything. Let one's imagination run free and one will most likely find a subsection somewhere that handles that particular

topic. If you are contemplating setting up a club for geriatrics who play marbles, no doubt the Department for Sport would be there to help you and to ensure that the rules of marbles are not infringed. [Or should you have consulted the Department for Recreation or maybe the Department for the Aged?] If you want to open up your garden for the enjoyment of paying visitors, no doubt the Department for Tourism could tell you how to go about it and lend a hand. [Or should you have consulted the Department of Horticulture?] After all, it is important for you to know which laws you might inadvertently be breaking or whether, perhaps, you may be eligible for a government grant! Should you wish to display the finger-paintings of your three-year-old son, Gerald, perhaps the Department for the Arts might agree to find a gallery for you and subsidize the showing. With luck, the government art gallery might even buy one of Gerald's paintings. If your daughter, Clarabelle, has just begun menstruating and you are uncertain as to what to tell her, it is comforting to know that the social workers in the Department for Youth or in the Health Department or in the Department for Women's Affairs or in some other department are there to give her trauma counselling. If your eighty-two-year-old grandfather wants to become a jockey, who better to consult than the Minister for Horse-Racing or should you first consult someone in the Department for Sport or the Commissioner for the Aged or the Assistant Commissioner in the Adult Education Section of some other Department?

Once all this nonsense has begun, there is no stopping it. If we have a Department for Women's Affairs, surely in order to prevent the government from having to bring a legal action against itself under its own anti-discrimination laws, it would have to create a Department for Men's Affairs also! Then it could be claimed with some degree of logic that the government is discriminating against homosexuals necessitating yet another department – for homosexual affairs. (Perhaps there is such a department already!) If we have a Department for Sport to supervise the games that people play and if that Department trains many sportsmen and sportswomen at the taxpayers' expense, why do we not have a Department for Hobbies to encourage, train and subsidize bridge-players, tapestry-makers, stamp-collectors and model-train enthusiasts? If cockroaches are an ever-present problem, why do we not have a Department for Cockroach Control? The mind boggles at the possibilities open to our politicians. The only reason that I will not continue in this vein is lest some fool politician reads what I have written and feels obliged to create such a series of departments.

Elsewhere in this book, the subject of a 'Limited Government' is discussed. Here in this section, I have highlighted what happens when there are no clear guide-lines laid down to curb the activities of governments. Without such guide-lines, governments run wild and government departments begin sprouting like weeds in the rose garden. Once this process has begun, each government department acts according to its nature and grows like Topsy. The costs of running each department of this public bureaucracy also grow like Topsy and the taxes needed to pay these costs grow like Topsy. The laws, rules, regulations and by-laws that are spawned by all these government departments grow like Topsy and the reasons for putting people behind bars for breaking the laws, rules, regulations and by-laws created by these government departments grow like Topsy.

It was George Washington who so aptly said: “Government is not reason; it is not eloquence – it is force.”

THE WELFARE STATE

“Social gains”, “social aims”, “social objectives” have become the daily bromides of our language. The necessity of a social justification for all activities and all existence is now taken for granted. There is no proposal outrageous enough but what its author can get a respectful hearing and approbation if he claims that in some undefined way it is for “the common good”.

*Ayn Rand
(Anthem – Author’s Foreword)*

The Welfare State concept is so firmly established in the minds of most people and in our politico-economic system that any criticism of it, however mild, is usually enough to have the critic castigated as a heartless ogre intent on taking the bottles from babies’ mouths. The subject is so interlaced with emotion, humbug, hypocrisy, dishonesty, irrationality, crocodile tears and just plain thuggery that most people are incapable of seeing through the fraud that it really is.

To some people, the Welfare State is a great system provided that they, themselves, are receiving hand-outs from it but not such a great system when they are obliged to pay for the hand-outs to other people, particularly if those other people are people whom they do not like. To most people, however, the Welfare State is merely something that always has been and always will be!

Nevertheless, for the serious critic, it means that he must be prepared to join battle with every politician who understands where his votes come from; with armies of public bureaucrats who are under no illusions as to why they have their jobs; with large numbers of welfare recipients who are fully aware of the side on which their bread is buttered; and with the vast majority of ‘intellectuals’ who must dread the thought of the world that they have so assiduously helped to build, being exposed as an ugly hollow sham. The man bold enough to assail this Welfare State monster will inevitably be branded with every objectionable adjective and irrational label in the book. He will become heartless, uncaring, cruel, brutal, even mad. He may become a fascist, a red-neck, one who wants to turn back the clock to some prehistoric age, an advocate of ‘dog eat dog’, a strange anachronism living in the modern age. He will be accused of all these things and more. Such is the venom that is invariably reserved for anyone who is prepared to tell things as they really are and who, in the process, steps on the sensitive toes of a powerful self-seeking establishment. Let us, however, discard our rose-coloured spectacles and look at this thing called ‘The Welfare State’ as it really is. Why is it that it is claimed by so many people to be ‘one of the great achievements of mankind’; ‘one of the symbols of a civilized society’; a ‘necessity in any sophisticated country’ and ‘an enlightened sign of the benevolence of the human spirit’? For the answer to this question one will have to turn to the philosophers, the academics, the teachers, the clerics, the newspaper editors, in fact to all those people who preach the altruist philosophy – the philosophy that postulates, amongst other things, that if one is in need of something, then one is morally justified in stealing it. However much the ‘do-gooders’ may deny this; however much they may attempt to deceive themselves into believing that their actions are above reproach; whatever devious arguments they may devise to soothe their twisted consciences, the fact remains that this is, indeed, what they have been preaching in their university lecture halls, in their school class-rooms, from their pulpits and in their newspaper columns for the better part of a century.

The concept of the Welfare State, reduced to its fundamentals, is all about 'need' and 'extortion'. If your next-door neighbour claims that he needs something, then rather than work for it or come to some arrangement with his friends whereby they will help him to get it, he should be able, according to the Welfare Statists, to turn to his government and have that government extort the 'necessary' money from you and give it to him! According to the Welfare Statists, this is the civilized and honourable way in which to behave! Of course, you must understand that should you refuse to hand over your hard-earned money for your neighbour's use, then the government acting as your neighbour's agent, will threaten you with incarceration in a government prison. This nasty little touch of 'persuasion' is graced by the noble title of 'the benevolent State'! Let us not be under any illusions. If I am hungry or broke or just short of money and I threaten you and demand that you hand over your money to me, I am an extortionist. I am a thug. I am a criminal and I deserve the punishment that will be meted out to me. The fact that I am hungry or broke or just short of money can never be justification for my behaviour. Once the 'intellectuals' had accepted a philosophy which postulated that need was a justification for thuggery, the civilization which accepted these men and women as its moral mentors was in serious trouble. For one to claim that there is a moral difference between the case of one man who commits thuggery and the case of a group of men who commit thuggery, is to distort the meaning of the word 'morality'. To claim that a group of men and women who call themselves a government should be able to commit thuggery or extortion with impunity whereas an individual should be sent to gaol for a long period of time for doing exactly the same thing is to distort the concept of justice. To claim that it is not extortion when governments take the money because they give it away to those who need it, is no different from the individual thug claiming that he is not a thug as he extorted the money in order to give it to his girl friend who also needed it. To pretend that when governments extract money by force or by the threat of force, it is not extortion but when individuals do exactly the same thing, it is extortion, is to show a contempt for the language, a contempt for logic, a contempt for truth and a contempt for intellectual honesty. Perhaps when we view the young and not-so-young hoodlums who terrorize our cities and towns, snatch the bags from old ladies' hands, burgle our homes and demand money at knife-point, we would do well to ask ourselves who implanted the philosophic ideas into the ugly little heads of these thugs and who encouraged them to look upon other people's property as theirs, merely because they claim to need it in order to support a drug habit or some other irrational craving.

Once people realized the secret of the Welfare State; once they realized that they could get money by demanding it more easily than they could by working for it, they increased their demands. To begin with, most people did not have to demand all that much, for the politicians were quick to realize the enormous vote-catching potential of the new system. What is more, they could pretend that it was their money that they were giving away and that they were giving it away for no other reason than that they were all big-hearted, highly benevolent fellows!

The Welfare State is now such an unwieldy monster and is growing at such an alarming rate that it is rare to find a person who is not a recipient of someone else's money so that nearly everyone is living off someone else to varying degrees – some people to a greater degree than others. The public trough has become so large and so much a part of our way of life that more and more people are demanding more

and more hand-outs for more and more reasons. Once the concept of 'need' was firmly established in the culture as a moral justification for the extortion of money, it was only a matter of time, and one small intellectual step, before this concept was extended to include that of 'want'. Today, merely to want something is generally claimed to be a sufficient moral justification for one to demand money from the government! If your neighbour wants money for his son's football team; money for his wife's amateur theatricals; money for the book he hopes to write on 'the sex life of pixies' or any of a thousand other such trifling projects, the Welfare State is there to help him out financially – at your expense. This hand-out mentality has now radically changed the character of a significant proportion of the population so that many men and women who were once strong and independent are now weak and dependent. The 'do-gooders' have done their job well!

The underlying philosophy of the Welfare State and its debilitating effects on the morale of people is one thing; the economic effects, however, are another and it is these that we will now discuss. One of the great ironies of the Welfare State is that it is governments, themselves, that create the economic disasters that bring about so much human misery; and it is the same governments that create even more misery when they attempt, through the Welfare State, to alleviate the distress that they have already occasioned by their prior misguided policies. The Welfare State is the story of the dog that chases its tail.

If one accepts the altruist philosophy, one must accept the concept of the Welfare State; and if one accepts the concept of the Welfare State then one must accept the fact that enormous amounts of money will be needed to feed it. A government, however, is not a gigantic storehouse of limitless wealth. Whereas in a private or public company the senior management is selected by those who have voluntarily invested money in the company and given it its working capital, the politicians and public bureaucrats have no money with which to begin their ventures except for that which they can extract by the threat of force from the public. If a private or public company consistently makes silly decisions, it will sooner or later go bankrupt. A government that consistently makes silly decisions, on the other hand, can go on making them for as long as it can convince the public that what it is doing is in everyone's best interests. It may even suggest to them that the government is actually doing a fine job and that lack of funds is the real cause of the problem. Increased amounts of money are, therefore, extorted from people in the form of taxes – not necessarily just one tax but many different taxes. This means that, at a personal level, it may no longer be possible for many people on lower incomes to put as much money aside as they would like for that rainy day; for their children's education; for private medical insurance; or simply to buy new clothes. As a result of the drop in personal savings brought about by taxation, large sums of money (small amounts from many people) are no longer available to the banks to lend to business men to enable them to extend their factories or build new ones and, in the process, create more jobs. With money lost to people because of taxation, parents may no longer be able to afford a private education for their children and so they enrol them in the government schooling system which now, in turn, needs more money because of the extra student enrolments. The same happens with private medical insurance. As more and more money is forcibly extracted from people in order to prop up the government health system, so more and more people find that they are no longer able to afford private health insurance. They consequently drop out of it and rely

solely on the government system. This adds to the cost of the government system which means that still more money must be extracted from people which means that even more people drop out of private health insurance, and so it goes on. In the same way, because of heavy taxation to support the Welfare State, Mr. Jones may find that he is unable to afford that new suit so that the tailor misses out on an important sale, and if this happens to him often, as it possibly will, then he will have to put off staff or else go out of business himself and so add to the growing government dole bill.

Generally speaking, in order not to upset too many voters, governments tend to prefer a more ferocious assault on the pockets of those whom they label 'the rich' much to the delight of 'the poor', but the savings of 'the rich' are just as important as are the savings of 'the poor' for when we talk about tax, we are talking not merely about income tax and sales taxes but about provisional tax and company tax, payroll tax, capital gains tax and a host of other taxes. All these taxes mean that vast sums of money, much of which would otherwise have been pumped back into the factories and businesses are no longer available for this purpose. Without this investment capital, business slows. As business slows, men and women are put out of work and unemployment levels rise. As unemployment levels rise, there are inevitably more Welfare State hand-outs which means that more money is needed by the government and hence more taxes are exacted and so business slows further and unemployment levels rise higher – the dog chasing it's tail! The politicians with an hypocrisy unique to themselves now bewail the fact that people have lost the will to save!

There is, however, at any one time, a limit beyond which it is unwise for the politicians to go when taxing the public. This is why governments resort to a more devious method of 'finding' the necessary money. The method goes by the name of 'deficit financing' and takes the form of government borrowing (from either local or overseas lenders) and inflation (the printing of more money and extending bank credit by a little official sleight of hand). The money borrowed, of course, will eventually have to be paid back with interest (unless the government declares itself bankrupt in the interim) and that money will have to be found either by means of further taxation, further inflation, further borrowing or by all three together. Unlike borrowing, however, inflation is beautifully sneaky. It pushes people into higher tax brackets so that although they are actually no better off than they previously were, they are now obliged to pay higher taxes! Once a government has made its decision to inflate or else to increase the rate of inflation, it is not easy for it, politically, to reverse the process as to do so will probably bring about a recession or a depression. Therefore, there is always the temptation for governments to keep on inflating and, if possible, to pretend that they are not doing so by keeping prices down by other methods such as price controls and by entering into deals with unions. They may even distort the true picture by fiddling with the cost of living figures. Inflation also destroys the savings of people on fixed incomes so that older people are no longer able to live off their savings and are now obliged to apply for government pensions. This adds further to the costs of the Welfare State. Inflation also distorts the economy as it changes the signals for the business man so that he may be led falsely to believe that he should expand his business at a time when, in actual practice, he should be consolidating it. By the time he has realized his mistake, the damage is done and he finds that he must now put off workers. The

Welfare State now braces itself, once again, for more hand-outs. As the costs of the Welfare State escalate so the economy stumbles from one crisis to another. It is now that the politicians tell us that if we are only prepared to hang on a little longer, everything will be better next year!

To deprive a man of the monetary wherewithal necessary for him to protect himself and his family and then when he is unable to pay his way, to give him a hand-out and to call that hand-out an act of humanitarianism is to demonstrate a degree of hypocrisy unique even for the most hypocritical of hypocrites.

Most socialists and their fellow-travellers, without any clear understanding of their subject, take great delight in portraying Capitalism (a system in which people deal with one another voluntarily and to mutual advantage) as a 'dog-eat-dog' system. In actual practice what better example of such a system could there possibly be than the Welfare State – a system in which everyone, to varying degrees, whether he wishes it or not, lives off someone else! In reality, it is the Welfare State that is the ultimate philosophic expression of the 'dog-eat-dog' politico-economic system.

Once governments have begun doling out hand-outs, it becomes virtually impossible for them, politically, to stop the process, particularly as over the years they have drummed into people's heads the silly and cruel notion that they have a 'right' to these hand-outs. Sadly, most people have allowed themselves to be lulled into accepting morally bankrupt doctrines and economic systems that are not only inane but are also built on fraudulent foundations. The Welfare State with its vast public feeding troughs and its almost limitless array of hand-outs has now become so all-pervading that one cannot help but compare it to the free bread and circuses of ancient Rome – the political device instituted by Rome's rulers to curry favour with the mob and so strengthen their hold over the people. If we are ever to correct the mess created by the Welfare Statists, our first step must be to understand the reason why we have allowed it all to happen. Happily, this Section will have helped to provide that answer.

DESTRUCTIVE MATTERS

Ecology, Environmentalism, Conservation and Pollution
The Anti-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity Laws
Government Health Programs
Consumer Protection

ECOLOGY, ENVIRONMENTALISM, CONSERVATION AND POLLUTION

Examine what is said, not him who speaks.

Arab proverb

ECOLOGY

Ecology is a scientific word well established in the English language. It may be defined as 'the study of the relationship of plants and animals to their environment and to each other'. Unless one has considerable knowledge of the subject, ecology is a word best reserved for the biologist. It should be pointed out, however, that merely because a man has a university science degree, it does not automatically mean that he thinks scientifically for there are men and women with science degrees who will happily supply 'scientific evidence' to 'prove' that the earth is only a few thousand years old, that God built it in seven days and that Adam and Eve established the human race. When a man calls himself an ecologist, it does not automatically follow that he is a good ecologist. He may be. He may not be. His views on the cooling or the warming of the planet, for example, may be arrived at by a process of clear reasoning using impeccable scientific data or they may be arrived at by emotion. It is important to know which.

ENVIRONMENTALISM and CONSERVATION

Environmentalism and Conservation are virtually interchangeable words. Their modern meaning is 'concern for, and the preservation of, the environment'. Although the word 'environment' is an old word meaning 'one's surroundings', its usual meaning, today, together with the word 'environmentalism', has nothing whatsoever to do with its original meaning. In the same way, the word 'conservation' which originally meant the preservation of a specific thing, has now come to mean the preservation of just about everything on earth! Neither of these words 'environmentalism' or 'conservation' (in their modern forms) is a scientific word. Both are concocted words without precise meaning; both are emotive words; both are political words; and both words are probably meaningless.

Although to most people, the words are interchangeable, I will use the word 'environmentalism' to cover a world-wide movement and the word 'conservation' to cover matters at a local level.

ENVIRONMENTALISM

If the environmentalist is concerned for the preservation of what he calls 'the environment', then by his own admission, he is concerned for the preservation of the land and everything that is naturally on it such as the trees, shrubs and grasses; the animals, birds and insects; and everything that is underneath it such as the minerals. He is also concerned for the preservation of all the water such as the oceans, seas, rivers and lakes and all the life in it such as the mammals, fish and coral. He is also concerned for the preservation of everything above the land and the water viz. the atmosphere. The self-imposed responsibility of the environmentalist, therefore, is to protect the earth and almost everything on it, in it, underneath it and above it! But we have not finished yet. We have left out one important factor – man and his products. If one is to be logical on this premise then obviously man, being one of the

animals, should be included in the list of creatures to be preserved by the environmentalists, as should also the products of his mind and his muscles. Were these products not to be included it would be rather like including the ants but not their anthills and the birds but not their nests. So now everything on earth has become the responsibility of the environmentalists and that, surely, is either paranoiac madness in its most grotesque form, or if it is not, then it is authoritarianism by subterfuge.

By now, hopefully, some of the fringe environmentalists will be feeling distinctly uneasy, whilst others will be getting ready to point out that man and his products are not to be considered as part of the environment, so let us consider that argument. If man and his products are not to be considered as part of 'the environment' then one must ask why it is that he is to be excluded. Is it because man is the most successful and complex of all forms of life? If so, then why is he to be deemed as unworthy of preservation? Why are most of the products of his mind to be downgraded and why must man take second place to the trees, the shrubs, the grass, the hyenas, the dolphins, the koalas, the scorpions, the eagles and the sharks? For the answer to this question we must go back in time and look at the origins of the 'green movement' and see it for what it really is – not a scientific movement at all but a political movement.

Socialism, even from its earliest days, was not a politico-economic system worthy of more than passing academic interest. Nevertheless, it captured the imaginations of large numbers of 'intellectuals' world-wide even after it had shown itself to be, at best, an unworkable system and, at worst, a system of extreme brutality. In spite of this, the 'intellectuals' persisted and over many generations helped to pour out from the schools and universities all over the world, a veritable torrent of academic socialists many of whom would later, by popular vote, attain positions of power and influence in their own countries. In some smaller countries, other academic socialists would grab power and rule like little Hitlers and Stalins and, in so doing, lead their countries down the slippery slope to ruin.

Economically, Socialism is a system doomed to failure from the beginning whilst, politically, it has only one road to take – the road to tyranny and this is exactly what happened, in practice, in the old Soviet Union and its satellites. The USSR, throughout its brief life, struggled from crisis to crisis, economically, before finally collapsing as, in logic, it had to and then, after half a century of one of the cruelest tyrannies in history, it disintegrated politically. Following its demise, public opinion in those countries of the West which had at various times come under the sway of socialist politicians, swung sharply against socialism as a political doctrine. Most people recognized that it was not the benign political philosophy and the economic 'cure-all' that the 'intellectuals' had for so long portrayed it to be. Even die-hard socialist politicians now avoided using the word 'socialism' considering it a word more likely to lose them votes than to gain them votes. A leopard, however, does not change its spots. Although politically and economically, socialism had for many years been seriously ill and facing imminent death, philosophically it was very much alive and well and getting ready to re-emerge under different colours. The concepts of altruism, pragmatism, unlimited majority rule, 'the common good' and 'the national interest' remained as firmly ensconced in the culture as they ever had been, as did the contemptuous attitude towards individual rights including property rights. So, as

the aging men and women of the 'Old Left' decided that it was time for them to put their old vehicle up on blocks in the garage, their sons and daughters, imbued with the same fervour that their parents had once shown, gave the old car a superficial clean, repainted it in a splurge of gaudy colours and put it back on the road under a different name. The 'Old Left' had become the 'New Left'. This 'New Left' emerged in the 1960's with the hippie and beatnik movements and has flourished ever since in a variety of forms. In essence, it is a conglomerate of ideas and behaviour. Nothing is too bizarre for 'the movement' – a large chunk of left-wing politics, a hotchpotch of half-baked philosophical ideas, a predilection for drugs, Marxist economic theory, a certain contempt for parents, goodly chunks of mysticism, hatred of the successful and things material, the elevation of parasitism and the granting of special privileges to something akin to holy status, revolutionary aspirations, a detestation of industrialization, the downgrading of reason, an attraction to communal living, a fascination with the concept of a global dictatorship, a revolt against progress, a rejection of the work ethic, sexual promiscuity, the embracing of Eastern religions and a whole host of other exotic and crackpot ideas and forms of behaviour. It is this group of 'intellectual' and social misfits that is the motive force behind the Environmentalist/Conservationist Movement. Sadly, the movement has its fellow-travellers, as did its predecessor – the old Left – the people who are captivated by the fine words, the lofty sounding ideas, the empty phrases and the suspect science. What most of the fellow-travellers fail to recognize is that the environment and conservation are the least of the concerns of the hard core of the Movement. It is their intense hatred of anything that smacks of capitalism – private property, industry, personal success, profit and progress that is anathema to the leaders of the Movement. It is only when seen in its true light that an understanding of the Movement and the behaviour of most of its members is possible. Their irrationality is best illustrated by the desire of many of them to turn back the clock to a time when people lived a more primitive existence without science, without technology and without factories to produce the goods that these same people could not do without such as the life-saving drugs, the surgeon's tools, radios, television sets and motor cars let alone sewerage systems, clean water and a wide variety of healthy foodstuffs.

CONSERVATION

As we have seen already, 'public property' such as mountain ranges, vast tracts of land, natural forests, rivers, lakes, oceans, beaches, swamps and so on can very quickly become a battle ground to be fought over by those people who want everything to remain as it is and those people who want to change things. When the government which owns the 'public property' under dispute is asked to adjudicate between the warring parties, its first reaction, invariably, is to stall by setting up a Government Inquiry. When stalling is no longer politically acceptable and when the government feels compelled to act, it carefully weighs up the votes likely to be won or lost and comes down heavily on the side that it believes will ensure it the greater chance of success at the next election. With this decision, many people agree and are happy whilst many other people disagree and are unhappy. A couple of governments later, however, the same little charade is likely to be played out all over again. This time, perhaps, the once happy people become the unhappy people and the once unhappy people become the happy people and so it goes on – a little like the Hundred Years War – maybe finishing only when everyone is thoroughly

exhausted, half of them emotionally and the other half financially, but all by now well and truly tied up in bureaucratic red tape.

Now let us look at conservation when it applies to private property. Here you should not think for a moment that this refers to you conserving your property because it does not. It refers to other people, many of them living on the other side of town or on the other side of the Country or even on the other side of the world, 'conserving' your property at your expense not for your benefit but for theirs! If a conservationist down the street takes a liking to the trees on property that you naively believe to be yours, he may set the government wheels in motion to prevent you from chopping them down. There are no prizes for guessing where this authoritarian thinking originated. If you buy land with the intention of building on it a golf course, a resort or a village for retired people, any conservationist group of 'do-gooders' and 'ferals' can prevent you from going ahead with your project. The government, for fear of losing the 'green' votes, will probably stand aside and give these people their heads at your expense. If a conservationist in the next street takes a fancy to your house, he may approach the appropriate government department and, hey presto, your treasured home soon appears as 'heritage listed'. Whatever you may think about this, your home is now out of bounds to you as a would-be handyman, but have no fear. To compensate you for your loss of freedom you will receive, in return, a pretty little metal plaque which you are invited to screw to the outside wall of your little love nest. Maybe you think all this is great but, on the other hand, maybe you do not. In any case, you are now told what you can do and what you cannot do by way of altering the structure, the shape and the decorations of your own home; and if and when the time comes for you to sell your home, you will be obliged to offer it for sale with all the bureaucratic restrictions imposed upon it. You may, of course, just be lucky and find a sucker who relishes such restrictions being placed on him but, on the other hand, you may not.

All this high-handed behaviour is carried out in the name of 'conservation' and the 'national interest' by politicians and public bureaucrats egged on by a small self-proclaimed 'cultural élite' most of whom would probably not have felt out of place in the 'Property Acquisition Department' of the old Third Reich. With the success of a National Heritage under their belt it was not surprising that the conservationists should next come up with an even grander concept – this time that of a 'World Heritage', and this they achieved with barely a murmur of dissent from a complacent public. This 'World Heritage' monstrosity apparently means that certain vast tracts of either public or private land, certain public or private buildings and certain public or private objects may, at the whim of a small self-appointed clique of 'experts', be arbitrarily 'acquired' in some nebulous fashion by 'the world' in the name, presumably, of the 'international interest'! The idea is then wrapped up in evasively sanctimonious verbiage and foisted on to a gullible public in a manner suggesting that the citizens of a Country should feel proud to have 'the world' 'acquire', at no cost to 'itself', great tracts of land, sea, buildings and objects, both public and private, in the citizens' own Country! The blissfully innocent, the stupid and the Machiavellian schemers who aspire to play important rôles in some hoped for world government no doubt all find such a concept appealing. To one who respects national independence and who is a lover of individual liberty, the whole concept, however, is repugnant.

As we have seen, it is not merely the land, the vegetation on it and the minerals beneath it, the oceans, lakes and rivers and the atmosphere above them, as well as selected buildings and objects that are to be preserved unchanged, but also the animal life, principally those creatures that are indigenous to an area. The best way, however, to ensure that an animal or vegetable species will survive is to cultivate it for commercial purposes, but such a program could operate successfully only in a capitalist society that respected individual rights including property rights. It is ironic that this is the very system that the conservationists abhor above all others.

If the 'greenies' were genuine in their desire to preserve certain areas of 'public' land and water or buildings and objects in their present state, they would advocate a politico-economic system in which all property was privately owned and in which property rights were respected. Thus would they be able to club together to buy such property and hold it in trust for whatever purpose they wished. That they should choose not even to consider this possibility but elect rather to forcibly thwart others in their developmental projects, reinforces the remarks already made about this philosophically degenerate Movement. It is, therefore, highly unlikely that the conservationists will have any long-term success in preserving the fauna and the flora of a country but, as we have seen already, conservation is not the ultimate aim of the Conservationist Movement.

It should not be too great a step into the future for one to visualize a time when people who wished to preserve land, buildings or objects that were already in private hands, might consider clubbing together and making the owner or owners a generous offer for them. Thus everyone would be justly treated. If people were not prepared to put their money where their mouths are, they would not deserve to be taken seriously.

The concepts of 'public property', 'the national interest', 'the public good', 'a National Heritage', 'a World Heritage' and environmentalist/conservationist politics are all concepts in direct conflict with those of individual liberty and progress. Sooner or later, people will have to decide on which side of the fence they intend to stand. If they choose the wrong side, they will have only themselves to blame for the consequences.

POLLUTION

'Pollution' is a lay word as well as a scientific word and it may embrace aspects of Chemistry, Physics, Biology, the Law and huge chunks of Politics. It is a word that is reasonable for a layman to use so long as he is aware of his scientific limitations.

Whereas animals are equipped by nature to adjust to their environment, man is not. In order to survive, even at the most primitive level, man must discover and produce everything that he needs; which means that he must alter his background and adapt it for his own use. In other words, man has to manufacture things – everything from the simple fire, stone axe and crude spear of his early ancestors to the aeroplanes and computers of today. Man's well-being has always been dependent upon his success as a producer. It is this fact that does not appear to have been noticed or else understood by today's environmentalists whose thinking seems to run something like this –

- a) man is an environmental outlaw;
- b) the worst of these outlaws are the business men and women, particularly the entrepreneurs and industrialists who must be severely curtailed by the State 'in the public interest';
- c) some form of an all-powerful world government may be necessary if these polluters are to be effectively controlled in all countries;
- d) if these national or international controls happen to send entrepreneurs and industrialists out of business, so what – who cares!
- e) why don't we all lower our sights and go back in time and live as our ancestors lived in some 'idyllic pollution-free pre-industrial age'?

It is interesting to note how so many of these environmentalists seem to view the earth as the special preserve of the trees and the animals with man, the most highly developed and successful of all the living creatures, as a mere trespasser on their planet!

There is no doubt that pollution is a significant modern problem, but if it is to be minimized then people must be prepared to throw unreasoned emotion out the window, face facts squarely and open their minds to different ideas. It is a crazy notion verging on science fiction, to suggest that man should somehow step backwards in time to a pre-industrial age which, incidentally, was not idyllic but was for most people a living hell on earth.

In the present politico-legal climate in which the concept of property, both public and private, is but a vague haze, it is well-nigh impossible to arrive at a satisfactory definition of 'pollution', for pollution is not merely something that affects individuals and their health but their private property as well, not to mention all the government property including the rivers, streams, lakes, coastline, oceans and atmosphere. Nevertheless, for practical purposes, pollution can best be defined as 'the transfer of harmful matter or energy to the person or property of another without the latter's consent'. It is perhaps important to mention early that the worst polluters are not individuals or industrialists but governments and the worst governments are those with the greatest powers. In recent times, the worst polluter of all was the government of the old Soviet Union.

Nearly all of the problems caused by pollution are a direct result of politico-legal ineptitude which, in turn, is a direct result of the philosophic inadequacies of the 'intelligentsia', being those people who have the greatest influence on the way in which people think. It is the vagueness surrounding the concept of property (both public and private) and the concept of individual rights including property rights that has created a veritable nightmare for anyone seeking redress against polluters (governments and private individuals) who are harming their health and despoiling their property. It should also be pointed out that whereas industries may be polluting the land, the water and the air, they are, more often than not, doing so under government licence or else with the tacit consent of governments. Furthermore, governments themselves are major direct polluters particularly as a result of their massive power-generating plants and sewerage systems. Everything is now such a mess that it has become fashionable for the Judiciary in some developed countries to tolerate severe pollution, explaining it away as a necessary evil that cannot be avoided in an industrialized society! There is no denying that some degree of

pollution is unavoidable in a modern State but if the Judiciary is to put pollution (government and private) into its 'too hard basket', nothing will ever change and there will be no incentive for governments to smarten up their act and for industry to come up with new scientific and technological methods of pollution control. Excessive noise and unpleasant odours are also pollutants as noise is energy in the form of sound waves and unpleasant odours are the transfer of matter in the form of chemical particles.

Before I conclude this section it may be fitting to include a few lines on the claimed threat to our planet as a result of pollution causing global warming and damage to the ozone layer. Sadly, even amongst some scientists, emotion is prone to take over from reasoned thought so that it may become almost impossible for the concerned layman to differentiate fact from fiction. When scientists allow politics to influence their scientific research and thinking, they cease to be effective scientists and they make it doubly difficult for the truly objective scientists to go about their business. Whatever the correct answers may be, one thing is certain – these answers will not be found in emotion, political manoeuvring and political grandstanding. They will be found only when the politico-economic climate is such that it allows people and their property to be properly protected by the law and when governments are prevented from owning and controlling property, which enables them to pollute with impunity. Furthermore, it is only when scientists, technologists and entrepreneurs have free rein in the market-place to develop alternative power sources and pollution inhibitors that we will see any lasting improvement. Sadly this is the last thing in the world that the powerful Environmentalist Movement wishes to see as it is a concept in direct conflict with its own political agenda.

THE ANTI-DISCRIMINATION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY LAWS

At the superior nudist camps, a nice class distinction was made: the butlers and maids who brought along the refreshments were forced to admit their lower social standing by wearing loincloths and aprons respectively.

*Robert Graves and Alan Hodge
(The Long Week End)*

If one runs a typing pool, it would not make sense to employ someone who has not any hands; or if one is an eye surgeon, to take on as an assistant a surgeon with 'the shakes'. Equally, it would not make all that much sense not to employ the best available typist merely because she was black, or the best available assistant eye surgeon merely because he was a Jew. Similarly, it would not make all that much sense, nor would it be consistent with any sane definition of liberty, were an employer to be compelled to take on a worker for some irrelevant reason such as the fact that the person was a woman, one-legged, dark-skinned or blind.

If we are ever to live in a free society, it is only right that people should be allowed to choose those with whom they are mutually prepared to associate and work. It is of no-one's concern, other than those involved, whether such choices are made rationally or irrationally. After all, if the black typist and the Jewish assistant eye surgeon are the best available, it would be the respective employers who rejected them who would be the ultimate losers, for if these employers consistently made their decisions along similar irrational lines, they would not long prosper in business. The market-place and competition are not as forgiving as to allow that. All this is so obvious that further discussion would not be necessary were it not for the modern obsession with 'anti-discrimination' laws.

In the 1960s, some women members of the New Left in the United States of America were somewhat displeased, on growing up, to find that they were living in a man's world. 'The Women's Liberation Movement' was born. What began, however, as a movement for equality before the law, very quickly degenerated into a movement in which its members were demanding special privileges for themselves. The Movement soon took hold in other countries. The 'Anti-Discrimination Laws', which were the politicians' response to this new pressure group, were presented as a revolutionary step forward in the fight for 'social justice' (whatever that was meant to mean!).

What these laws did in practice, however, was to work their magic in the direction opposite to that intended. One did not have to be very bright to realize that such laws could work only by compelling some people to act against their own wishes and against their own better judgment. So what the politicians and their 'intellectual' buddies had done, in effect, was to drive another nail into the coffin of liberty; make it just that little bit harder for business men and women to conduct their businesses profitably; and to legitimize, even further, the open warfare that they had long sponsored between different groups of people.

These 'Anti-Discrimination Laws' enabled people who genuinely believed or else who imagined that they had been discriminated against to bring actions for damages against those whom they claimed had wronged them. Once people had grasped the rules of this game and the loot to be had, there was no stopping them. Perhaps one

could make even more money this way than one could by seeking compensation for some trivial or imaginary complaint sustained whilst one was at work! One thing was certain, however, and that was that the Judiciary would enter into the spirit of this new game as it had with the 'compensation' game.

If one should imagine that this is but a trivial matter, let him consider the moral meaning of such laws, which are an open invitation for one man to turn to the Law for help in order to compel another man to do his bidding. Furthermore, on the practical level, let him consider the people who might imagine that they have been discriminated against, particularly once they have begun to smell the scent of money. We have already mentioned women discriminated against by men but what about men by women? Then there are employees by employers, the press operator by his foreman, lessees by lessors, borrowers by lenders, patients by doctors, consumers by producers, children by adults, blacks by whites, whites by blacks, Jews by Christians, Moslems by Jews, Protestants by Catholics and Catholics by Protestants, Atheists by all of them, homosexuals by heterosexuals, heterosexuals by homosexuals, footballers by their coaches, the mentally and physically handicapped by everyone. The list is well-nigh limitless.

Few subjects better illustrate the philosophic bankruptcy of our 'intellectuals' and the hopelessness of our politicians than does this subject of 'anti-discrimination laws'. It may not be all that sensible to discriminate against a woman merely because she is a woman or against a man merely because he is a man, or against a black man merely because he is a black man, but if it is such a serious offence to have irrational likes and dislikes, why do not the politicians do their job properly, by their own standards, and force people to talk to those whom they do not like, force people to entertain in their own homes those whom they do not wish to entertain, or even force people to marry those whom they do not wish to marry? The whole concept is utterly inane.

If people were genuinely interested in fair play and justice in this area all they would need to do to ensure it, would be to insist that their politicians passed a law (particularly one that was entrenched in the Constitution) which 'forbade governments from passing any laws that discriminated against any individuals on the grounds of race, colour, sex, creed etc.' It really is simple, or so one might imagine if one did not understand that there are many people – the parasites in our community – who do not want equality before the law, certainly not for themselves. What they want is more than equality. They want special privileges and the only way they can attain these special privileges is by pressuring their friends in government to enact laws which will turn them, the privileged, into the masters and those who spurn them into their slaves. This is how democracy works.

If Anti-Discrimination Laws are one side of the coin, the Equal Opportunity Laws are the other side. They are both variants of the same thing. In today's bankrupt philosophical climate it is considered intolerable that anyone should dare make his own decisions as to whom he will deal with on a contractual basis. It is an 'affront to society' for a man to act on his own best judgment. It could be a serious offence to prefer blondes to brunettes or big bosoms to small bosoms or thin men to fat men or Protestants to Catholics (or vice versa). If one has a business which one has built up over a lifetime, one could well see it destroyed by any bum who has never earned

an honest dollar in his life but who knows how to use the 'anti-discrimination' and 'equal opportunity' laws to his own advantage. What is more, it may not cost the bum a cent thanks to a 'free' legal service and degenerate lawyers who are prepared to take on any case so long as there is a dollar to be made from it. When the case comes to Court it is more than likely that a compliant Judge will come down on the side of the bum – merely because he is a bum. This is known as 'justice'.

No-one is safe from these iniquitous laws. They hang, like the sword of Damocles, over the heads of all employers, the most thoughtful of whom must have second thoughts every time they contemplate taking on a new staff member. How many potential businesses never see the light of day and how many men and women never get a job because of an employer's fear of laws such as these will never be known.

GOVERNMENT HEALTH PROGRAMS

Our policies are neither liberal nor conservative, neither Democratic nor Republican. They are new. They are different. Health care should be a right, not a privilege. And it can be.

*Bill Clinton and Al Gore
(Putting People First)*

Government Health Programs are probably as good an example as any of the power of ideas and how ideas, good and bad, can alter the course of history; advance civilization or retard it; uplift people or degrade them; raise standards or lower them; liberate people or enslave them.

Whenever politicians in a democratic country decide to interfere into any aspect of life it is fair to assume that they are motivated largely by the lure of votes. If they can claim that vote-getting is not their purpose but that they have a genuine concern for people, a duty to protect their 'rights' and a determination to make everyone's life happier and healthier, then the attainment of their goal becomes easier. However, if one is capable of standing aloof and viewing the antics of politicians objectively, one will quickly see them in their true colours as merely second-rate actors playing in a tragedy written by a third-rate playwright. The objective viewer will see the politicians as they really are – merely regurgitators of worn-out ideas and dogmas that they have picked up along the way by a process akin to passive absorption.

On this subject of Health, the philosophic ideas on which the politicians draw are threefold. The first of these is the philosophy of altruism about which I have already spoken – the philosophy that proclaims that man has no right to exist for his own sake; that service to others is the only justification for his existence; and that self-sacrifice is man's highest moral duty, virtue and value. It is the altruist who would have us believe that if people are in need, then others are morally obliged to help them without regard to their own lives and happiness. Altruism is a philosophy that looks upon some people as the masters and others as their slaves. It is a philosophy that inevitably turns the most productive people into sacrificial animals. This is borne out by the fact that a government-run medical scheme can work only when the doctors have first been made subservient to their patients and to the State.

The second major philosophic concept that the politicians call upon to justify their interference into medicine is the erroneous concept that people have a 'right to health care'. If it is claimed that people have such a right, then it follows that some people must be forced to provide that care and some people must be forced to pay for it. The providers of health care are not, of course, the politicians who promise the bonanza nor are the politicians, except to a minor degree, the ones who pay for it. The forced providers are, predominantly, the doctors and the forced payers are the taxpaying public.

The third philosophic concept put forward to justify government interference into Medicine is the concept of 'the common good' – the tribal concept that the individual tribesman amounts to little and that it is his rôle in life to be ever ready to sacrifice himself for the good of the tribe. Here we see the altruist philosophy all over again but with more obvious political overtones.

Although government medical systems go by different names in different countries and vary in their details ranging from a predominantly socialized British system to something less so in Australia and a curious hotchpotch in the United States of America, the stamp of government is clearly imprinted on Medicine the world over. It is the stamp that ultimately leads to disastrous consequences all of which would have been avoided had the politicians been capable of seeing further ahead than the forthcoming election.

Depending upon the degree of individual liberty that is lost as a result of this government interference so the resentment of doctors rises. With this rise in the level of resentment comes a gradual slide in morale and with it the danger of lowered standards. As the politicians and those in the Media attack the doctors for their own devious purposes so the image of the doctor suffers. With this image change comes a loss of prestige and with loss of prestige comes a greater tendency for patients to become more critical of their doctors and less forgiving. Often egged on by unscrupulous lawyers, litigation against doctors becomes a profitable pastime with the Judiciary joining in the game with gusto and often awarding astronomical sums of money by way of damages, sometimes for the most irrational of reasons. As a consequence, doctors' insurance premiums against such litigation rocket through the roof. This added expense must be borne by someone and that someone inevitably is either directly or indirectly, the patients.

Although most doctors take out insurance against the possibility that one or more of their patients may, one day, sue them for some real or imagined hurt, this is by no means the doctor's only form of protection. He can always fall back on a safety-first approach to medicine and this is the approach that many doctors adopt when they believe that litigation is getting out of hand. Instead of a doctor relying on his clinical judgement, as he once did, he will now be more inclined to order a battery of X-rays and pathology tests in order to protect himself. If the doctor is a general (or family) practitioner, he will also probably refer his patients to specialists more frequently than he once did in order to spread the responsibility. Needless to say, this raises still further the cost of the government health scheme. The Law of Causality or the relationship between cause and effect can never be evaded.

As, under the government system, patients are not paying directly for most of the services that they receive, or if they are, they are being heavily subsidized by their governments, there is a natural tendency for them to take full advantage of these 'free' or 'near free' services and consult their doctors for the most trivial of complaints. This adds further to the costs of the government scheme. As these costs rise, sooner or later the government becomes alarmed and sets out to curb them. This it attempts to do by imposing further controls on the doctors. It is now that we see the emergence of a 'Medical Gestapo'. That is not its official title, of course, but that, in effect, is what it is. Needless to say, such a nasty little concept causes further resentment, anger and contempt amongst doctors particularly when they contemplate the new government kangaroo courts in which the rôles of prosecutor, judge and jury are all held by the same people. It is these medical courts that are devised to threaten all doctors and terrorize those whom the public bureaucrats have arbitrarily decreed are 'over-prescribing' and carrying out an

'excessive' number of X-rays and pathology tests and, in so doing, undermining the 'noble work' of the politicians!

As more and more people see no reason to subscribe to private health insurance as everything is now seen to be 'free' or 'almost free', so further strain is placed upon the public system and long waiting lists begin to appear for operative procedures in the public hospitals. A patient may now have to wait for months or even years for an operation that he once would have had almost immediately.

With costs soaring ever higher, further government price-cutting measures are adopted. These cannot be directed openly at patients as the patients form the bulk of the voting public. It is, therefore, the doctors, as a minority group counting for little in the battle for votes, who must bear the brunt of such 'economy drives'. As many doctors' incomes fall, particularly those of general practitioners, and as the cost of running their practices rise due to government-induced inflation and bureaucratic interference, their standards of living decline. The general practitioner, in particular, may now compare his life with that of the administrative doctor in the Public Service, a doctor who, in most cases, is little more than a glorified medical clerk. What the general practitioner finds is that this administrative doctor works far fewer hours a week than he does, has very little real responsibility and is, more often than not, merely a hindrance to him in his practice. For these traits, this Public Service 'doctor' is probably better off financially and can happily look forward to a secure and prosperous retirement. The private doctor's morale slides further.

Meanwhile, as more and more people, for economic reasons, fall out of private health insurance, so the profitability of the Health Insurance Companies declines. As a consequence, insurance premiums rise. With these price rises, still more people withdraw from private insurance and the load on the public hospitals becomes even more intolerable. As the state of medicine becomes progressively worse, the politicians are put under pressure. Not renowned for their scruples or their honesty, they blame the doctors, making them the scapegoats for the failures of their own disastrous schemes which are now eating up more and more of the taxpayers' dollars. The leeches in the Media attach themselves to a demoralized medical profession and the bloodsucking begins. The general public takes its cue from the Media and many lose confidence in the doctors. More and more people turn their backs on scientific medicine and now put their trust in quacks practising pseudo-medical hocus-pocus often paying more for their phoney consultations than they ever paid their doctors even before the introduction of the government's magical medical scheme.

In this climate of interference, loss of liberty, rising costs, government spying, Kangaroo Courts, hatred, suspicion and ill-informed 'Media' onslaughts, many older doctors lose heart and longingly await the day of their retirement. In their place come younger doctors conditioned to accept a government system, knowing nothing else and, at least for the present, content to live out their lives as public servants in all but name. Some doctors respond to this interference in other ways. A few, less squeamish than the rest, quickly identify the loopholes in the government system and grab the opportunities now open to them to get on the gravy train and make a financial killing for themselves. Yet others respond by wasting valuable time in becoming active in medical politics, most of them naively believing that they can

negotiate with the very politicians who are intent on beating them into submission – somewhat analogous to that of a man believing that he can come to honourable terms with a rattlesnake! Within this small group of doctors (those who are prepared to enter the medico-political arena), there are some doctors less scrupulous than the rest. These less scrupulous doctors are in cahoots with the politicians and public bureaucrats and claim to speak and to act for all doctors of the same type as themselves whether they are members of their coterie or not. It is these less scrupulous men and women who behave like the Quislings of a past era and are ever ready to sell their souls to their masters not for money for themselves personally but money, nevertheless, for the house of ill-repute over which they preside; and to satisfy their pathetic craving to be ‘someone’ even if that ‘someone’ is merely a member of the management team of a bordello.

Whereas most conditions of hardship are likely to bring out both the best and the worst in people, government interference invariably brings out a preponderance of the worst. It is only when doctors, patients and their insurance companies, as well as all those other people involved in patient care, are free to trade with one another voluntarily and to their mutual benefit without being hounded, manipulated and hamstrung by an ever-growing and ever more powerful public bureaucracy that quality medicine is consistently possible. When a government or any other organization interposes itself between the doctor and the patient, standards inexorably fall. When a doctor is answerable to someone other than his patient or is paid by someone other than his patient, that is the time for the patient to be on his guard. Thus it is not merely doctors who should be alarmed at the ever-growing interference of governments into their profession. After all, they can always get out, if not from their Country, then from their profession and turn their hands to something else. The patients, however, are stuck with a system that inevitably produces second-rate medicine and eventually becomes unsustainable economically. Many politicians are probably aware of the monster that they have helped to create but they are so puny that they dare not dismantle it for fear of losing votes. That is the way in which democracy works!

CONSUMER PROTECTION

We were the first to assert that the more complicated the forms of civilization, the more restricted the freedom of the individual must become.

Benito Mussolini

Consumer Protection or 'Consumerism' is yet one more product of the 'New Left' – that conglomerate of crazy ideas that captured the imagination of the 'intellectuals' as the 'Old Left' was immersed in its death throes. The rationale behind 'consumer protection' is the presumed need for the State to interfere further into the marketplace in order to protect most people (the consumers) from the iniquities of a smaller group of people (the producers) who are out to exploit them at every turn. The assumption of the consumerist is that the consumer is the 'goodie' and the producer is the 'baddie'. It is not difficult for one to recognize here the huge dollop of Marxism that is inherent in this concept.

In an attempt to strengthen his argument, the consumerist talks glibly of 'consumers' rights'. There are, however, no such things as group rights such as 'consumers' rights' any more than there are such things as 'producers' rights' (about which, incidentally, we hear nothing). Whatever rights these people have are by virtue of the fact that they are individuals and not members of a group. The fanaticism of the consumerist is such that his attacks on the producers (on whom, incidentally, the consumers are dependent for their very existence) must go on unabated. Why? Because Karl Marx said so. As a consequence, there is a mind-blowing proliferation of consumerist organizations world-wide that would make any red-blooded public bureaucrat green with envy.

What the exponents of 'consumer protection' are conditioning people to believe is that producers (that is producers of both goods and services) are inherently crooked and that were it not for the State's consumer protection laws, these shysters would run wild and take everyone down with inferior goods and services at bloated prices. With people of this calibre loose in the community, surely no law is too harsh if honest decent law-abiding people are to be protected! If, however, the State could devise laws that would entrap producers whatever they did, then so much the better; and that is exactly what the Antitrust Laws did in the United States of America and in those countries that slavishly followed her! If the State Commissar arbitrarily decreed that the price of a company's product was 'too high', then that company was liable to be charged with exploiting its customers. If the State Commissar arbitrarily decreed that the price was 'too low', the company was liable to be charged with unfair competition. If the State Commissar decreed that the price was the same as that of the company's competitors then it was liable to be charged with collusion! This is a measure of the length to which the consumerists are prepared to go in order to cripple producers. This thinking is in conformity with the altruist philosophy that the more indispensable a man is, the greater is the reason for him to be turned into a slave so that he may more effectively serve the interests of the tribe or 'the community'.

A mirage is something that a person thinks he sees whereas a fact is something that is real. In the context of consumerism, the mirage that most people see is a movement deeply concerned for the welfare of consumers. The reality is that the consumerist movement is obsessed with a deep-seated hatred of producers as a group. One does not have to be a student of law or of economics to understand the most elemental aspects of criminal law and the market-place. If it is claimed that a business man, or anyone else for that matter, has wilfully perpetrated fraud then both the criminal and civil courts in any reputable country are equipped to hear the case and ensure that justice is carried out. Long before anyone had even thought of the word 'consumerism', the laws were in place to punish those guilty of offences such as cheating, fraud, theft and so on. As for the market-place, the understanding of it by most of the consumer protectionist fraternity would surely be surpassed by that of any semi-literate peasant who regularly peddles his wares, for he knows that to remain in business he must be prepared to face competition, produce or sell a reasonable article at an acceptable price and make a profit. If he cannot do all those things he is soon out of business. If a man should think that the best way to succeed in business is to produce or sell shoddy over-priced articles and cheat his customers, he has never been in business nor is he ever likely to be in business on his own. The only hope for him is as an academic in some University Economics Department!

FURTHER CONTROLLED MATTERS

Licensing
Standards
Censorship
Drugs
Gun Control

LICENSING

According to Walter Gellhorn, who has written the best brief survey I know, "....One may not be surprised to learn that pharmacists, accountants, and dentists have been reached by state law as have sanitarians and psychologists, assayers and architects, veterinarians and librarians. But with what joy of discovery does one learn about the licensing of threshing machine operators and dealers in scrap tobacco? What of egg graders and guide dog trainers, pest controllers and yacht salesmen, tree surgeons and well diggers, tile layers and potato growers? And what of the hypertrichologists who are licensed in Connecticut, where they remove excessive and unsightly hair with the solemnity appropriate to their high sounding title?"

Quoted by Milton Friedman in
'Capitalism & Freedom'

Licensing has become so much a part of our lives that most people probably take it for granted assuming it to be a necessary mechanism whereby the State can protect us all from unscrupulous or shoddy operators. So long as people continue to think this way they will continue to be burdened with licences for almost everything for as long as they live. Today, there is barely an aspect of living that is not, either directly or indirectly, subject to a licence of some sort. The sale of almost everything is subject to a licence – bread, milk, meat, vegetables, fruit, furniture, carpets, motor cars, plants, cosmetics, animals, books, magazines, newspapers etc. Then there are all those people who provide services, as opposed to goods, who must be licensed – the doctors, lawyers, engineers, hairdressers, accountants, chiropractors, hypnotherapists, architects, psychologists, electricians, carpenters, plumbers, radio and TV repairers, teachers, priests, builders, dentists, mechanics, taxi-drivers etc. There are the primary producers – the farmers, the cattle and sheep men, the dairymen, the orchardists, the market gardeners etc. and the prospectors and the miners – and the secondary producers – all those people who make things out of metal or wood or plastic or fabric or leather in big factories, in little factories, in backyard sheds. The list is never-ending. What is more, many people are licensed over and over again! Were we to believe all that we are told, we would believe that, were it not for licensing, society would soon disintegrate; that everyone would be cheating on everyone else; that bands of barefaced shysters would roam the Country and prey upon the old, the young and those in between; that most vendors would sell shoddy wares at exorbitant prices; that most business men and women would short change their clients; that doctors would take any short cut so long as there was a dollar to be made by it; that architects and builders would skimp on materials and build structures that would soon fall down and so on. The people who propagate this sort of nonsense either do not understand the workings of the market-place or else they have ulterior motives in wanting to perpetuate the licensing system. Let us, therefore, look at these propositions.

A successful trader, whether he is a primary producer, a manufacturer, a wholesaler, a retailer, a professional man, a tradesman or anyone else, relies, above all else, on his good name in order to maintain himself in business. Once he relaxes his standards in whatever area those standards may be, his reputation will suffer and he will lose business; and losing business is something he can ill-afford to do if he hopes to make a reasonable profit. If our trader does not quickly correct his shortcomings then his competitors will move in and take over his portion of the market.

One may feel sorry for him but it was his own customers who showed their disapproval of the way in which he operated his business that brought about his downfall. The market-place is generally not over-forgiving. It may be tolerant in the short term but over a longer period, provided people are moderately free, they will always do business with those traders whom they consider will give them the best value for money. No amount of licensing can circumvent this simple business principle. Licensing does not ensure high standards. It is a man's determination to protect his good business name, and competition in the market-place, that ensures high standards. All licensing can ever attempt to do is to set minimum standards, but without vigorous competition, minimum standards invariably end up as being maximum standards – and that means low standards. When the State sets minimum standards and restricts competition by its licensing policy, why should anyone do more than adhere to that minimum? And that is precisely what many people do.

When buying an article, whether it happens to be a motor car or a pair of shoes, most people shop around to find out what the market has to offer. One may ask advice from others whose opinions one values. One certainly does not ask whether the Ford Motor Company or Toyota have licences to make motor cars before buying one of their cars, nor does one ask to see the licence of the manufacturer or salesman before buying a pair of shoes. If one moves into a new area and wants to consult a doctor, one will again seek advice and part of that advice should include information on the University at which the doctor graduated. Does its Medical School have a reputation for turning out good doctors? Should you learn that the doctor graduated from the University of Dodoland you may want to make further enquiries before entrusting your week-old baby daughter to his care. The fact that the doctor holds a government licence to practise medicine in the Country or the State will tell you only that a public bureaucrat or an agent of a public bureaucrat has decreed, for one reason or another, that, in his opinion, the doctor has attained at least certain minimum standards. Sadly, in all walks of life, people have been lulled into believing that a State licence is synonymous with quality and that there is therefore no need for them to look further or to ask any more questions before making a purchase or contracting a service.

It would be fatuous to pretend that by eliminating licences we would get rid of those confidence tricksters who prey upon the old and the gullible. Sadly, they will always be with us – licensing or not. There are, however, perfectly good laws relating to fraud that should bring these impostors to heel and with laws, as there should be, making it obligatory for the criminal to compensate his victim, hopefully justice would eventually be done. (See 'The Criminal Justice System'). The advocates of licensing are not merely those who are largely ignorant of the workings of the market-place, for there are others who would not have it any other way. Licensing to them is one of the great boons of life as licensing is a method by which they are able to keep people out of the area in which they operate. It works rather like a union closed shop. Once one is in the appropriate union, one can prevent a non-unionist from working in that industry or work-place. So it is with licensing. So long as people in a particular occupation are subject to a system of compulsory licensing, then that occupation is out of bounds to all who do not hold a licence. Should an unlicensed person, even one who is more skilful than any of the licence holders,

work at that occupation, he will soon be subjected to the full weight of the State apparatus and find himself in dire trouble. (See 'Victimless Crimes'). It is this closed shop aspect of licensing that so many people in business, in the professions and in the numerous trades find so attractive as it gives them the same sort of privileged protection that one would gain from any other coercive monopoly or oligopoly. In such a climate, corruption breeds.

There are also those public bureaucrats who issue the licences – a veritable army of them – who have cosy jobs for life for actually being counterproductive! The politicians, likewise, are another group that welcomes a licensing policy for not only is licensing another method of taxation surreptitiously dressed up to look like a benevolent protection agency, but it is also a method by which authoritarian governments can more easily control people. Once people are segregated by a system of licensing, governments will, as a matter of course, encourage each group to elect a leader and it is with these leaders that the government will agree to 'negotiate' whenever it wishes to control, even further, the individual members of that particular group. The wise man should never forget that the word 'negotiate' is usually merely a euphemism for the words – 'threaten' and 'control'. Should, for any reason, individual licence-holders find it necessary to stand up to an authoritarian government on a matter of principle, they will soon find that the government will threaten them with the revocation of their licenses, thus effectively depriving them of their livelihoods if they do not back down. Licensing thus acts as a noose around a man's neck. Let him step out of line for any reason whatsoever and the government will pull the noose tight. It is not merely the totalitarian States that partake of such ugly little practices.

As is so often the case in life, things are not always as they seem. Licensing is yet another such example of this old adage.

STANDARDS

The ultimate result of shielding men from the effects of folly, is to fill the world with fools.

*Herbert Spencer (1820 – 1903)
(State Tamperings with Money and Banks)*

In this Section, the reader will find that there is a certain doubling up of material with that contained in the section entitled 'Licensing'. This is because the claimed need for 'licensing' and for 'standards legislation' is based on the same philosophic and economic premises. The two subjects could have been discussed together and presented under one heading, but for the sake of clarity I have elected to treat each subject as a separate entity. This, after all, is the way in which most people will view them.

One of the many great myths of our times is the belief that were it not for thousands of laws and regulations policed by large armies of public bureaucrats paid for by the taxpayers, standards in all areas of the production and distribution of goods and services would fall to a level just marginally above zero. The reason for the persistence of this myth probably has its origins in the philosophic and economic doctrines of Karl Marx who saw the market-place as one great battle ground to be fought over by two opposing groups of people – the exploiters and the exploited – between the evil, powerful manufacturers and business men on the one hand and the wretched downtrodden 'workers' on the other. In Marx's eyes, the unscrupulous exploiters would stop at nothing in their attempt to take advantage of the poor but honest 'workers'! What Marx did not appear to understand was that in any honest transaction, it is not a matter of one party winning and the other losing but of both parties winning. If I manufacture and sell bicycles and if I offer one of them to you for \$x, you must first make up your mind whether you want a bicycle and if you do, then whether or not you are prepared to buy one from me at my asking price. If, after looking at the bicycles of other manufacturers, you believe that my bicycle is not worth \$x then you do not buy it. If you want a bicycle and you do think my bicycle is worth \$x to you, then you may buy it. What you are saying, in effect, is that you would prefer my bicycle to your \$x, whereas I, as the manufacturer and seller, am saying that I would prefer your \$x to my bicycle. So a deal is struck. We both get what we want. You get my bicycle. I get your money. Both of us are winners. We might be tempted to believe that this is so obvious that everyone would understand it. Certainly any business man or woman from the lowliest barrow boy upwards should understand it but, curiously, many politicians and academic economists do not. If one has been indoctrinated, either overtly or covertly, into Marxist philosophy and economics, one will for ever be trying to identify the exploiter and the exploited. In this case, to such people, I am the exploiter and you, poor fellow, are the exploited because it was you who 'lost' your money to me. [The fact that you acquired a bicycle in its place is conveniently forgotten.]

Once the Marxist has 'established' that the market-place is all about 'goodies' and 'baddies', it then becomes his holy mission to attempt to identify the full range of dirty tricks that these 'baddies' have up their sleeves. One such sordid scheme of these nasty business men is to first establish a market for their products and then, at a later date, to surreptitiously drop the standards of their products, flood the market with them and so make enormous profits at the expense of the poor but honest

consumers. Once people have grasped the 'fact' that the exploited masses are at the complete mercy of the 'capitalist exploiters' and that the market-place is ill-equipped to cope with such exploitation, it then becomes 'obvious' that the State must move in and, by government decree, ensure that standards do not fall !

Upon such a myth, huge bureaucratic empires are built so that there is barely an article made or a service rendered that is not subject to some form of licensing or standards legislation. What is interesting (as is discussed under 'Licensing') is that whenever a governmental minimum standard is imposed, it invariably becomes a maximum standard as well, so that standards generally are liable to fall.

If the State decrees that certain building standards will be imposed, then these minimum standards will be observed by most builders – not lower standards, not higher standards, but the bare minimum standards that have been set by the State. Why should most builders do more than the State demands and cut into their profits when they can placate their consciences, reassure their clients and satisfy the government all at the same time by doing the bare minimum?

If people want high standards, the best way for them to get them is to get governments out of the market-place and leave business people to compete freely with one another. Admittedly, a few sharp operators who are prepared to sell poor quality overpriced articles or services may enter the market and make a quick killing but such people are to be found there already in spite of all the laws governing standards. Such men, however, do not prosper for long as they are soon found out and sent packing. It is foolish to imagine that a society can be designed which will be foolproof against the entry into it of shady operators unless that society is first turned into one huge concentration camp – the direction in which governments, the world over, are slowly leading us.

So long as people are prepared to act in a responsible manner; so long as the laws of fraud are sound and are enforced; so long as insurance companies are free to insure or not to insure as they see fit; so long as there is freedom for people to expose shoddy operators in such media as special magazines, and to boycott those of whom they disapprove, there is no reason for people to be unduly concerned about standards in a free market.

What many critics of the market fail to realize, or else refuse to acknowledge, is that most reputable companies, professional people and tradesmen are jealous of their good names. If a product or workmanship is inadvertently found to be faulty, most reputable companies and tradesmen, even today, expect to be notified and are usually prepared to exchange the article or else to repair it at their own expense. Were they not to do so on a consistent basis, the buying public would soon lose confidence in the product and the company producing it and proceed to take their future custom elsewhere. If the company did not quickly mend its ways, it would soon find itself out of business. Such is the way of the market-place.

So long as teachers in our schools and universities continue to propagate false ideas and so long as false ideas continue to be spread by those in the Media, little will change. Sadly, it is the millions upon millions of ordinary, decent, hard-working people who are the ultimate sufferers when false ideas take hold in a culture.

CENSORSHIP

Thought and speech and writing should be as free as the winds. There is no opinion so sacred that it ought not to be ridiculed and opposed. If it is rooted in truth it will triumph over ridicule and opposition: if it is rooted in falsehood let it perish quickly.

*Alfred G. Stephens
Tocsin 31/10/1901*

Censorship is a term that applies only to governments. A private individual or a group of individuals cannot censor anything. If a parent refuses to allow a child to bring a sexy magazine into the home, that is not censorship; nor is it censorship when a Church dignitary threatens his parishioners with hell-fire if they read a book that he maintains is a threat to their spiritual health. It is not censorship when my local newspaper refuses to publish my hard-hitting letter. I do not own the paper and I should not be able to compel its owners or executives to act against their will, however much I disapprove of them.

In a legal sense, it is only censorship when the State arbitrarily decrees it to be a crime if a certain book, magazine, film or similar material, or else a certain category of book, film etc. is imported, produced or distributed within a specified area. Censorship may also take the form of control of such material by a system of licensing or by some other restrictive measure. In actual practice, public bureaucrats wield enormous censorship powers, most of them based on their own subjective opinions. Those opinions can be challenged, of course, but only at great expense to the challenger, with the government holding a huge advantage in having access to a bottomless pit of money, including some of the challenger's own money, in order to press its case! The challenger could have the censor's decision overturned but everything is stacked against him.

The philosophic source of the Censor's power is our old enemy – 'the public good' or 'the national interest' – that collectivist notion that the paternalistic and authoritative State, in the person of its public bureaucrats, knows what is best for us all in these matters! The object of a censorship ruling may be sexual, religious, political or some other aspect of our lives. When the public bureaucrats decree that a particular 'work' must not be seen, heard or read by us, they are telling us that their judgement is better than ours and that we are not qualified or sufficiently mature, as are they, to make a responsible evaluation as to what we should see, hear or read. They are telling us, in effect, that we should not be allowed to make our own decisions in such matters! Of course, there will always be people in any community – those with a dictatorial bent – who are not averse to turning to governments in order to have their neighbours' freedoms curtailed claiming that too much freedom is not good for them! It is not to the credit of many people that they apparently see nothing wrong with the principle of censorship, meekly accepting the concept that one group of people should be able to dictate to another group of people the contents of that which they read, see or hear.

Although not censorship in the legal sense of the word, there are yet other methods by which governments or pressure groups acting through governments, are able to control the thinking of people within a country. Such methods are usually subtle or secretive and undetectable to all but a small percentage of people. When a

government has virtually total control over the schooling system, it has at its disposal a ready-made propaganda system as effective as anything that Joseph Goebbels ever had at his disposal in Nazi Germany. How that system is used is determined by a handful of senior public bureaucrats on Interference Hill. These public bureaucrats in the Education Departments will determine the subjects to be taught and not taught; the content of the subjects taught; the type of books to be studied or not studied; the stresses to be laid on certain issues; a determination of that which is considered to be politically correct or incorrect; and a whole range of other guidelines that will largely determine the manner in which, it is hoped, large numbers of young people will think once they have left school.

When licenses are bestowed by governments on radio and television stations, it needs only a dropped word in the right quarters to the effect that the appropriate public servant in the appropriate government department is not impressed with a particular line that a station is taking; or that he dislikes a certain program or a certain presenter; or that his favourite sister is an important member of a particular political party; or that he, himself, is very sympathetic towards some particular political movement, and an alarm bell will ring in the chief executive's head. If the particular station is to retain its licence, then the chief executive may as well play the game and keep on the right side of the man issuing the licenses! If the programming of the station is too contentious 'in the wrong direction', it is time to heed the warning signs. Censorship has won another glorious victory!

DRUGS

... the smell of corruption extended far beyond that. All of this was going on in a place thathad the greatest concentration of law enforcement manpower and resources ever assembled in the United States to tackle a specific problem of crime. Besides the twenty-eight municipal police forces in Dade County, each of which had its own narcotics squad, and specialized units of the Metro-Dade Police Department, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, and the Florida Marine Patrol, there was a list of federal agencies and departments engaged in what Washington called 'the war on drugs' – the US Customs Service, the Coast Guard, and the US Navy; the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the FBI, the IRS, and the CIA; the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms; the Secret Service, the departments of Justice and Treasury, the Border Patrol, and the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). To coordinate the efforts of this exceptional army, there was the South Florida Task Force, reporting directly to Vice-President George Bush. Yet in February 1987, five years after 'the war' began, there was more cocaine on America's streets than there had ever been, and it was cheaper and purer, and more people were using it.

*Paul Eddy, Hugo Sabogal & Sara Walden
(The Cocaine Wars)*

One would have thought that the experience of Prohibition in the United States of America in the earlier part of the twentieth century would have been enough to alert intelligent people to the dangers inherent in governments legislating in an attempt to eradicate the taking of alcohol or any other drug for that matter. Surprisingly, many people, including most of today's politicians, have learnt nothing from the lessons of the Prohibition Era. At that time, despite all the government legislation, all the politicians, all the public bureaucrats, all the police forces, all the law courts and their judges, people continued to manufacture, transport and drink enormous quantities of alcohol. Obviously, the laws did not achieve the results that they were designed to achieve. They did not make the better society that was promised but a worse one, for the Prohibition Laws gave rise to organized crime and organized crime gave rise to corruption on a massive scale. Politicians, public bureaucrats, policemen at all levels and even judges were often willing to accept bribes from the mobsters in exchange for their turning of the blind eye to the highly lucrative illegal liquor trade. Such men sometimes even acquiesced in the most grizzly of crimes perpetrated not merely against members of opposing gangs but also against innocent people as well. It was an era in which organized crime went about its 'business' with a ruthless indifference to human life. The Prohibition Laws left behind them a trail of death and destruction not merely in the form of the bullet-riddled bodies of those who displeased the gang lords but bodies permanently crippled, or else beyond all help, as the result of people drinking a deadly concoction of inferior or dangerous substances known as 'hooch' which may have been 'manufactured' in someone's kitchen or bathroom.

For politicians or anyone else to imagine that they can build a better society by enacting legislation, backed up by the full force of the Law, to prevent people from doing with their private lives what they want to do, is the height of folly. It is folly for both philosophical and practical reasons.

Philosophically, such legislation relies on the concept that people do not own their own bodies and lives; that their bodies and lives belong to the State. Therefore, according to this doctrine, the State should be able to pass laws in an attempt to prevent people from harming themselves which means preventing them from injuring State property! This is the rationale behind many laws, not merely those laws

prohibiting the selling and taking of drugs, but laws such as those that compel the wearing of seat-belts in motor cars; laws that compel the wearing of helmets by cyclists; laws that compel owners to have fences built around their own swimming-pools; laws compelling owners to install safety equipment in their own boats; and all the legislative attempts to deter (and, maybe eventually, prevent) people from smoking tobacco. These laws, designed to protect people from themselves, function by turning people into criminals once they dare to assert sovereignty over their own bodies and lives. In legal terms, the enforcement of such laws is known as 'justice'!

A second philosophic concept, which is essentially another way of expressing the first, is our old enemy the altruist philosophy which states that man has no right to exist for his own sake but that he has a moral obligation to sacrifice his life for the good of others. As we have already noted, this is the philosophy that gave rise to the political concept of the Welfare State. This concept puts the State above the individual. If the individual in his private life acts in some way that upsets the sensibilities of the State, then that individual must be either beaten into line or else offered some form of government molly-coddling to correct his unfortunate habit. No-one can be certain at any one time, however, which course of action will be in vogue. In the Welfare State, there are any number of government departments that may become involved whenever a person decides to take drugs of one kind or another. There is, for example, a department that may initiate criminal proceedings against him. There is a department that may attempt to break him of his habit. There is another department to distribute the dole to him if he is unemployed because of his drug taking and yet a further department to look after his wife and children if they are neglected because of his habit. Another department may take care of him when he becomes ill from neglect or from the drugs themselves or because of the dirty needles he is using. There may even be a department to supply him with drugs and with syringes and needles!

Once politicians have accepted the altruist philosophy and its political counterpart, the Welfare State, then it becomes their responsibility to attempt to contain the cost of it and not allow it to balloon out of control. This explains why the politicians feel obliged to pass innumerable laws curtailing people's liberties whenever there is a risk that they may harm themselves and so become a financial burden on the State. With reasoning such as this, none of us should be surprised if, one morning, we all wake up to find that we are living in a Police State.

Needless to say, the success rates of governments against drugs are no higher than were the success rates against alcohol in the USA in the Prohibition Era. In fact, despite all the government propaganda, what has now happened is that governments never quite manage to keep up with the drug takers and the drug suppliers. In spite of more and bigger government departments, an ever-larger army of 'drug fighters' and the wastage of vast sums of taxpayers' money, drug consumption increases; the drug trade prospers; organized crime becomes more sophisticated; corruption escalates and an ever-increasing number of laws are enacted to curtail our liberty. A huge 'industry' has now evolved employing vast numbers of people – mainly public bureaucrats and hangers-on whose livelihoods are dependent upon the drug addicts and their suppliers. It is these 'drug fighters' who now have a vested interest in the perpetuation of the drug trade and it is they who would be most perturbed were drug taking, for one reason or another, to cease.

Such a catastrophe would jeopardize their jobs! So the whole process goes on its merry way like the roundabout that goes nowhere fast. More drugs mean more 'drug fighters' (i.e. more public bureaucrats) which mean more taxes to support them and more regulations which mean more economic distortions which mean more unemployment which means more hand-outs and more drop-outs which mean more drugs and so on.

All this silliness could easily be stopped by the simple device of getting the cause of the problem out of the problem. The cause of the drug problem, just like the cause of the problems created by Prohibition, is government interference. Get rid of government interference and we get rid of the problem. As it is unlikely that governments would graciously shed most of their powers in one glorious and monumental moment, the best we can hope for in the short term, as far as drugs are concerned, is that they be decriminalized. Note that 'decriminalization' is not 'legalization'. It is essential to grasp the difference between the two. 'Decriminalization' means that the government gets out of the area altogether, whereas 'legalization' means that the government remains in the area and begins to control it further, whereupon the drug scene and all that follows in its path such as crime and corruption have a colossal field-day. Taken by itself, decriminalization would obviously not have any serious impact on drug taking but it would hit hard the pockets of the drug czars and those who live by corruption, for when goods and services are illegal or else are controlled by governments, then organized crime and corruption thrive. Remove the controls and there is no longer a profitable market in which organized crime can operate. Furthermore, the prisons would no longer be cluttered with men and women whose sole 'crime' was that they merely elected to take drugs of one kind or another. An added bonus, at least in theory, would be the disbandment of some of those costly government departments that had been brought into being to 'handle' the drug problem. You and I know, however, that the public bureaucracy does not work this way, and that, in practice, other government 'work' would be found for these displaced public servants – but that is another story.

One final observation must be made. Why do people take drugs? The answer is that people take them for a large number of different reasons and it is not my purpose here to write a thesis on this subject. It is merely for me to point out that if drug taking has been one of the great scourges of modern times, then there is a reason for it. That reason lies in the culture that the 'intellectuals' have given us – a culture that is philosophically bankrupt, politically primitive and economically flawed. A discussion of these topics is, in essence, the subject of this book. Get the philosophy right, get the politics right, get the economics right and all else follows.

GUN CONTROL

[The author is here referring to the first hours of the American War of Independence.]

But the unknown individual had the courage of his convictions. He got up, put on his clothes, took his gun, and went out to meet the British troops. Not acting under orders, not being led nor wanting to be the leader, he stood on his own feet – a responsible, self-controlling person – and fired the shot heard 'round the world. The sound of that shot said that man is a free agent; that government is the servant rather than the master.

*Henry Grady Weaver
(The Mainspring or Human Progress)*

Elsewhere in this book, the political mania for lawmaking was discussed. We have also seen how easily politicians can be swayed by emotional unthinking people who seem to imagine that whenever there is a problem, the surest way to solve it is for them to turn to their politicians and demand that appropriate legislation be enacted. Such a knee-jerk reaction to problems, however, is nothing new. It has always been the way with people whose predominant philosophy is pragmatism.

The demand for 'gun controls' is just one further example of the blind faith that many people have in the curative powers of legislation. It needs only a minor tragedy in which, perhaps, a crazed gunman runs amok and kills a number of people, for the lives of millions of other people to be inexorably changed by the resultant legislation. Furthermore, these changes will inevitably be even more devastating than were those that prompted the legislation in the first place. One of the many serious flaws associated with laws enacted for pragmatic reasons is that the legislators and those who encourage them, invariably fail to see further ahead than the immediate future. To them, anything beyond that time is a blur. The concept of cause and effect is something that most of them either do not fully grasp or else choose to ignore. A responsible person, however, dares not reject such a concept for it spells out an important fact of reality – that effects have causes and causes produce effects. On the face of it, it may have appeared a good idea for the government to have outlawed the use of guns or at least to have controlled the users of them. In the immediate future it is possible that the number of cases of murder and manslaughter in a community will have been reduced and this fact will probably have been proudly held up as proof that the enactment of the law was, indeed, an unbounded success. But was it? Let us look beyond the immediate future. What will be the results of the legislation in five years time, in ten years time, in twenty years time? It is easy for one to say "Who cares?" or "If the law is unsatisfactory then it can always be repealed". This is true, but in practice, it has been shown that politicians are far more likely to enact laws than they are to repeal them so that once an Act is on the Statute-Books it will probably remain there materially unchanged for a long period of time. This means that any serious consequences of the law will continue to affect people's lives long into the future.

Guns cannot be held responsible for killing people any more than can knives, bombs, motor cars, aeroplanes, mountains or any other inanimate object. Only people can commit murder or manslaughter and if people wish to kill other people, there are any number of different methods or weapons they may employ in order to do so. For a government to legislate to prevent people from owning just one type of weapon amongst many that could be used for killing people cannot be taken as a

serious attempt on its part to reduce the number of killings occurring in a community. For a government to be taken seriously it would have to ban, or else severely restrict, the use of all implements capable of being used for killing purposes – all poisons, all knives, all heavy objects, all pointed objects, rope, scarves, pillows, all the components that go into the making of bombs, all matches, cigarette lighters, oxyacetylene torches, motor cars, aeroplanes, boats and ships, electricity and who knows what else. [Admittedly, most if not all of these ‘things’ come under government scrutiny already but for entirely different reasons and in entirely different ways.] What can be taken seriously, however, is a government’s determination to be seen to be doing something ‘in the public interest’ thereby, hopefully, winning votes for itself, for therein lies the real motivation behind the legislation.

Some might argue that certain guns should be allowed but others should be disallowed. On the face of it, this may appear a reasonable argument but it is a typically pragmatic argument. Who will decide which guns will be allowed and which disallowed? Where is the line to be drawn? What principles should be applied to determine it? There are no principles. The line is drawn wherever it is expedient to draw it. Will expediency dictate that the line be drawn here this year; elsewhere next year and somewhere else still the year after that? The argument will be never-ending so long as different groups of people continue to apply their pressure to politicians and so long as decisions are made for pragmatic purposes rather than on the basis of principles. When, as is suggested many times over in this book, the initiation of physical force and the threat of it are outlawed by government, it does not take a vivid imagination to work out what would constitute the threat of physical force with regard to guns – any type of guns.

Let us now look at some of those longer-term consequences of ‘gun control’ that the advocates of it either do not wish to consider or else are incapable of visualizing. The most obvious of these is the need for yet another monstrous government bureaucracy which will be established in order to control all those people who either own guns, want to buy them or wish to use them. Such bureaucracies do not come cheaply. Some people have to pay for them. Those people are, of course, the already hard-hit taxpayers. In whatever manner the controlling is carried out, people’s liberties will be further limited for should a man wish to own a gun for the purpose of protecting himself and his property or else to use it for sporting purposes, he will be obliged to go cap in hand to a public bureaucrat and humbly beseech a licence to enable him to own or to use a particular type of gun. Should the public bureaucrat decline this request then the applicant will have no option but to appeal to some more senior public bureaucrat, and so the whole silly begging game proceeds on its way. Normally, so long as the appropriate forms are completed correctly with the ‘t’s’ crossed and the ‘i’s’ dotted and so long as the applicant pays the prescribed tax money (known as a ‘licence’ fee by most people and as ‘extortion money’ by others), the authority to own and/or use a particular type of gun will probably be granted. Once the pattern is set, however, the government may, at any time it chooses, turn the screws and tighten up the relevant legislation, banning the use of even more guns; adding to the size of the controlling public bureaucracy; increasing the penalties for infringement of the laws; granting the police forces greater powers of enforcement; turning more and more dissenters into ‘criminals’ and potential ‘criminals’ and in so doing driving yet more nails into the coffin of liberty. It is only a matter of time before the inevitable happens and it becomes a criminal offence for

anyone to take the steps necessary to enable him to satisfactorily defend himself, his family and his property against thugs and thieves. Admittedly, in more advanced societies the citizen implicitly hands over the responsibility for the protection of his life and property to the police forces, but when the police forces are incapable of carrying out those duties properly, then the responsibility must fall back on to the shoulders of the individual himself. Disarm the individual and he is powerless to do what he has every right to do – to fight and to kill, if need be, in order to protect his most fundamental right – the right to his own life, and, by implication, the right to assist others in the protection of theirs. That the police forces are unable to carry out their proper duties adequately is not necessarily a reflection on them but rather on the politicians and their hangers-on who have largely turned the ‘people’s’ police forces into an aggressive arm of government. Nowadays, an ever-decreasing proportion of police work is concerned with the protection of individuals and their property. More and more of it has come to be concerned with enforcing a never-ending stream of victimless ‘crimes’ and as acting as government extortion agents on the streets and roads of a country. The original concept of police forces as government agencies set up to protect people and their property against criminals has increasingly given way to the concept that police forces are there to do the government’s bidding and to act as aggressors against the very people whom they should be protecting.

One has only to look at the history of prohibition in the United States of America and, more recently, the world-wide ‘anti-drug’ legislation which brought into being large numbers of enormous government bureaucracies costing unimaginable sums of taxpayers’ money to achieve only minimal results for us to appreciate the futility and the dangers inherent in ‘gun-control’ legislation. When any legislation is passed under the pretext of it being ‘in the national interest’ we should understand that it inevitably ends up benefiting some people at the expense of others. In the case of ‘gun control’ it is the criminals who benefit most and the honest people who suffer most. If people want guns for criminal purposes they will buy them without difficulty on the ‘black’ market just as people once bought ‘black’ market alcohol and today, buy ‘black’ market drugs. This ‘black’ market, in these instances, is the ‘free’ market as opposed to the ‘controlled’ market. (It is not, however, an ‘open’ market.) There will always be a market for guns so long as there is a demand for them. No amount of legislation will destroy that market short of turning the Country into one huge concentration camp. The controlling legislation will merely drive guns underground, forcing up their price, catering for the demands of the real criminals and turning large numbers of honest people into ‘ersatz’ criminals by government decree. It will not be long before we have a society in which criminals are armed and most honest citizens are compulsorily disarmed!

With the passage of time, as the criminals becomes bolder and the chances of their being apprehended are reduced as the police are spending more of their time doing ‘other things’, so armed hold-ups become commonplace and innocent people are brutally bashed and murdered without being able adequately to defend themselves. Once this happens, the death toll rises far beyond that of the original slaughter that prompted the ‘anti-gun’ legislation in the first place. What began as a tragic but limited local disaster, in time, turns into a massive nation-wide catastrophe. Such is man’s folly.

CONFUSING MATTERS

Monopolies
Unions and Strikes
Unemployment
International Trade

MONOPOLIES

Paraphrasing 'The Communist Manifesto' of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels:-- 'The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie to centralize all instruments of production in the hands of the State. To accomplish this it will have as one of its objectives the centralization of credit in the hands of the State, by means of a national bank with State capital and an exclusive monopoly.'

There is enough rubbish written and spoken about monopolies to fill a minor library. It is for this reason that this section is inserted, not merely to bring some sanity to the subject but also to expose the hypocrisy, the deceit and the stupidity that has become the hallmark of so many modern politicians.

As we shall see, there are different types of monopolies but the most interesting aspect of this subject is that nearly all of them are the product of government. It is also of considerable interest to note that it is these very same governments that devote an inordinate amount of their time and our money in devising ways to get rid of them!

In a totalitarian State, the government either owns or controls every major enterprise. In a mixed economy such as those of most major countries today, it is governments that have traditionally taken upon themselves the responsibility for owning and running a large number of organizations. Typical amongst these have been the postal services, telecommunications, railways, international air services, electricity, gas supplies, water supplies, sewerage systems, education, roads, bridges, city bus services, airfields and much more. When such enterprises are owned and run by governments they invariably take the form of coercive monopolies. This means that competition with these government enterprises is prohibited by law. Nowadays, when so many governments are either broke or almost broke, there is a tendency for some of these enterprises to be sold off, either in their entirety or in part, to private owners in order to help pay off massive government debts. In many of these cases, the new owners may be granted a sole franchise to operate the business but only according to specified government rules. In other cases, the government may sell an enterprise but limit the extent of competition that it allows so that the enterprise becomes what is known as a coercive oligopoly (i.e., a 'monopoly' restricted to a limited number of companies). Such an example would come about under a government 'three airline policy' under which the government would permit these different companies to fly similar routes and 'compete' with one another but only in a restricted manner. A fourth company wishing to enter the field would be disallowed by law.

What has been discussed so far constitutes the great majority of all monopolies. Note, however, that they are all coercive and are all either government owned, government franchised or else restricted by government in some manner.

There are, however, a few industries that have never been owned by governments but which have become virtual monopolies purely and simply because governments have put the political and legal machinery in place that enables them to become the sole operators in their field or else one of a few select number of operators in that field. When a company is granted special favours by a government such as a

subsidy, a bounty or a franchise, or when it has friends in the government, or it has become so privileged that it is able to exert exceptional pressure on politicians, it may be possible for it to keep out any competition. Remember that this can only be achieved with the help and connivance of governments. Another factor that often precludes competition is the complexity of a country's legislation and its punitive taxation system both of which favour the established company and are often sufficient, in themselves, to deter a competitor from entering the field. So, once again, we can lay the blame for the monopoly or oligopoly at the feet of governments.

The other type of monopoly is the 'natural' monopoly. This is a monopoly that, unlike the others, is non-coercive in nature. A good example would be that of a well-run bakery in a small town. So long as the baker sells a good product at a price acceptable to his customers there is probably little likelihood that a competitor would prosper were he to set up in opposition. The market in this small town is just not big enough to support two bakers. The existing baker, in this case, has a natural monopoly and so long as he continues to satisfy his customers, he will survive and prosper. Should he drop his standards, however, or charge his customers above that which they consider to be a reasonable price, then his business will be in jeopardy should a competitor be tempted to enter the field.

Another example of a non-coercive monopoly is that of an industry (let us say a maker of matches) that is so efficient in its operation that it is able to market an excellent product and at such a low price that another match manufacturer would be unable to compete with it and survive. In this case, once again, the industry has a natural monopoly and everyone should be happy – the manufacturer for being able to make a good profit, the workers for having steady jobs and the customers for being able to buy a good product at a low price. Let us suppose, however, that our manufacturer becomes lax and begins to produce inferior matches or that he becomes inefficient and is impelled to raise the price of his article. It is now that competition may enter the field. On the other hand, competition can always come from an unexpected quarter – not from another match manufacturer but, let us say, from the maker of disposable cigarette -lighters. After all, the purpose of both the match and the cigarette -lighter is to produce the same thing – a flame.

The salient point is that it is governments and government interference into the market-place that alone creates harmful monopolies. Nevertheless, the champions of big government (and there are many of them) persistently assert that monopolies are inherent in a free market. Nothing could be further from the truth. Sadly, such myths persist and continue to be propagated in our schools and universities. Because they are so propagated and believed by politicians and public bureaucrats, we end up with pages and pages of unnecessary legislation, huge unnecessary government departments, thousands of unnecessary public bureaucrats and a team of unnecessary judges presiding over their unnecessary courts.

Surely Lewis Carroll at his brilliant best could never have conjured up a wackier scenario than this.

UNIONS and STRIKES

While the role of the unions was accepted as beneficial by politicians of all parties, who saw them as a useful means of garnering votes, they were looked upon as an anomaly by the courts because they interfered with the freedom of contract between willing sellers and buyers, subordinating individual rights to collective interests and threatening to undermine the processes of parliamentary democracy. The threat to liberty and democracy was the greater because the statutes which established the legal status of the unions treated them as incorporated bodies, largely outside the law, enjoying immunity from the courts when they committed an actionable wrong.

Ben Roberts

(Mr Hammond's Cherry Tree: The Morphology of Union Survival)

Like so much else that has political and economic overtones, unions and strikes are capable of generating violent emotions – the inevitable product of a plethora of long-standing myths and a foggy blur of scrambled ideas.

It is generally believed not merely by unionists themselves but by many non-unionists as well, that the relatively high living standards of people in the Western World were obtained as a direct result of the Union Movement and its fight on behalf of 'working people'. Nothing could be further from the truth. It is true that unions may have helped to bring about some short-term wage increases or temporary improved working conditions in a factory or in a particular trade or even in a number of factories and a few trades but that is an entirely different proposition from claiming that the Union Movement has permanently raised living standards for a whole country or for a large section of the world. It should also be understood that wages in excess of those that would have been obtained on a free market are obtained not merely at the expense of employers but also, and just as importantly, at the expense of non-unionized workers. They are also obtained at the expense of workers in other types of occupations and also at the expense of the general public. If there is not strong competition (local or foreign) in that area of industry or commerce on which a union has set its sights, then the employer may be able to increase his prices and so pass on his added costs to the consumers. The consumers of his article, however, will probably include his own employees so that they, too, will be obliged to pay a higher price for the article that they, themselves, have helped to produce. If, on the other hand, there is strong competition in that particular industry or commercial venture, then the employer may not be able to increase the price of his article. This means that when excessively high wages are obtained by union pressure, the new added costs to the employer must be adsorbed. It may be that this can be done only by him laying off staff, by continuing to use old machinery or else by cutting his profit margin and so delaying business expansion. All these factors slow his business, lower productivity and have both a direct and indirect impact on his employees and their jobs. If the extra wages burden is eventually found to be utterly intolerable, then the employer may be sent bankrupt and all his workers will lose their jobs. In the final analysis, therefore, although it may have been a battle won by the union executive it was, in true Pyrrhic fashion, a battle lost by the union's members!

By coming to an agreement with employers, union executives may be able to improve working conditions for their members and, through negotiation, ensure that their members get the full market value for their services. If, however, unions attempt to raise wages beyond market levels by using physical force or the threat of

it, or else by turning to governments or to the Law Courts in order to cash in on the physical force that they, in turn, have at their disposal, then the market-place is thrown into turmoil. It is a popular delusion to imagine that unions can override basic economic laws. They cannot. It is labour productivity that is the fundamental determinant of wages and hence standards of living. This is why wages in the advanced countries of the world are higher than are the wages in the underdeveloped countries. It is not that the average Australian, American, or British farm-labourer belongs to a union (which he may not) or that he works harder than does a Vietnamese peasant, (which he probably does not) that accounts for his higher wages and standards of living. It is the fact that he is more productive as a result of the sophisticated machinery with which he works compared to that of the Vietnamese peasant who must rely on his own muscles and his solitary ox-drawn plough. The lesson to be learnt is simple – if productivity is down, then real wages will be down – if productivity is up, then real wages will be up.

It is often believed by unionists that employers, as a group, are a shameful lot and ever ready to bleed 'the workers' of their last drop of blood. [Shades of Karl Marx!] It is true that some employers may be hard taskmasters but it is also true that some employees are also far from lily-white. Most employers, for a very good reason, are prepared to pay a fair day's wage for a fair day's work and many pay even more than this. The reason that they do so is not benevolence but self-interest. It is to the employer's advantage to pay a good worker a good wage (if he can afford to do so) and deter him from being lured away to work for an opposition employer. Unions, however, have traditionally resisted attempts by employers to reward their most efficient workers – the unions insisting that the same hourly rates must apply to all workers regardless of differences in their productivity. Such a doctrine ultimately backfires on all workers as productivity invariably declines and with it employment opportunities and wage levels.

When we realize that both the employer and the employee need each other, we should understand that their relationship is essentially a personal one, a contractual one and one that should be beneficial to both parties. In such a relationship, if the employee wishes it and the employer agrees, there is a definite place in the relationship for a union. There is not, however, under any circumstances, a place for governments in any private employer-employee negotiations or relationships unless violence erupts and governmental retaliatory force is needed to contain it. Unions could play an invaluable rôle in a civilized society were their leaders and members to understand the moral and physical restraints that should be imposed upon them – restraints imposed not because they are unionists, but because they are human beings. These restraints, which should be legally binding on all people and institutions, are those that would outlaw the initiation of physical force, fraud and coercion by anyone against anyone else. There was a time in some countries when strong unions provided for their own unemployed members. It was, therefore, in the unions' interests to think twice before demanding unrealistic wage increases that could cause severe unemployment. Today, however, with government hand-outs in the form of a 'dole' to unemployed people, such restraints are removed.

In economic terms, the physical labour of a worker or the skills that he brings to his task or the specialist knowledge that he holds in his brain are all marketable commodities just as are tomatoes, shirts and motor cars. The wage or salary that a

man or woman receives is the price that the employer is prepared to pay and the employee is prepared to accept in exchange for these personal attributes. Whether we are talking about tomatoes, shirts, motor cars or labour, the same economic laws apply and the same chaos will inevitably eventuate when anyone, whoever it may be, attempts to interfere forcibly with these voluntary transactions.

If there has to be a villain in this story, and there certainly is, it is not primarily the unions but governments for it is governments, in nearly all Western Countries, that have, over the years, granted unions special powers and privileges by way of legislation that have enabled them to ride roughshod over whomsoever they wished. When unions, through compulsory unionism rules, made employment dependent upon union membership, it was governments that gave them the power to do so. When unions declared a factory or an industry a closed shop, it was governments that enabled the unions to use physical force or the threat of it against other workers. When union-backed demarcation disputes arose, it was governments that gave them their blessing and allowed the unions to threaten employers and so add needlessly to their costs. When strikers picket on 'public' property, it is governments that condone this abuse. When union members break their contracts, it is governments that grant them special privileges to do so. When unionists perform acts of industrial sabotage, governments invariably turn the blind eye. When strikers attempt forcibly to prevent non-strikers from passing a picket line, governments will often adopt a 'softly-softly' approach and refuse to recognize, let alone to protect, people's rights, whether they be those of the employer or those of non-union workers. When unions take action in an attempt to prevent promotion on the grounds of merit (as opposed to seniority) governments are just as likely to side with the unions. When unionists beat up those who work 'too well', governments often try to distance themselves from such acts of barbarity. It was governments, in the past, that enacted legislation forcing employers, when taking on personnel, to deal exclusively with unions, making it illegal for employers to negotiate directly with individual workers. This meant that an employer could find himself in prison were he to employ the man most suited for the job! When a government legislates to force the substitute workers to give up their jobs to the strikers once the strike is over, as is the law in some countries, it shows the extent to which many politicians will go in order to curry favour with unscrupulous union bosses. Furthermore, government wage legislation has caused, and will, no doubt, continue to cause, untold harm to the old, the young, the unskilled, the people of some racial groups, the mentally slow, the disabled and the unemployed as these people are usually prevented by law from taking jobs at lower wages and more in keeping with their productivity levels. When unions, with government help (which means, ultimately, with some form of intimidation or coercion), seek to fix wages above their real market worth, the ensuing unemployment must be laid fairly and squarely at the feet of governments for it is they who, for years, bestowed on unions their enormous and frightening powers.

So long as union leaders imagine that they can improve the working conditions of their members by such practices as opposing the introduction of better machinery; of initiating go-slow programs under the pretext of fighting work 'speed-up' practices; of applying pressure on employers to hire workers whom they do not need or want, they will continue to work against the interests of their members. So long as union leaders continue to be concerned only about ever-increasing wages regardless of the employers' ability to pay them; and taking the determination of wages and

working conditions out of the market-place, their main effect will be to create unemployment. In this regard, union leaders invariably behave in an almost identical manner to that of the politicians. Both manage to instil into the minds of their followers the illusion that under their benign guidance, they will be led to a land overflowing with milk and honey. That this never eventuates is attributed to the machinations of their enemies: in the case of the politicians – the opposition party; in the case of the union leaders – the ‘scheming capitalist bosses’!

One of the ultimate weapons of union leaders is ‘the strike’. Let us, therefore, look at this ‘strike’ in a little more detail. When employees are hired by means of a verbal contract (as opposed to a written one) it is an accepted convention that if a man is paid on a weekly basis, either party must give a week’s notice should it wish to terminate the contract. Similarly, if a man is paid on a monthly basis, a month’s notice must be given. This means that without a written contract, whenever a worker downs tools and walks off the job, this strike, in reality, constitutes a breach of contract and the employer should be able to claim damages against the striker and against any other workers who join him in the strike. In the same way, if the employer were to act in a similar manner towards the employee, then the employee should be able to claim damages against the employer. In the case of the employee striking and hence breaking his contract, it is only reasonable that the employer should be allowed, legally, to employ another worker in the striker’s place should he so wish. [It may happen in practice that the employer may prefer not to do this but, when the strike is over, to rehire the strikers whose standards of work he already knows, rather than employ new workers about whom he knows little. That, however, should be a decision for the employer alone and not for anyone else.]

To talk, as do so many people, of a ‘right to strike’ is a contradiction in terms. In a sane society, no-one could ever have a right to break an honest contract. Certainly governments should recognize a man’s right to withdraw his labour should he wish to do so, but only after he had fulfilled the terms and conditions laid down in his contract – implied or written. This means that all workers could, if they so wished, give due notice to the employer and resign ‘en masse’.

This brings us to the question of verbal and written contracts. As verbal contracts depend upon mutual trust, it is generally advisable for people who do not know one another to insist upon a written contract so that both parties may know exactly where they stand. It is in this area that the unions can play an all-important rôle by drafting, in conjunction with employers, mutually acceptable contracts. Such contracts would, hopefully, be written in simple language, unambiguously and fairly. [In some countries, such practices have been established for many years.] In the event of such contracts being broken by either side, the injured party could claim for damages. If the injured party was the employee then his union might offer to act on his behalf. Unions, through honest negotiation (as opposed to coercion) can also take it upon themselves, if they so wish, not only to help their members to obtain the market price for their labour and reasonable hours and working conditions as well as reasonable health and safety guarantees, but also venture into a wide range of other exciting areas. Contracting discounts for members on an ever-widening range of articles and services is but one such way that unions can make themselves more attractive to workers. The mind boggles at the possibilities.

Although we can and should be highly critical of many unions, we should remember always that it is the politicians with their buying of votes and their pragmatically motivated legislation, who have enabled unions, so often, to create havoc in people's lives. We should also understand that union leaders are probably neither better nor worse, brighter or duller than are any other group of people in the community. Like most other people, they are merely the product of a culture that they have chosen not to question. It is this unwillingness on the part of people, including most unionists (and, no doubt, most employers) to clear their minds of old worn-out ideas that helps to prolong the political and economic chaos that is so characteristic of our times.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Principles are not legislated or invented – they are discovered. For centuries men were ignorant of the laws of physics, but they were subject to them nonetheless. It was only when principles were discovered that the great advances in the physical sciences could take place. So it is with human action. To the extent that the principles of human nature have been ignored or rejected, men have suffered poverty, stagnation, and political tyranny.

*Susan Love Brown, Karl Keating et al.
(The Incredible Bread Machine)*

When we talk about the unemployed we are talking about a mixed bag of people. Firstly, there are those who, for one reason or another, are almost unemployable such as the committed drop-outs from society, the incorrigible drug addicts and some of the mentally retarded. Secondly, there are those who are capable of working but who are perfectly content to live out their lives on government hand-outs. Thirdly, there is a large group of people consisting mainly of young people who are really unemployed but who have been shunted into government schooling programs so that the politicians may pretend that the unemployment figures are lower than they really are. Fourthly, there are those people who would like to be employed but who are unable to find a job to suit them. Fifthly, there are those who cannot find a job of any sort and, sixthly, there are those who are voluntarily and temporarily not working but who, at almost any time of their choosing, are capable of finding suitable employment.

Before we discuss the overall problem of unemployment, let us first expand a little on each of these six groups.

The first group (those who are virtually unemployable.)

In the present politico-economic climate, most of these people will never be usefully employed. In any free or even semi-free society, people should be able to drop out of it if they so wish. Similarly, they should be allowed to pickle their brains with drugs if they are silly enough to want to take that course. In no society, however, do these people have a right to infringe upon other people's rights by trespassing on their property as by 'squatting' or by living off money extorted from honest hard-working people. Such acts are the acts not of honourable and responsible men and women but those of bums and parasites. As far as the mentally retarded are concerned, in a sound economic climate, many of these people would still be capable of performing work of some sort and there are, even today, in an uncertain economic climate, any number of fine charitable organizations willing to help such people to help themselves.

The second group (those who prefer the dole to work.)

Most of these people will not be usefully employed until such time as their hand-outs cease. In the meantime, unless hard-working productive people openly express their displeasure, these people will continue to use governments in order to sponge on others.

The third group (the unemployed disguised as students.)

Sadly, many of these young people are the object of a cruel confidence trick. Some of them may benefit from these artificial training programs. Many will not. It is the individual productive people in the private sector – not a counterproductive

public bureaucracy – who are the best judges of the future labour needs of commerce and industry.

The fourth group (the people who are over-selective.)

When we go shopping in order to buy pears and we find that pears are out of season, we probably buy, instead, some other fruit such as oranges. Not many people would go without fruit for any length of time merely because their favourite fruit is out of season. Yet this is the mentality of the people in this group. They would rather be without a job than accept one that was not exactly to their liking. If these people are as selective as this, then they have largely themselves to blame for being unemployed.

The fifth group (those who cannot find a job of any sort.)

There are many in this group who would actually find employment if they used their brains a little more effectively, brushed the chips off their shoulders and ‘cleaned themselves up.’ They might then find that their self-esteem had risen and that this change of attitude was being picked up by the antennae of their would-be employers.

The sixth group (those who, for various reasons, are having a well earned rest.)

We need not trouble ourselves unduly with this group as these people are usually capable of adjusting to any set of circumstances.

Whatever the group into which people fall, most of them would be able to find work if they so wished it, compatible with their physical and mental capabilities, if sound policies were adopted by governments. What, then, are these sound policies and why have unsound policies led to so much unemployment and misery? Let us explore this subject.

Anything that hampers the free exchange of goods and services between people will inevitably, sooner or later, have a harmful effect on commerce and industry as a whole. Admittedly, government interference into the market-place may temporarily assist one section of industry and commerce. Such an example would be that of a government’s decision to lower interest rates in order to stimulate the building industry. In doing so, however, the government is injuring some other areas of industry and commerce by creaming off much needed investment capital that would otherwise have gone into different ventures and which would probably have created greater and more permanent employment. Arbitrarily lowering interest rates will also reduce the incomes of those people, particularly the elderly, many of whom rely entirely, or in part, on past savings for their income. The consequent reduction in their spending soon has its effect on the retail trade which, in turn, affects the wholesale trade which, in turn, affects the manufacturing sector and the importers. What politicians, public bureaucrats and economists tend to do is to look at just one side of a coin and extol its beauty whilst refusing to turn the coin over and to look at the other side which, invariably, is not so attractive. In the longer term and looking at the bigger picture, far more harm than good is done with every decision by governments to ‘stimulate the economy’ by interfering into it and regulating it. Current economic thinking, however, holds that interference into the market-place is essential if the market-place is to function properly, efficiently and fairly!

The law of Supply and Demand (which is the law that governs the market-place), however, is just as much a law of nature as is the Law of Gravity. When politicians, public bureaucrats, judges and union leaders interfere into the market-place, they do not change the Law of Supply and Demand. They merely distort the market-place and it is this distortion that has a profound effect on commerce and industry and everything associated with them – including jobs. This interference takes so many forms that it would be impossible to itemize and discuss them all here but some of the more common examples are crippling taxation in all its manifold forms, inflation, tariffs, quotas, bounties and subsidies, licensing laws, property resumption laws, anti-discrimination laws, unfair dismissal laws, laws ensuring government monopolies, environmental impact studies, laws relating to standards, laws granting unions special privileges, union demarcation disputes, union resistance to advanced manufacturing techniques, bureaucratic red tape by the lorry load and so on. As if these restraints on trade were not enough, there is yet another interference into the market-place that must take pride of place amongst all the others as a major cause of unemployment. This is the ‘economic’ device of setting minimum wage rates by some form of arbitrary decree as may be used by governments, unions or Arbitration Courts. What those who advocate such policies are attempting to do is to override the Law of Supply and Demand and to pretend that, in so doing, they are actually improving the working of the market-place.

This is somewhat analogous to the academic economists suggesting to the academic physicists that they should override the Law of Gravity in order to make gravity work more efficiently! In our universities this sort of nonsense goes by the name of ‘economics’.

In the market-place and in economic terms, the price that an employer must pay for labour is no different, in principle, from the price that you and I must pay for tomatoes, beef steak or motor cars. Just as tomatoes, beef steak and motor cars have a price on the market, so does labour. In a free market, if there is a steady demand for tomatoes but a glut of them, the price of tomatoes will be low. If there is a steady demand for tomatoes but tomatoes are in short supply, their price will be high. If there is a glut of average quality tomatoes but a scarcity of high quality tomatoes, then the ordinary tomatoes will be cheap whereas the high quality tomatoes will be more expensive than they usually are. If the buying public considers the price of these high quality tomatoes to be excessive, then many people will refrain from buying them and so the price of high quality tomatoes will come down. Every intelligent shopper will understand this whether or not he or she knows anything about economic theory. As we have said, the same economic principles apply whether we are talking about tomatoes, beef steak, motor cars or labour, so let us get back on track and talk about labour.

In an unhampered market, if there is a steady demand for average carpenters and an over-supply of them, their wages will be low. If there is a steady demand for first-class carpenters and if there is a scarcity of them, their wages will be high. If there is a strong demand for first-class carpenters and a great scarcity of them, their wages will be higher still. If good plumbers are in greater demand than good carpenters, then, other things being equal, good plumbers will be able to ask for more money than will good carpenters. If governments or unions or judges, however, arbitrarily declare that average carpenters will be paid the same wage as first-class plumbers

then the whole labour market is thrown into turmoil. All the economic signals are changed – the green light becomes amber and the red light becomes green. Imagine what would happen if these signal changes occurred without warning on the streets of a big city. There would be disaster and this is exactly what happens in the labour market. If the body that sets wages sets them at a level lower than does the market-place, then the workers will be paid less than the employers would be prepared to pay them – that is they would be paid less than they are actually worth. If the body that sets wages sets them at the same levels as those set by the market-place, then what is the body doing wasting everyone's time and money as it obviously serves no useful purpose. If the body that sets wages sets them at a level above that which the market would have set, then some employees will be put off as employers will find that it is no longer profitable for them to employ so many workers. The old, the very young, the dim-witted and the least reliable will probably be the first to go. Others will follow. The ranks of the unemployed will begin to swell.

The concept of a set of minimum wages, whether decreed by governments, unions or judges, is so firmly established in our politico-economic system that it is hard to see it, in the foreseeable future, being consigned to the scrap-heap, but consigned it must be, together with all the other government, union and judicial interferences into the market-place if unemployment on a large scale is ever to be eradicated. [Full employment, of course, is easily and quickly attainable under a dictatorship – a system in which people are directed to work in certain selected areas, with or without their consent, with or without payment, under pain of death or incarceration in a concentration camp should they object. When we speak of eradicating massive unemployment, therefore, it goes without saying that we are talking about doing it in a free society or, at least, in a predominantly free society.] Unemployment is telling us, amongst other things, that wages in some important areas are set at too high a level and that so long as this labour remains over-priced, unemployment in these areas will persist.

If it is as simple as this, which it is, why then you may ask, can't politicians, public bureaucrats, economists and union officials see it? The answer is that some of them probably do see it. To support this statement, some highly-placed politicians and public bureaucrats with the full backing of their economic advisors and the tacit consent of senior union officials have, in the past, conspired to lower wages, not by government, union or court decree which would have reflected badly on the politicians, the union officials and the judges, but by the simple device of having the government of the day inflate the currency so causing prices to rise. The tacit agreement between all concerned parties was that higher wages would not be sought in order to keep pace with the higher prices. So, in effect, the general wage rates came down. That, too, goes by the name of politics and economics. It is hardly surprising to learn that not one person in a thousand would see through such a political confidence trick.

Most politicians find the problem of unemployment far too difficult and it is for this reason that they are content to fiddle around with it and give the impression that they are doing something of value. They could, of course, inflate the currency and so create an artificial boom which would soak up most of the unemployed. After decades of such economic madness, however, some politicians appear to have learnt that such a course of action is not such a brilliant idea after all. Gross inflation

has, therefore, temporarily fallen into disfavour. This means that governments would have to do something sensible instead, such as putting into effect proposals such as those put forward in this Section, but such proposals would be certain to lose them votes. It is safer for them, therefore, to do nothing!

By and large, union leaders are not over-concerned about massive unemployment as they are predominantly concerned about higher wages for their own members and most of their members have jobs already. As for the huge armies of counterproductive public bureaucrats, most of them are holding down secure jobs with wages and salaries at levels far beyond those that they would be able to obtain in the private sector were they to do the sort of work that they are currently doing. Why, then, should they worry? Furthermore, the public service unions would, no doubt, fight tooth and nail to resist any lowering of their members' wages.

Although minimum wage laws and the arbitrary setting of wage levels are the single major cause of massive unemployment, we should not forget the damage done also by all those other interferences that distort the market-place so retarding business growth and adding to the unemployment lists.

To put the whole sorry story into perspective, let us imagine a man entrusting his brand new car to the care of a mechanic who believed that all new cars possessed certain inherent weaknesses in design and manufacture that needed to be corrected in order to ensure that they worked properly. Imagine this mechanic constantly fiddling with his client's car, adding bits here, removing bits there, readjusting settings, replacing metal tubes with plastic tubes and plastic tubes with metal tubes, taking out the pistons and replacing them with pistons made of a different material, changing the braking system and altering the gear ratios. The mind boggles at the possibilities. Needless to say, at the end of it all, the client might still be left with a car of sorts but it would not be the car that it once was and that it should be. Almost certainly, it would not work properly. What the owner of this car would do once he had learnt of the true extent of the changes that the mechanic had made to his new car is open to conjecture but one thing is almost certain: he would, in the future, insist that any mechanic looking after a car of his would never tinker with it under some delusion that he was capable of making a well-designed and well-built car run better. If the reader thinks that this little cameo is silly, then I will have to agree with him. It is silly, but it is no sillier than for one to entrust one's working life and potential happiness to the care of politicians and public bureaucrats who abide by only one basic rule – 'whatever it is, interfere with it'. The moral of the story is all too obvious. So long as people allow governments to interfere into the market-place, there will be chaos – not some random chaos but a planned chaos! When a politically initiated chaos determines the course of people's lives, is it not time for them to cry 'halt'? So long as people allow their governments to interfere into the market-place, the market-place will become distorted. The greater the interference, the greater will be the distortion. It is this distortion that creates massive unemployment and it is massive unemployment that creates untold human misery. To invite misery is not an intelligent act but inviting misery is exactly what most people do when they blindly follow silly economic doctrines and political hocus-pocus.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Normally, it seems obvious that a buyer gains from what he gets, not from what he gives up – and the lower the price he must pay for what he gets, the greater is his gain. But in the realm of international economics, some oddly prefer less to more of good things and to pay higher prices than lower.

*William R. Allen
(Midnight Economist)*

The mere title 'International Trade' is probably enough, in itself, to frighten many readers. Surely, some will say, this is a topic so complex that only specialists in the field could hope to understand it. Well, those people could be right and then, on the other hand, they could be wrong. Let us find out the truth of the matter.

In principle, the understanding of international trade is extremely simple. It is so simple, in fact, that any author of an economics book worth reading would probably not bother to devote more than a few pages, at most, to the subject. In practice, however, the subject of 'international trade' is a nightmare of complexities – the direct and indirect result of years of interference and misinformation by politicians whose basic concern is not trade but power. According to most politicians and their economic gurus it is essential that governments manipulate the international market-place just as they manipulate the domestic market-place. Otherwise, they say, great harm will be done to the Country and economic bedlam will prevail! Needless to say, it is the interference itself that creates the harm and the bedlam – not the market-place.

Let us consider an analogy. The children's game of marbles is extremely simple. Were the government, however, to decide to control marbles, it would soon find it 'necessary' to devise many hundreds of different rules that children would be obliged to follow when playing this game. [How else could the public bureaucrats justify their existence in this area?] If the children did not follow these rules, they would be severely punished and even, perhaps, bundled off to a reformatory. It does not take a finely-tuned imagination to foresee that marbles would quickly become a complicated game. We might even, in time, find that the study of marbles had become so complex that it was found necessary, 'in the interest of children', to make marbles the subject of a university degree course. The moral of this silly story is that anything simple can be made complex if we allow the politicians and the public bureaucrats to control it or interfere with it. International Trade, in this respect, is no different from the game of marbles.

Another interesting observation is that doing business with someone who lives in another country is, in essence, no different from doing business with one's next-door neighbour. If you happen to be admiring your neighbour's brand new Mercedes-Benz at a time when he has just lost a mountain of money in some ill-advised business venture, he may be prepared to sell it to you at a reduced price. If you have the money (lucky you), you may be able to come to terms acceptable to you both. If so, you will pay your money to him and he will give the car to you. It is as simple as that, or rather, it should be. Similarly, were you to approach a German in Germany who has a Mercedes-Benz for sale and were you to offer to buy it, you would, no doubt, negotiate the terms of the contract with him and he would tell you

how he wished to be paid – in German marks, in Euros, in American dollars, in Australian dollars, in pounds sterling, in gold bullion or perhaps in so many bags of peanut shells. It is then up to you to find the particular medium that he is demanding for the contract to be fulfilled. As there are other people, such as yourself, wanting to buy and sell goods and services on the overseas market, there is obviously an opportunity for some people to make a good living out of buying and selling German marks, Euros, American dollars, Australian dollars, pounds sterling, gold bullion and peanut shells. For a small fee, one of these brokers will handle the details of your international transaction for you. Congratulations, you have just taken part in international trade and found that it was all very simple. Of course, there are matters such as freight charges and insurance cover with which you may be involved but you may be involved with these also in domestic trade.

In another Section, we saw how governments had succeeded, over time, in establishing themselves as masters of the populace, although for one brief and glorious period in the United States of America, this situation was largely reversed and the people, or rather most of them, became the masters of their government. Sadly, however, this period did not last. We also saw how governments in the past had contrived to acquire control over the supply of money. Between the mid-sixteenth and the late seventeenth centuries, there emerged a body of economic thought which was concerned mainly with the relationship between 'a nation's wealth' and its balance of foreign trade. The followers of this way of thinking came to be known as 'Mercantilists' and they favoured State intervention into foreign trade (or protection as we now know it) in order to maximize, so they thought, 'the wealth of the nation'. In spite of the Mercantilists' controls, international trade in the western world was still not as constrictive as it is today. Nevertheless, in the nineteenth century, many of these controls were lifted in Great Britain and international trade became as free as it had been for a long time. It was largely because of this policy of free trade that the Country experienced a period of unprecedented prosperity.

After the First World War, economic nationalism reared its ugly head again and free trade was abandoned in favour of protection. In 1936 there was published in England a book that was to have a profound influence on the thinking of the majority of economists the world over. They, in turn, influenced the world's politicians. This book was entitled 'The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money'. Its author was John Maynard Keynes. Strictly speaking, this book was not really a book about economics at all but was rather a book about politics – a book about how the politicians could and should, in Keynes' opinion, meddle with economics in order to create a world in conformity with his own vision of it. As his writings endorsed the doctrine, so popular with politicians, that greater government interference into people's affairs was essential if they were to live happy, secure and prosperous lives, the politicians welcomed the book with open arms. Keynes looked at his native Britain which was in the grip of the Great Depression, a product of government interference into the economy, and, without batting an eyelid, asserted that 'laissez-faire capitalism' had proved itself unworkable. That the economic system he was condemning was not 'laissez-faire capitalism' but was the 'mixed economy' did not appear to trouble him nor has it apparently troubled the consciences of his many disciples and fellow-travellers ever since.

It was Keynes who was largely responsible for the modern concept of 'macro-economics'. Macro-economics, in the guise of economics, treated countries in the Mercantilist manner, as if they were huge business enterprises so that all the butchers, bakers and candle stick makers in a country were no longer considered as individual tradesmen but as mere pawns in some huge mythical national business venture! The exponents of macro-economics no longer discussed the problems of Bruce, the butcher, Bert, the baker or Claude, the candle stick maker but pondered the problems of 'the meat industry', 'the textile industry', and the 'metal, wood and plastic industries' and, ultimately, the economic problems of 'the nation'! If 'the beef industry', for example, was experiencing problems because Argentinian beef was being imported into the Country and selling at a price lower than local beef then those in 'the beef industry' might appeal to the government for help. If the politicians in power sniffed the scent of votes, they might impose a duty on imported beef (a tariff) or they could, perhaps, permit only a certain amount of imported beef to enter the Country (a quota) or, perhaps, prop up the local beef industry with hand-outs (subsidies or bounties). Whatever course the government chose to take, however, the outcome would always be the same. The politicians would emerge smelling like roses as they would have been quick to point out that what they had done was 'in the public interest'. The public, in whose interest the government had claimed to act, would later have found out that it now had to pay more for its beef, whilst the 'economy of the Country' would in some way have to absorb, as best it could, the distortions that followed this interference.

International Trade is all about the importing and exporting of goods and services. As has been said already, such trade should not be a complicated procedure. It has been made so by political interference. Let us, briefly, therefore, look at some of the ways in which politicians interfere into the international market-place and in so doing enable themselves to satisfy their latent paranoiac tendencies which manifest themselves in a multitude of different ways. Paramount is their craving to possess the power to enable them to push people around and to bestow favours on those who please them. When we talk of government interference the first thing we think about are laws, rules and regulations – thousands upon thousands of them. If a man is to trade internationally, these must all be understood and obeyed. All these laws, rules and regulations are controls – controls over people's lives. Should a man choose to flaunt a few of these controls or else lose his way amongst the welter of words, then he could find himself ending up in gaol. Somewhere in this labyrinth of instructions, a man may find that he is entitled to some special privilege or to a hand-out of some sort. He may find that he can import article X but not article Y or that he can export article P but not article Q. Maybe he can import or export ninety-nine of this type of article but not a hundred of them. Perhaps he may be allowed to export brown ones but not blue ones and, if he is lucky, he may be allowed to export square ones although round ones are disallowed. He may find that he can import a particular article from country A but not from country B. He will, of course, have to apply to the appropriate public bureaucrat and pay the requisite licence fee and, perhaps, the registration fee, the surtax and the import duty – or was it the export duty? Needless to say, he should know that there is a 10% tariff on article G whereas there is a 22% tariff on article H but that as from next Wednesday, these figures will be reversed. It is worth knowing also that he could be entitled to a subsidy if he makes and exports wine but not if he makes and exports ginger-pop. There are also excise duties, 'ad valorem' duties and specific duties to be paid

perhaps, embargoes to be considered and foreign exchange controls to be sorted out. And so it goes on and on ad nauseam.

In another section of this book it was stated that most people are led to believe that in any honest transaction there is always a winner and a loser – that the winner is the one who gains the money whereas the loser is the one who gives up his money for the article! This same silly concept is carried over into International Trade so that the party that gains the money (the exporter) is judged to be a ‘goodie’ whereas the party that gives up the money for the article (the importer) is judged to be a ‘baddie’! This is the rationale behind the silly notion that a country is winning all the prizes when it exports but is donning the dunce’s hat when ‘it’ imports! In actual practice, people would not buy or sell if they did not believe that the transaction was to their advantage. Silly ideas, however, die hard and this one has now become an article of faith amongst most politicians and so-called economists. The ultimate goal of a country, if it is to be successful economically, these people say, must be to strive harder and harder for ever-greater exports and in so doing reap in more and more money for the tax-man. This way the Country will have a ‘favourable balance of trade’! This is why lavish hand-outs and special privileges are bestowed upon exporters whilst more and more controls are usually imposed upon importers! There may even be a national government campaign organized at great public expense to deter people from buying imported goods. Lest such a campaign offend foreigners, it is usually ‘sold’ to the public in a devious manner. Instead of the government asking people not to buy imported goods, it invariably beseeches them to buy locally-made goods instead. Hence the slogans – ‘Buy British’, ‘Buy Australian’ and ‘Buy American’! The real purpose, however, is to restrict imports. In these campaigns, people are usually told that by buying locally and curtailing imported goods they are helping to make their Country great and prosperous and, as a result, they are enhancing the richness of their own lives! Due to the conditioning processes, such statements are usually blindly accepted as making sound economic sense. They do not, but this should not surprise us as people are hardly ever told that it is they, as consumers, who are the victims of all this nonsensical political meddling. Instead, they are bombarded with a barrage of even sillier ideas – none more so than the concept of a ‘favourable’ or an ‘unfavourable’ balance of trade. When people are free to trade to their mutual advantage, there is simply a balance of trade. When you paid your money and bought that Mercedes-Benz from your neighbour, both of you acquired what you wanted – you, the car and he, the money – a perfect balance. It would have been inane to have spoken of an unfavourable element to such a transaction. As with domestic trade so with international trade.

Just as you and I cannot go on buying goods indefinitely, neither can ‘a country’. At a personal level, sooner or later you and I must sell something in order to acquire the money with which to continue buying. The individual usually gets this money by selling his labour, his knowledge or his wares. Countries are no different in this regard from individuals. For ‘a country’ to continue importing, it must earn the necessary money to enable it to buy the foreign goods. It does this by exporting. This is why the trend is always towards a balance between exports and imports and why, in the long term, imports and exports must equal each other (considering both in the broadest sense which includes ‘invisible’ items such as tourist expenditures and freight charges). It is exports that pay for imports. Exports are the cost of trade whilst imports are the return from trade. It is not the other way around. The more

that people in a country export, the more other people in the country are able to import. The smaller the import trade into a country, the smaller will be the export trade out of it. When politicians interfere and decide to cut down imports, they are, in effect, deciding also to cut down exports. When they decide, in their interfering ways, to encourage exports by means of hand-outs and special privileges to exporters, they are, in effect, deciding also to increase imports into a country. Erecting barriers against imports is just another way of cutting down on exports and lowering our standards of living. There is still a balance but it is at a lower level and that is not in most people's best interests.

To further highlight all this official silliness, let us consider the case of a producer who is propped up by some form of government assistance. In the short term he may benefit when he sells his goods either locally or overseas. When, however, he puts on his 'consumer's hat' and buys foreign articles that are subject to various tariffs (or import duties) he will inevitably lose as he must now pay more for these articles than he would have paid before the imposition of the tariffs. Thus the farmer may be propped up artificially, on the one hand, with taxpayers' money so that he can sell his wheat or wool more profitably, but on the other hand, he may be penalized when he imports his new tractor, harvester, truck, television set or text books for his children's education. Surely, I hear you say, the farmers would not take such an imposition lying down and just as surely you would be right for the farmers would probably quickly complain to the politicians and the politicians would just as quickly have a vision of votes drifting away from them and falling into the lap of the opposition party. Faced with such a frightening prospect, the government would act quickly and, 'in the national interest', exempt farmers from these particular tariffs. A new government subdepartment must now be established in order to administer all these exemptions and so, surely, taxes will rise just a little further in order to pay for these added expenses; and also, surely, trade will become just that much more complicated and confusing.

Once such nonsense has begun, there is virtually no way of stopping it. It is like the proverbial snowball that runs down the hillside gathering snow as it goes getting bigger and bigger all the time. Government intervention into anything always necessitates further intervention in order to correct the mess created by the initial act of intervention, and so this 'corrective' act of intervention leads to yet further chaos which will 'necessitate' still further acts of 'corrective' intervention and so on. The moral of the story is obvious and is best summed up in the old adage – 'leave well alone!'

Long ago it was observed that if goods did not cross frontiers then armies surely would. This is merely another way of saying that if people do not welcome wars then they should ensure that trade between people in different countries is free. Trading between individuals, both domestically and internationally, is a friendly peaceful act between people who know what they are doing and why they are doing it. It is when trade, both domestic and international, is controlled by governments that it takes on a completely different complexion. It soon becomes a subject bathed in complexities, ignorance, favouritism, intrigue, bluster and power politics. It is in this climate that most politicians shine as it gives them the opportunity to do what they do best – to show off, to scheme, to fiddle with things that they do not understand, to push people around, to court popularity at other people's expense and to view

themselves as born-again Solons. Such behaviour, however, has no place in trade whether it be domestic or international.

OBSOLEScent MATTERS

'The Criminal Justice System'
Victimless Crimes

'THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM'

The Nazi rulers followed this recipe when they decreed the following supplement to the civil penal code in 1935: 'Anyone shall be punished who commits an act which the law declares to be punishable or which merits punishment in accordance with the underlying idea of a penal law and with wholesome popular sentiment. Should no specific penal law be directly applicable to the act in question, it shall be punished according to the law whose intention most closely applies thereto.'

*Hans Peter Bleuel
(Strength Through Joy)*

'The Criminal Justice System' is really a misnomer for it is a system of Law Courts whose judges and magistrates may or may not dispense justice. (See 'Victimless Crimes'). It would be more honest and accurate if such a system were to be known as 'The Criminal Court System' and I will refer to it as that for the rest of this Section.

Like so many present-day institutions, the Criminal Court System has evolved over a long period of time so that much of the philosophy under which it operates has not changed significantly for hundreds of years. This is particularly so in three important areas of criminal law – the victim against whom the criminal has offended; the type of punishment meted out to the criminal; and the attitude of the State towards jurors and witnesses. Let us consider each of these in turn.

Whereas in a civil case, the object of the Courts is to redress wrongs by compelling compensation or restitution to the person injured, in a criminal case the primary object of the Courts, today, upon a determination of guilt, is to punish the wrongdoer for offending against 'society'. If a man murders his neighbour, he is arrested and brought to trial primarily not because he has offended against his neighbour by killing him, but because he has offended against society by killing one of its members. His trial is announced as that of the State (or a person representing the State) versus John Doe. It is perfectly correct that the State should, indeed, take over the prosecution from the victim or from the victim's family but it should take it over on behalf of the victim, not on behalf of 'society'. It is because of this collectivist concept that the next step becomes even more disturbing. If it is 'society' that has been wronged then it is surely up to 'society' or 'the State' to demand its pound of flesh. Traditionally, the type of punishment meted out is either a fine payable to the State or else imprisonment for a certain period of time. This means that the victim or the victim's family not only suffers as a result of the crime itself but also suffers in having to support the criminal by way of taxation whilst he is in prison and also, probably, in having to help support the criminal's family through welfare payments. Consequently, the victim or his family is a 'three-time loser'.

More recently, the official attitude towards criminals has changed so that instead of the stress being placed upon punishment for a crime, the stress is put on the 'rehabilitation' of the criminal so that the State's primary aim is now not so much to punish criminals for their misdeeds as to rehabilitate them! What is significant here is that 'the State', or rather those who determine judicial policy, appear intent on forgetting about the victims of crime and showering their love and attention on the criminals!

The latest crazy concept that is slowly creeping into the Criminal Court System and gaining acceptance, at least in my own Country, is that of the State, not the criminal, reimbursing the victim. This means that the already overtaxed taxpayer is to become yet again another of the criminal's victims! This ghastly nightmare of judicial thinking goes by the name of 'justice'.

The third topic that needs to be mentioned is that of jury service and the act of issuing subpoenas to witnesses. The philosophic assumption here is that as the State is some kind of benevolent father-figure to us all, we in our turn have certain obligations towards it. One such obligation is for us to sit on a panel of jurors whenever required by the State. The letter that informs us that our turn for jury service has arrived is usually couched in benign language. It is, in reality, an order – "attend or else submit to the consequences – the consequences being a fine which, if not paid, will be replaced by a prison sentence"! So, whatever inconveniences a man may incur or however much he may resent being threatened, and regardless of the pittance he may be paid or not paid as remuneration, he must attend at the appropriate court at the appropriate time in the same way as he would have been obliged to attend had he been accused of the crime itself! Once again, we are reminded that our bodies and our minds do not belong to us but to the State. The same compulsion applies to witnesses.

What then should be done to lift judicial thinking out of the Dark Ages and bring it into line with the world that the scientists, technologists and entrepreneurs have given us? It should not be too difficult a task. The Judicial System should first recognise that it is the victim who is the subject of the crime and not 'society'. As the victim of a crime is the one who suffers, the Court should, upon a determination of guilt, order the criminal to reimburse his victim (or his family) not only for what he has taken but for all the added costs incurred such as legal costs, lost interest, personal distress and so on. Whether the restitution to the victim should be paid by the criminal as a result of work in a free environment or as a result of work within a restricted environment such as a prison should be a question for the Court to decide. Were a person to be found innocent of a crime, the monetary costs of his defence should, in principle, be recoverable from the party that initiated the proceedings.

As far as compulsory jury service and the power of the State to subpoena witnesses are concerned, both are an affront to individual liberty and as such should not be tolerated in a civilized society. If individually negotiated fees were paid to jurors and to witnesses, coercion would not be necessary and individuals would be more likely to assist the process of the legal system.

The Criminal Court System is such an important part of any society that sloppy thinking with regard to it should not be tolerated. What is needed is for some brave souls in the legal profession to grab it by the neck and give it a hard shake not just to change it for the sake of change, but to turn it from a Criminal Court System into a Criminal Justice System with the stress placed fairly and squarely on the word 'justice'.

VICTIMLESS CRIMES

It is impossible to introduce into society a greater change and a greater evil than this: the conversion of the law into an instrument of plunder.

*Frederic Bastiat (1801-1850)
The Law*

When a thief steals your watch, he is the criminal and you are the victim. When a man kills his brother-in-law, the killer is the criminal and the brother-in-law is the victim. That is obvious. How then, can there possibly be a crime without there being a victim? Easily – by government decree. In Hitler's Nazi Germany, if a man happened to be mentally retarded, a Gypsy or a Jew, the State declared him to be an unwanted person. As such he was probably arrested, imprisoned and very likely exterminated in one way or another. Similarly, in the old Soviet Union, if a man were to parade in Moscow's Red Square carrying a placard which stated "I want my freedom", he would likewise have been arrested, tried, found guilty and either shot or sent to a Siberian prison camp there to remain possibly for the rest of his life. In the eyes of the State, all these men and women were criminals, not because they had harmed anyone in any way but because they had offended the sensibilities of the almighty State. Most people are probably appalled at the thought of these innocent people being treated as criminals, not because they had perpetrated acts of violence against other people or their property or else tricked them out of their money, but because the State, for one reason or another, merely disapproved of them. This, however, is exactly what happens hundreds of times a day, almost every day of the year, in most countries of the world, even in those countries that like to pretend that they are civilized and free. The gaols, in fact, in all countries, are overflowing with people who are not really criminals at all but are treated as criminals by the State for no other reason than that they have done things that the State arbitrarily declared must not be done. For example, the State might, for political reasons, give way to the pressure of a certain group of bakers who fear competition, or else to a particular religious sect, and decree that, henceforth, bread will not be baked or sold on Sundays. Were a baker to decide that it was in his best interests and in those of his customers to bake bread and sell it to them on a Sunday, he would be treated as a criminal. Obviously, in such a case there is no victim for not only was the baker happy to bake the bread and sell it but his customers wanted to buy it. This is a typical example of a victimless crime which may be defined as an action that does not infringe upon the rights of others but which, nevertheless, is arbitrarily decreed by a government to be a crime. Victimless crimes are merely attempts by one group of people to control the lives of another group of people. If one group of people does not approve of the activities of another group of people, then the first group may lobby its politicians to pass a law aimed at stopping people in the second group from doing what they are doing. Should these people refuse to stop, then they will be treated as common criminals!

The story of victimless crimes is the story of unlimited majority rule and pressure-group politics – a political system in which individual liberty and individual rights are held in profound contempt. In this system of government, provided a man has a sufficient number of people backing him and is hence able to exert enough pressure on his politicians, he can legally dispose of anyone who displeases him. When some

of these people, whom others do not like, are sent to gaol for refusing to stop what they are doing or else for refusing to pay unjust fines imposed upon them, they become, in effect, political prisoners in exactly the same way as did those mentally retarded people, the Gypsies and the Jews in Nazi Germany and the placard-carrying demonstrator in Stalin's Russia. Over the years, people have become so conditioned by their 'intellectual' mentors that most of them are unable to see anything wrong with the concept of one group of people being incarcerated in prison merely because their presence, for one reason or another, offends the sensibilities of another group of people who happen to have highly developed dictatorial tendencies. Over the years, we have seen people pressuring governments to turn those of different religions or sects (and those without any religion at all) into criminals; turning honourable doctors into criminals; turning users and vendors of contraceptives into criminals; blasphemers into criminals; homosexuals into criminals; distillers, brewers and publicans into criminals; prostitutes into criminals; lovers into criminals; drug-takers into criminals; gamblers into criminals; gun owners into criminals; and those attempting suicide into criminals. We have seen professional people pressuring governments to turn some of their colleagues into criminals; business men and women using governments to have their competitors turned into criminals; workers turning fellow-workers into criminals; teachers turning other teachers into criminals.

Whenever the concept of victimless crimes is condoned by a society, organized crime will never be far behind nor will its offshoots – bribery and corruption. It was prohibition, the product of decades of political agitation by fervent Christian people in the United States of America, that gave rise to organized crime and political and judicial corruption on a scale that had seldom been seen in the USA. So long as there is a sufficient demand for a substance or a service, even if that substance or service is deemed to be illegal or else legal but subject to a licence, there will always be people prepared to sell the substance or the service and people to buy it – licence or not. Wherever there are public bureaucrats to grant licences to privileged people, there will always be people prepared to bribe them in order to obtain a licence and public bureaucrats ready to accept those bribes. Wherever there are policemen and judges to enforce the laws against those who commit victimless crimes, there will always be some policemen and judges who are willing to be 'bought'. Corruption and organized thuggery thrive on victimless crimes. It is not a coincidence that organized crime and corruption have historically gone hand in hand with such victimless crimes as gambling, liquor, sex and drugs.

To combat the victimless crimes and the organized crime and corruption that thrive on them, huge bureaucratic empires are created. Needless to say, with all this money and effort little of consequence is ever achieved. Nevertheless, the politicians are able to pretend to themselves and to the public that they are fighting a bitter and successful war in order to save the Country from all the ills that are besetting it!

It is only by decriminalizing all those activities that constitute victimless crimes that we will see a significant decrease in organized crime and corruption. In the USA, the last people who wanted to see the prohibition laws repealed were the mobsters themselves and those politicians, public bureaucrats, policemen and judges who were benefiting from the corruption. If a person wants to gamble, visit prostitutes,

drink alcohol, take drugs, read sexy magazines and view sexually explicit films, it is his business and that of those people who provide the particular goods and services for him. It has nothing whatsoever to do with a person's next-door neighbour, the Society for Wholesome Living, the Temperance Union, the Anti-Gambling League, the bishops and archbishops and the politicians and public bureaucrats on Interference Hill. Naturally, were those who are currently committing victimless crimes to use physical force, fraud or coercion against anyone, then the victimless crime would quickly become a genuine crime. It is often suggested that some victimless crimes such as prostitution and drug-taking should be legalized. Legalization of people's activities, however, is a recipe for disaster for it means that the State authorizes certain people to perform certain acts provided they have government approval or a government licence to do so. Those who do not have that approval or licence automatically become potential criminals. Licensing plays into the hands of organized crime and those who stand to benefit from the ensuing corruption.

Victimless crimes are a natural product of the concept of unlimited majority rule which we call 'democracy'. It is a system which permits and encourages people to turn to governments in order to restrict the activities of those people whom they do not like for any of a number of different reasons. The concept is so primitive and tribal that any decent thoughtful person must surely wonder how it was ever possible for such a system of government to have survived for such a long period of time.

EXTORTIONATE MATTERS

Taxation

Conscription (or the Draft)

Pressure Groups and Lobbying

TAXATION

Taxation puts enormous resources at the disposal of government, for good or ill. But in entrusting these sums to the executive organs of government, we at the same time grant them powers which may be turned against ourselves.

*James Coffield
(A Popular History of Taxation)*

To take something from someone else against that person's will, using the threat of force to do so is, by definition, 'extortion'. If a government passes a law acknowledging this fact but exempting itself from any responsibility when it chooses to act in such a manner itself, then its act becomes 'legalized extortion'. One can argue about that statement until one is blue in the face but it will not alter the truth of it. The most common response to such a statement runs, in essence, something like this – "Yes, I agree with you but we must have taxes, mustn't we? Therefore, I disagree with you"! This is the kind of mental tumbling act that one will hear even from so-called 'well-educated' people.

We talked earlier about pragmatism and principles. There is no better example of pragmatism than taxation. The pragmatist would maintain that a government extorts money in order to do 'good things' with it and it is these 'good things', according to him, that 'proves' that the extortion itself must have been a good thing also! It is convoluted thinking such as this that emanates all too often from our University lecture halls and school class-rooms and is eventually taken up by almost everyone including our politicians. What most people fail to question is not merely the extortion itself but the nature of those 'good things' that governments are supposed to be doing with the money that they are forcibly extracting from us.

When it is taken for granted by so many people that governments must extort money from us to enable them to do all these 'good things', it does not make sense for these same people then to castigate governments because they are extorting too much of it. After all, was it not they who tacitly sanctioned the extortion in the first place? As it is impossible for one to win an argument on a matter of principle if one accepts one's opponent's basic premise, it is impossible for one to win an argument condemning 'excessive' taxation if one has already sanctioned the act of taxation itself. It is rather like giving someone permission to hit you and then complaining when he hits you too hard. The obvious question for one to ask is "why did you give him the permission to hit you in the first place?"

It is one thing to establish the immorality of extortion but it is another thing altogether to convince most people of it. As we have already noted, there are now so many people in all countries who are living off this extortion money that it is unlikely that most of them would suddenly have a change of heart and acknowledge to themselves that they had, for too long, been living off the hard work of other people. It is equally unlikely that most of the 'intelligentsia' would be prepared to acknowledge the errors of a lifetime and risk being stripped of their pretensions of erudition and wisdom. Nevertheless, there are still people who are sufficiently honest and concerned for their own lives and those of their children and grandchildren who are prepared to open their minds and to call things by their proper names. As taxation has been with us, in many different forms, since Roman times

and probably well beyond that, it has had ample time to become entrenched into our culture. Most people, however, no longer recognize it for what it really is – not merely legalized extortion but also a tool with which some people may enslave others. Were the ‘average man’ to pay in assorted taxes 50% of his income, it would mean that for the first six months of every year, from January until June, he would be compelled to work for the government for no reward whatsoever, thus making him a partial slave of the State for that period of time. Should he attempt to hold on to some or all of his honest earnings during that period, he would be penalized financially in addition to the tax money that the State claimed he owed and he would possibly also be forcibly taken to prison thus becoming a full-time slave of the State. There, in his cell, he would have the opportunity to reflect upon his good fortune in being able to live in a ‘free’ society!

As if all this were not enough, let us look yet further into this whole sordid story of taxation. When an employer hires an employee, the employer may be compelled by law, under threat of a heavy fine or else imprisonment, to act as the unpaid agent of the Taxation Department. He may be ordered to collect the government’s tax from the employee! Bigger firms may be obliged to employ whole teams of people who add nothing whatsoever to the employer’s productivity yet the employer is obliged by law to pay their wages! If he makes a mistake, it is he who is held responsible and it is he who becomes liable to prosecution! These added costs must all be either absorbed or else passed on to the consumer. If he cannot pass them on, then he could be in deep financial trouble. The employer cannot refuse to be a compulsory unpaid tax-gatherer and cannot claim reimbursement for the counterproductive work that he is compelled to perform. Once again, he is nothing more nor less than a partial slave of the State. With smaller firms, the costs of being forced to become a compulsory unpaid tax-gatherer can be proportionately higher and this may be just enough to topple some of them into commercial oblivion.

Wherever there is a tax to be extorted, it is invariably the person from whom the money is to be extorted who is compelled by the government to do the necessary paper work on behalf of the government. In Australia, at least, the Government has even compelled accountants who do taxation work to act as agents of the Taxation Department and work just as much on its behalf (without recompense) as on that of their clients! It is all rather like forcing a man who is about to be hanged to make his own gallows. There is, however, nothing new in this. Did not the Nazi thugs, not so long ago, force those whom they were about to shoot to dig their own graves?

Excluding income taxes (including progressive taxes and provisional taxes), there may be pay-roll taxes and company taxes, customs levies and excise duties, licence fees and death duties, property taxes and stamp duties, gambling taxes and annual vehicle taxes, local government rates and capital gains taxes and a never-ending stream of other similar taxes. There are goods and services taxes on just about every conceivable article and on an ever-increasing number of services. No-one could possibly master the true level of taxation without him being able to devote himself full time to the task and being in a position to employ a small army of helpers. If the government wants to raise more money quickly, all it needs to do is to raise one or more of these taxes by a small percentage and hardly anyone will be aware of what has happened. In this way, the government acts like the petty thief who takes just some of your money so that you may not even be aware that you have

been robbed. Sneakiness is an important component of politics. All these reprehensible acts go by the high-sounding name of 'fiscal policy' and the man or woman who presides over them is generally considered to be the second most important person in the Country!

Elsewhere we have considered the harmful effects of taxation on commerce and industry (in their broadest sense) and on all those people who work in these areas. We have seen how incentives are destroyed; how large amounts of investment capital are taken out of the hands of private people and put into the hands of public bureaucrats. We have seen how profits are reduced and how, consequently, productivity declines; unemployment rises and standards of living fall. With the falling living standards, the government inevitably demands more money in order to prop up those who now find that they are worse off than they once were. This inane cycle goes on and on.

It is surely only a matter of time before the Welfare State, which is the major beneficiary of crippling taxation, collapses under its own weight. It is then that the question will have to be answered and not evaded:— "what is the proper rôle of government in a civilized society?" If it is accepted, as is proposed in this book and by many exponents of liberty world-wide, that it is to protect people's rights including their property rights and not to violate them, then taxation ceases to be the major issue that it is today. When massive, outrageously expensive and enormously powerful governments (i.e. powerful over their own people) are hopefully replaced by small, 'inexpensive' governments whose powers are confined, in essence, to those necessary to protect people from physical violence or the threat of it and to settle disputes according to objectively defined rules, then people will have satisfactorily worked out how best these small governments might be financed. In the meantime, for us merely to recognize the dangerous path that governments are currently taking and for us to propose an alternative to it, is a step in the right direction.

CONSCRIPTION (OR THE DRAFT)

Night closed over the still-thundering battlefield. Nearly 60,000 British soldiers had fallen, killed or wounded, or were prisoners in the hands of the enemy. This was the greatest loss and slaughter sustained in a single day in the whole history of the British Army. Of the infantry who advanced to the attack, nearly half had been overtaken by death, wounds or capture.

*Winston S. Churchill
(The World Crisis 1911 – 1918)*

Of all the actions taken by mixed economy governments, conscription is undoubtedly the most obnoxious of them all. Daily, governments of all countries go about their 'business' extorting money from people (taxation), perpetrating fraud against people (debasement of the currency), stealing their homes ('resumption' of land and buildings) and incarcerating people for countless victimless crimes too numerous to mention. When a government, however, arbitrarily takes the lives of men, perhaps for ever, merely because they are men, that must surely be the ultimate act of immorality.

The most valuable asset that a man has is his life. Without that, all the riches in the world and the happiness to be enjoyed count for nothing. Yet it is this body that the State claims as its own to do with exactly as it pleases. If it chooses, it may order a man to walk over a minefield and lose both his legs (if he is fortunate enough to survive at all). It may order him to stand in front of a machine gun, a tank or a flame-thrower or to submit himself to gas or germ warfare or else expose himself to abnormal doses of radiation and die a slow death. It may order him to work in the bowels of a ship and risk shell-blast, bomb-blast or drowning. There is no point in the man objecting as his objection will probably be enough, in itself, to ensure his incarceration behind bars for a long period of time.

The rationale behind conscription is two-fold. The first is that altruist philosophy again – that a man has no right to exist for his own sake but that he has a moral obligation to sacrifice his life for the good of others – the ant and the anthill thinking. The second is the philosophy of pragmatism – the doctrine that evaluates any assertion solely by its practical consequences and its bearing on human interests. It is the pragmatist who states, in effect, that 'if it works, it must be good!' It is the pragmatist who mocks principles, standards and reality claiming that all one has to do is to ask oneself the simple question "how well does it work?" It is the pragmatist who finds no place in his philosophy for morality or principles claiming that "any fool should be able to see that the conscription of young people solves the manpower problem and as an added bonus puts a bit of much-needed discipline into the scruffy, unruly lives of the young". It is the pragmatist who claims that the end justifies the means and that the massacre of thousands of one's own men was the price that had to be paid for that minor transitory success.

The State may declare war whenever and wherever it chooses. Its propaganda machine may suggest a score of 'good' reasons for its decision but the man who is not convinced by the arguments, or does not understand them, has no option but to submit to the State or else be imprisoned. That the politicians and public bureaucrats should be so morally bankrupt that they can talk glibly about a man's right to social security, medical care, rest and leisure, education, housing, a fair

wage, the dole and a whole host of other fatuous 'rights' but take it for granted that he does not have a right to his own life is a philosophic abomination almost beyond belief. By their way of thinking, a man has a right to the accompaniments to life but lacks the right to life itself!

Another argument one hears to justify conscription is that 'rights impose obligations'. The reasoning here is that a man is granted his rights by the State on the understanding that he will fulfil his obligation to the State in return. There is, however, no such contract between the individual and the State, nor can there be, for rights are not a product for the State to bestow. (See Individual Rights).

There is only one type of army consistent with a free country and that is a volunteer army. To those pragmatists who may question whether it is possible to raise an army other than by force or the threat of force, let me point out that in World War 1, the soldiers of my own Country, Australia, were all volunteers and there was seldom a shortage of them. Furthermore, the war was being fought on the other side of the globe. In World War II, for over two years before the Japanese entered it, all Australian soldiers, sailors and airmen were volunteers. There was never a shortage. In my own case, I was first obliged to go on a waiting list as the authorities could not handle the large number of volunteers. Once again, that war was being fought on the other side of the world. I shall not discuss the many different reasons why men and women voluntarily enlist in the services in time of war, but if young people believe the cause to be a righteous one, no country need fear that they will not rise to the occasion. If, however, large numbers of people do not consider the war to be a just war, then, in large numbers, they will refrain from enlisting. Thus will they apply a healthy brake on the adventures of 'gung-ho' politicians.

Many military experts claim that when all other factors are equal, a volunteer army is superior to a conscripted army. This makes sense as when a man enlists for reasons other than compulsion, it is fair to assume that personal pride will be a significant factor in his motivation and in determining the course of his actions.

PRESSURE GROUPS AND LOBBYING

Taxpayer financing of community groups, which started as a trickle, has now become a torrent “empowering” a particular type of self-styled public interest advocacy group. “Empowerment” is achieved not merely through funding. Governments now give these groups a virtual monopoly over “public representation” on government policy advisory bodies, and over some appointments to key statutory bodies. The result is a distortion of the political environment.

Bob Browning

(The Net-Work: A Guide to Anti-Business Pressure Groups)

Pressure groups are groups of people with common interests in a particular field who believe that the best way for them to get what they want is by wheeling and dealing with politicians, usually at the expense of other people. Lobbying is the activity of attempting to influence legislation by privately influencing the legislators. Pressure groups and lobbying are yet one more sordid aspect of the system of unlimited majority rule and the mixed economy.

Pressure groups usually attempt to secure for themselves either special privileges or else exemption from the harsher aspects of some proposed legislation. Many of our laws come about as a result of these pressure groups and their lobbying. Pressure groups may elect representatives to make direct contact with a selected politician or politicians or else they may engage special private firms, known as lobbyists, to make contact with influential politicians on their behalf. The experienced lobbyist knows his way around the corridors of power, specializes in getting to know and befriending a number of politicians and, if he is smart and just a little unscrupulous, then he may make a study of the human frailties of as many of these politicians as he is able. The lobbyist may merely talk to the politician over a few drinks or over a lunch paid for by the lobbyist or perhaps, as a ‘friend’, he may give the politician’s children expensive Christmas presents. If he feels safe, he may invest in more blatant bribery or, if he has been able to ‘dig up some smut’ on a politician, he may threaten him by letting him know that he has such information. He may even blackmail him into complying with the wishes of the pressure group that the lobbyist represents. The possibilities are limitless.

This is not meant to imply that most lobbyists are scoundrels. It is mentioned in order to point out that the temptations are ever present for the rules to be stretched whenever a system sanctions the granting of favours by politicians. In reality, the whole system, even though it is permitted by governments and is even actively encouraged by them, is really nothing more nor less than a system of legalized corruption. The different pressure groups are now so numerous that some of them inevitably find themselves fighting over the same piece of cake. So long as pressure groups imagine that they are getting their money’s worth from the lobbyists they will, no doubt, continue to use them but, at best, all they are really getting is short-term gains at the expense of long-term chaos.

Once the principle of pressure group politics and lobbying has been established as a legitimate political practice, it is only a matter of time before the floodgates open. Not only do more and more pressure groups enter the field but the underlying purpose of pressure groups and lobbying also expands. There was a time when pressure groups consisted (admittedly shamefully) solely of local people attempting

to obtain special privileges for themselves in their own country at other people's expense. Now, however, we are witnessing local pressure groups demanding special privileges for foreigners in their countries – these special privileges to be paid for, not by the foreigners, but by the local people – the innocent taxpayers who probably have no idea as to what is going on under their noses. Whenever powerful ethnic and religious groups within a country flex their muscles, all that most politicians manage to see is votes either to be won or lost. If ethnic or religious groups want special privileges for their friends and relatives 'back home' in some foreign land, to be paid for at our expense, then all they need to do is apply pressure to their government and have it modify its foreign policy accordingly. Thus can foreign policy be made – not necessarily in the best interests of one's own country but certainly in the interests of a foreign country! Ultimately, such a policy will have to be paid for and it will be paid for either in extorted money or in blood (and perhaps in both) innocently given by ordinary decent people who are untutored in the scheming ways of politicians and power-brokers.

As if this were not enough, even foreign countries may lobby, not merely through their official embassies, but by employing local professional lobbyists whose 'raison d'être' is to influence individual politicians whenever and wherever they believe there is profit to be had for their masters – in this case, their foreign masters. Thus the lobbyists may actually be working as the agent of a potential enemy of his own Country! This is known as one of the more sophisticated intricacies of politics!

So long as people continue to embrace the concept of unlimited majority rule as their political system of choice, the mixed economy as their economic system of choice, the concepts of altruism, pragmatism and 'the common good' amongst their chosen philosophic concepts then they will have no option but to put up with the ugly spectacle of power-hungry parasitic people, local and foreign, with their noses permanently poked into the public trough. No civilization has ever been able to survive for any length of time in such a decadent manner. Unfortunately, this lesson may have to be learnt the hard way.

FRAUDULENT MATTERS

Inflation
The Census

INFLATION

Sometimes, on the other hand, coinage along with other usages conventionally established, is regarded as so much artificial trumpery having no root in nature; since if those who employ a currency system choose to alter it, the coins cease to have their value and can no longer be used to procure the necessities of life.

*Aristotle (384-322 BC)
(The Politics)*

People are led to believe that inflation means a general rise in prices. They are also led to believe that the cause of this general price rise is something of a mystery. Sometimes it is explained as the result of higher production costs; sometimes as the result of higher wage demands; sometimes as the result of unscrupulous producers; sometimes as the result of excessive demand for finished goods; sometimes, we are told that it is imported from overseas and, sometimes, that "it merely comes upon us like a thief in the night, silently and for no apparent reason"! Whether all such nonsense is propagated as a result of economic ignorance or as a result of deception must be a matter for conjecture. Whichever it is, the end-result is the same – large numbers of people unable to make any form of sound judgement on the machinations of the people behind the inflation – the politicians and those in their executive arms of government, in this case, the public bureaucrats in the various Central (or Reserve) Banks.

Put simply, inflation is the creation of new money by governments. The general price rises that we all experience are not inflation. They are the product of it. In other words, if the inflation is stopped, the general price rises will stop. The only people who can put a stop to inflation are the people in government – the people who created the inflation in the first place.

There was a time, not so long ago, when money had real value. If you had a dollar or a pound in your pocket you had something of worth. If what you had was not gold or silver, it was redeemable in gold or silver. Today, all we have for money is bits of paper, junk metal and entries in a ledger or in a computer. None of this has any intrinsic value whatsoever and is dependent, as a means of exchange, solely upon official edict and on the word of politicians and public bureaucrats! How safe can that possibly be? Should people be alarmed? Yes, they should for these same politicians and public bureaucrats can, at will, change the value of people's money whenever they choose to do so. This is what inflation is all about – debasement of the currency.

If inflation lowers the value of people's money why, then, do governments do it? They do it for a very simple reason – to get more money for themselves. Furthermore, because of the devious nature of inflation, governments are able to get away with it without most people having any clear idea of what is happening right under their noses. With this new money, the politicians proceed to buy votes. This nefarious practice has come about because people have, over the years, granted their politicians almost unlimited powers. Amongst these powers are those that enable governments to control, absolutely, all aspects of money. Governments issue the notes, mint the coins and then proceed to debase them; by edict they tell us what they have chosen to be legal tender even if the material chosen is worthless;

they control the banks and establish Reserve or Central Banks in order to do their bidding; they legalize government fraud, determine monetary policy and change the price of articles if and when it pleases them.

Unfortunately, people's blind trust in such a monopolistic monetary authority is misplaced, as history has repeatedly shown that, sooner or later, monetary destruction always follows in its train. The concept that money should be free of government control is totally beyond the thinking processes of most present-day economists and their intellectual satraps in government.

Earlier it was said that inflation, in simple language, is the creation of new money by governments. This is correct, but this inflation may take either of two forms or else it may take both forms together. It may take the form of 'simple inflation' in which case the new money is used by the government for deficit spending. (This means spending on those vote-catching schemes that the government has been unable to pay for out of the money that it has extorted from people by way of taxation). Inflation may also take the form of 'credit expansion', in which case the newly created money is channelled into the loan market in order to artificially 'stimulate' business! In either case, the end-result is the same – rising prices and a lowering of the purchasing power of money. In both instances, the currency has been debased and legalized fraud has taken place. Few people, however, will have understood what has happened. It is true that some people may welcome the temporary artificial boom created by the inflation. It is also true that others will see their savings eroded and, in their ignorance, proceed to blame everyone except the people who were responsible for it.

Religious people like to tell us that money is the root of all evil (or else that the love of money is the root of all evil.) Neither of these statements is true, but what is true is that the debasement of money – the cruel and crafty destruction of money, by way of inflation, is the root of many evils. Curiously, it is often religious people, themselves, in their determination to do 'good works' at someone else's expense, who are amongst the most ardent advocates of inflation. Whether they are aware of their moral shortcomings and the practical consequences of their ill-conceived economic theories is open to debate.

Inflation hits hard those people who are on fixed incomes, the retired and the old. It benefits debtors but penalizes creditors; it rewards spendthrifts but penalizes the thrifty; it erodes personal savings; it causes wrong signals to be sent out to business men and women and so distorts the economy; it artificially creates booms and then when these booms get out of hand, it leads to the ensuing 'busts' or recessions and depressions with the inevitable unemployment, poverty and misery that follow them. It invites further government interference by way of price and wage controls. It can lead to restrictive quotas on imports, rising tariffs and a whole host of other government restrictions. If not checked, inflation inevitably, sooner or later, leads to economic and social chaos and, ultimately, to some form of tyranny.

Inflation, however, is the 'in-thing' amongst most modern economists (but not amongst the best and most responsible of them). So long as these second-rate economists continue to dominate and to peddle their shoddy intellectual wares, the politicians will follow them because they like the product that is being sold to them.

They like it because it enables them to get away with the most disgraceful and dishonest behaviour and, at the same time, to cover themselves by claiming that they are merely following the advice of 'the experts in the field'!

THE CENSUS

It is pathetic, but characteristic of the muddle into which many of our intellectuals have been led by the conflicting ideals in which they believe, that a leading advocate of the most comprehensive central planning like Mr. H. G. Wells should at the same time write an ardent defence of the Rights of Man.

*F. A. Hayek
(The Road To Serfdom)*

In my own country, the Australian Bureau of Statistics carries out a nation-wide Census every five years. In the latest booklet that was distributed to all households, a number of reasons were given as to why such information was needed. The word that recurs over and over again is the word 'planning'. Personal planning is essential, of course, if we are all to live our lives with some degree of order and if we are to have any hope of achieving our individual goals in life. This, however, is not what the Bureau of Statistics has in mind when it talks about 'planning'. In the year of the Census, the senior public bureaucrats in the Bureau are merely carrying out the instructions of other public bureaucrats and politicians who claim that they need this information from us to enable them to run the Country properly. The assumption, as has been pointed out elsewhere in this book, is that a few men and women (politicians and senior public bureaucrats) should 'run the Country', plan the economy and direct us all in the rôles that we must play in the scheme of things for 'the common good'! It is interesting to note how that 'anthill concept' keeps recurring. So long as one accepts this anthill concept, then it is reasonable for one to accept the concept of a planned economy. In the days of the old Soviet Union, the terms 'The New Five-Year Plan' or 'The New Ten-Year Plan' were enough, in themselves, to excite the emotions of any dedicated phlegmatic Communist worker. Having been indoctrinated into this concept of a 'planned economy', it was perhaps natural for him to believe that this new plan would be the very one that would turn his miserable life into a paradise on earth.

When the individual in his private life plans but plans wrongly or unwisely, or else makes an error of some sort, it is he and his close associates who suffer. When a country plans but plans wrongly or unwisely or makes an error of some sort, it is the whole country that suffers. Sadly, the record of government planning is an abysmal one and there are infinitely more bad plans carried out than good plans, hence there is always considerable and needless suffering amongst the populace. This should not surprise us as the planning carried out by most responsible individuals and the planning carried out by governments are very different. The responsible individual lives within his means. Most governments, most of the time, live far beyond their means. The responsible individual puts money aside (as far as his governments permit) for a 'rainy day'. If governments want more money after the 'rainy day' they simply steal it by way of taxation or else print it on the government printing presses (inflation). The responsible individual walks before he attempts to run. Governments seldom bother to walk first; they run with gusto from the beginning and invariably succeed in tripping themselves up long before they have completed the first circuit. The responsible individual gives, within his means, to private charities. Governments spend extravagantly on massive Welfare schemes. When the responsible individual begins in business, his aim is to make a profit. When governments begin 'a business', their aim is to win votes. When the individual fails in business, he goes bankrupt. When a government business fails, the politicians

merely pump more and more of the taxpayers' dollars into it. I could go on in this vein but, hopefully, the point is made.

It is this government planning that is the reason for the Census but worse is to come for the Census is not merely a request for information. It is a demand for information – a demand backed up by the full force of the Law. “Give us this information – and give it truthfully – or you will be incarcerated in prison”. It is no good pleading that as the planned economy is doing such immeasurable harm to the Country, it would be irrational for you to provide the information. It is no good pleading that, as a matter of conscience, you cannot supply such information as to do so would harm not only yourself but other people as well. It is no good stating that you object to being threatened or that you are being forced to act against your own better judgement; or that your rights should be protected and not violated; or that governments do not have a right to accumulate information from individuals using the threat of force as a weapon to gain it. You must submit or else suffer the consequences. Hitler, Stalin and Mao Tse Tung would all have felt comfortably at home with this Department and with its method of getting information.

To tell the truth and to state that a planned economy leads ultimately to planned chaos is tantamount to preaching heresy. Most politicians, public bureaucrats, judges and magistrates do not wish to hear such a heresy as it strikes at the very foundations of their little make-believe worlds.

SILLY MATTERS

Foreign Aid
The United Nations

FOREIGN AID

Although it is the subject of a pious literature, and is credited with saintly and humanitarian motives, foreign aid often keeps strange and brutal company. In Mexico and Zaire, in the Philippines and Haiti, thieves and murderers, psychopaths and cheats have all been amongst its bedfellows.

Graham Hancock
(Lords of Poverty)

The concept of 'foreign aid' illustrates as well as anything the moral and intellectual bankruptcy that masquerades as philosophy, politics and economics in the corridors of power of most 'advanced' countries of the world. 'Foreign aid' is essentially a political term and implies help given in one form or another (usually money) by one government to another government or else given by a government to a large charitable organization which promises to distribute the necessities of life to the people of that other country. There are any number of variants on this theme. The premises upon which such acts of so-called generosity are based are threefold – philosophic, political and economic.

The philosophic concept behind 'foreign aid' is altruism about which we have already spoken. The concept is that whatever we may think of the leaders of the country that our politicians intend to help; however incompetent, stupid, cruel, or corrupt they may be, the ordinary people are merely helpless bystanders and cannot be held responsible for their own plight. As we have more of the good things of life than they have, then we have a moral obligation to sacrifice ourselves for their benefit even if it means that our own children may have to forego some important benefits in their lives.

The political concept behind 'foreign aid' is a variant of the old 'Danegeld' – the name given in 991AD to the money that Ethelred the Unready, King of England, paid to the marauding Danes in an attempt to buy them off. Needless to say, the Danes kept coming back for more and by the year 1011AD, just twenty years later, it was costing the English nearly five times the original sum to placate them! Ultimately, however, guess what? The Danes came back once more and simply took over the kingdom! Politically, the idea behind 'foreign aid' when it takes the form of a government to government hand-out (gift or loan) is either to keep up with the international Joneses or else to buy friendship. You and I know from personal experience that attempting to keep up with the Joneses is no way to live a life and, furthermore, that friendships cannot be bought. This makes people such as you and me much smarter than people like King Ethelred and today's politicians.

The economic concept behind 'foreign aid' is even more bizarre. The argument runs something like this: imaginary country, Carbundi, which for decades has been run by a corrupt madman named Ombobo, is now broke and Ombobo desperately needs money to keep his Country afloat and himself in power. He appeals to the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund which directs some member countries – including, let us say, Australia – to lend a massive sum of money to Carbundi in order to help her in her hour of need! The Australian Government bows to the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund and comes up with the money which it has already extorted from the Australian public (or, if it has not, then it soon will). This time, the money is to be given in the form of a loan. There is no security because

Carbundi is bankrupt (and even if it were not bankrupt, what could any country give as security?). Nevertheless, the Australian Government is more than happy to be given this opportunity to take part in such an exciting investment opportunity feeling confident that with this added capital, Ombobo will be able to turn his Country's economy around, make a fortune, pay back his creditors in no time flat with interest and Australia will soon be sitting on a mountain of money! Well, that is the theory of it all. You and I, however, are not as gullible as that for we know that a 'never to be paid back loan' is not an investment at all but the act of a first-class sucker.

Now it may be that the 'foreign aid' on this occasion is to take the form of a direct gift to Carbundi rather than a loan. The government's rationale for this act of economic madness is that Ombobo and the Carbundians will, with the help of our money, become prosperous and then be able to buy products made in our Country and so help to make us all rich! Imagine you and I running a business in this manner, giving money away to our customers so that they could buy our products! Not only would we end up in the Bankruptcy Court but we would probably be declared insane as well. However, perhaps the politicians and those who encourage them to perform such acts of stupidity are insane already. Who knows?

THE UNITED NATIONS

The UN was founded by fifty-one states, the great majority of them democracies. By 1975 there were 144 members, with plans for 165, all but twenty-five of them totalitarian or one-party states, mainly of the Left. The Soviet, Arab-Muslim and African states together constituted a working majority.

Paul Johnson

(A History of the Modern World from 1917 to the 1980s)

For those who are alarmed at the growing armies of counterproductive public bureaucrats in their own countries, let them conjure up a picture of something even more grotesque – a vast international bureaucracy that resembles some imaginary giant octopus with tentacles sprouting from its tentacles and further tentacles sprouting from those tentacles. This bureaucracy is the United Nations. Needless to say, it is you and I and people like us who are compelled by our governments to support it whether we wish to do so or not. Should we decline, we would soon find ourselves arrested, hauled before a court, found guilty, fined, and in lieu of payment, marched off to a government prison.

For reasons of their own, the ‘intellectuals’ of the world persist in painting for us a mental picture of the United Nations as an organization of almost mystical purity and wisdom. It is, we are told, an organization that is dedicated to stopping wars, solving the economic problems of the world, feeding the starving millions, educating the uneducated, caring for the children, bringing health to the unhealthy, justice to the oppressed, water to the thirsty, love to the unloved, riches to the poor and a host of other ‘magnificent humanitarian aims’. Hopefully, it will eventually play its part in helping to turn the world into one big happy family in which peace will reign for a millennium and misery will be outlawed for ever. Such is the myth propagated by the myth-makers. Some, no doubt, would like to see the United Nations as a world government in which they, themselves, would be amongst the rulers and hence be able not merely to push their own countrymen around but people of all other countries as well. If a man has grandiose aspirations and sees himself as a cross between Napoleon and Mother Teresa what more satisfying goal could he have!

From other sources, however, we learn that more than 80 percent of all money passing through the United Nations is spent on its vast staff! Many senior members of the numerous United Nations bodies now live like kings, behave like film stars, wield the type of power that many a tyrant would envy and bestow favours that would benefit a Mafia Godfather. Corruption is apparently rife.

Since its inception, the United Nations has welcomed as members numerous totalitarian States and other States with equally seedy records. The practice of slavery has never been a bar to entry into the United Nations. Representatives of these countries frequently hold executive and policy-making positions and are free to make decisions that are thoroughly incompatible with the most elementary principles of justice, liberty and respect for human rights.

What prompts public bureaucrats of many different countries to imagine that they are qualified to solve the problems of the world when there is not one amongst them who knows how he is going to achieve it by working through the United Nations? What

prompts the politicians of so many different countries to imagine that they, too, working through the United Nations, are capable of solving the problems of the world when they have not the foggiest notion how to solve the problems of their own countries?

In the state of relief and euphoria that followed World War I, most of the influential politicians of the day readily acquiesced in the idea of 'The League of Nations' which was formed in 1920. That organization, however, achieved little and was moribund long before it was officially pronounced dead in 1946. In a similar atmosphere of relief and euphoria following World War II, the United Nations was born but, unlike its predecessor, it thrived from the day of its inception and grew and grew in the great tradition of public bureaucracies everywhere. It grew like Topsy and it continues to grow. It is difficult to believe that all of the world's senior politicians are unaware that the United Nations has become an uncontrollable monster, yet never do we hear an official word of criticism about it. We never hear even a suggestion that it might be pruned let alone uprooted altogether. The truth of the matter probably is that whatever their personal views may be, the politicians of the world are all too timid to stick their necks out and tell the truth. So nothing changes and the United Nations continues on in its mythical rôle as 'the saviour of mankind' chewing up ever-larger sums of taxpayers' hard-earned money in the process. So politicians in strange countries continue to fight other politicians in even stranger countries and drag their subjects into their private wars. So misery, death, destruction and disease go on unabated. So the international hand-out system continues. So pompous fools continue to strut the world stage expecting attention and acclaim whilst hundreds of millions of ordinary people world-wide live like medieval serfs and suffer untold hardships merely because no-one in a responsible position has ever taken the trouble to find out whether there might possibly be another philosophy, another political system and another economic doctrine worthy of their attention.

INCOMPREHENSIBLE MATTERS

Religion
Foreign Policy

RELIGION

Lutherans believe and teach that on the Last Day the bodies of all men, separated from their souls in death, will be raised and reunited with their souls; that in the subsequent judgement of Christ, which will include all men, the determining factor will not be morality but faith in His atonement; that all believers will rise like Christ with glorified bodies to live with God forever in heaven, while all unbelievers will be sent to eternal punishment in hell.

*The Story of the Lutheran Church in Britain
(Published 1969)*

Some may wonder why a section on religion is included in a book that has as its theme – philosophy, politics and economics. Upon reflection, one will probably appreciate that religion is a form of philosophy (albeit a primitive one) and that religious institutions are intimately involved in politics and economics. In fact, long before Christianity appeared on the scene, religion and politics were often inseparable. In the Old Testament of the Christian Bible it is impossible to separate Jewish history and politics from the Jewish religion. In the New Testament, St Paul urges his flock to obey the government as governments are put in their positions of power by God. To oppose one's government, he says, is to oppose God himself! Throughout most of the history of Christianity, we have seen a cosy relationship existing between the Church and the State. In the present day, we see the Churches not only having a profound effect on the way in which people think but we see them acting as powerful pressure groups on governments not only in an attempt to get them to change their political direction but also to worm out of them special privileges and grants at the expense of other people. So long as the Churches continue to get at people's heads and to play the political game, they should not complain if their philosophy and their behaviour are subjected to scrutiny.

The history of religion is not a glorious one. Throughout the ages, religion has inspired men and women to perform and sanction acts of almost unbelievable savagery. It has inspired holy wars, not only between people of different religions but also wars between people of the same religion but of different sects. Historians have recorded for us Catholics, in the name of their god, persecuting Protestants, and Protestants, in the name of the same god, persecuting Catholics. They have recorded Catholics and Protestants together persecuting Jews, whereas the Jews, themselves, in one of their holy books have proudly recorded a whole litany of events in which their ancestors, spurred on by their very own god, perpetrated acts of appalling brutality against 'all-comers' including unarmed men, women and children! Historians tell us of Muslims in the name of their god attacking and brutalizing Christians and of Christians brutalizing Muslims. We have seen the Christian Catholic hierarchy authorizing the most hideous acts of barbarity during the Spanish Inquisition and the leaders of the Catholic and Protestant Churches figuring prominently, for hundreds of years, in witch-hunts, the specialty of which was the burning of women alive.

That a god could so inspire people to behave in such a monstrous manner should prompt us to delve a little more deeply into the nature of this god. What sort of a god is he? Is he, as many seem to imagine, a kindly old gentleman with a long white beard who lives somewhere in the sky – a sort of cross between Superman and Father Christmas? Or is he, perhaps, a sort of spirit or ghost? If he is, does he have

human characteristics? Does he (or she or it) experience human passions such as anger, love, lust, tenderness, jealousy, and so on?

For the answers to these questions we must rely heavily upon the religious 'experts' themselves. Unfortunately, these 'experts' are liable to disagree amongst themselves and so we are obliged to form a composite picture made up of different well-documented viewpoints. Even then, the best we can do is to look at one religion only; otherwise we could easily get bogged down in needless complexities. As Christianity is the predominant religion in the Western World, let us, therefore, confine our attention to it. The Christian god, we are told, almost universally, is a loving and benevolent god. Some tell us that he is also a cruel god, a vengeful god, a jealous god. All appear to agree, however, that he is all-powerful (omnipotent), knowledgeable in all matters (omniscient) and present everywhere (omnipresent). These attributes are interesting and merit further consideration. If this god, for instance, is omnipotent, then he is obviously capable of preventing suffering, and if he is benevolent one might reasonably expect that he might want to use his power to alleviate this suffering, but this, all too often, he does not do. Why not? Is it because he is not omnipotent after all or is it because he is not really benevolent; or is it merely that he was not wearing his benevolent hat during the particular time that those ten thousand children died of starvation somewhere in Africa (or was it in South America?). Perhaps it was not due to any of these things. Perhaps it was due to the fact that the whole concept of this god is nonsense.

If this god exists everywhere, then he must obviously exist in the scorpion's tail, in the mosquito's proboscis, in the snake's fangs and in the substance of all those nasty little bacteria and viruses that are waiting to assault us. What is more, being all-powerful, this god can, if he so wishes and for reasons of his own, direct these creatures in our direction and inflict upon us and on our loved-ones serious injury or even death. Why, we might reasonably ask, should he do these things to us? If the Christians do not know the answer, then their god certainly does for he, after all, is omniscient. Similarly, if this god is omnipresent, then he is obviously there in every drought, bush fire, cyclone, flood and tidal wave. Being omniscient, he must know in advance exactly how many people he will kill, how many people he will injure, their names and their ages, the extent of the injuries to be sustained and the range of property destruction that he will cause. Being omnipotent and benevolent one must assume that he might wish to abort these catastrophes before any damage was done and so prevent needless destruction and human tragedy. This, however, he does not do. One might imagine that such a cavalier approach to death and destruction might upset the more sensitive of the faithful, but not at all. It appears merely to reinforce their awe of him and their love for him once they have realized that he has chosen them to be amongst the survivors. For those who dare to question, the well-worn retort is trotted out – "It is not for people like us to question God's motives but to have faith in his wisdom and goodness." This means that people are urged to blank out their minds, to reject reason and to turn to blind faith!

A crazy, primitive, superstitious world of ghosts, miracles, demons, spirits, prophets, sacred writings, exorcisms, angels and archangels, the virgin birth, physical resurrection, transubstantiation, holy relics, heaven, hell and purgatory, reincarnation, curses, magic charms, a glorious life to be lived once one is dead and

a host of other weird and wonderful mysteries is ever there for the faithful to contemplate.

When people allow themselves to become reliant on superstition and unreality, is it any wonder that so many of them should fear reality and condemn the materialistic world that has given them their high quality food, their life-saving drugs and operations, their electric light, central heating, motor cars, radio, aeroplanes, refrigerators, television sets, computers and all the other magnificent products of man's rational mind? Is it not understandable that the mystics should decry reason when reason is the enemy of superstition and faith just as superstition and faith are the enemy of reason? It is this blind faith that the mystic promises will ensure a man his place in heaven. It is for his lack of blind faith that the mystic promises a man his place in hell. In the real world on earth, however, it is reason that is man's tool of knowledge; the faculty that enables him to perceive the facts of reality. It is reason, not superstition, that has enabled man to amass the knowledge that he now has of his world and universe and it is his use of reason, once he has decided to use it properly, that will enable him to solve the problems that beset the world today and will beset it in the future.

Faith is belief in the absence of evidence. In plain language, faith is the doctrine that states 'Believe me because I know best!' Faith does not demand thought but obedience. Faith, the Church tells us, is one of the highest human virtues for it is faith that will get people past the pearly gates into heaven once their bodies have been consigned to the earth or the flames of the crematorium. It is the mystic who preaches that a glorious life after death is more important than a real life on earth. It is the mystic who pronounces that death is more important than life! Any group of people that preaches such a creed has no option but to damn the mind, damn reason and damn logic. With these attributes damned, what hope would there be for science and technology, and without science and technology, what hope would there be for civilization itself?

Just as faith demands obedience, so reason demands freedom. A man cannot be expected to think rationally when there is someone standing next to him threatening him with a big stick. Religion, however, functions best when it has an easy relationship with the man who wields that stick.

FOREIGN POLICY

It is bad enough to know there will be rapes and robberies every day and that many of the guilty will never be caught. But no civilized nation can accept that the guilty may be apprehended and then set free because of a stamp on their passport which reads, 'DIPLOMAT'.

*Chuck Ashman and Pamela Trescott
(Outrage)*

The purpose of a government in a free society is threefold – to protect its people and their property from external aggression by means of armed forces; to protect people and their property from internal aggression by means of police forces; and to settle disputes among people according to objectively defined laws by means of Law Courts. In a free society, the primary goal of a country's foreign policy, therefore, should be to protect the country and its people against attack from outside its borders. If people within a country are to prosper and to feel as safe as it is possible for them to feel, then they will need not merely strong, modern, efficient and economical armed forces backed up by a well-trained part-time volunteer reserve skilled in guerrilla tactics but also an economic climate in which industry and trade are free both domestically and internationally. It is often not understood that when international trade is unhampered both into and out of a country, foreign merchants have a vested interest in doing all in their power to ensure that their markets are protected. Their decision is not an emotional one but a practical one based on simple self-interest. Such markets are their bread and butter and without them their prosperity declines. As was noted in the Section entitled 'International Trade' – free trade across borders is the best of all insurances against invasion by armies.

The subject of treaties between different countries for the purpose of mutual protection is fraught with danger not the least of which is the tendency for the smaller nations to rely on the bigger nations for their protection and so neglect their own defences. In the final analysis, any country of any significant size that is content to rely on another to defend it in the event of it being attacked does not deserve to survive. Yet such complacency and wishful thinking is all too prevalent amongst many smaller countries. Most people have become so intoxicated by the Welfare State and so determined to get out of it as much as they can that money for defence is often considered money wasted. As hand-outs bring votes but Defence seldom does, it is not surprising that many governments merely go through the motions of maintaining nominal defence forces in order to placate a public that is virtually asking to be deceived. That, then, is Foreign Policy and there is nothing more that needs to be said about it. All that remains is for us to mention those areas that, today, constitute foreign policy but which, in fact, should not have anything whatsoever to do with it. Interestingly, it is these areas that are the subject-matter of a large number of weighty tomes on the subject!

Elsewhere we discuss Foreign Aid, International Trade, the United Nations and Immigration – all topics that, according to conventional 'wisdom', help to constitute the subject of 'Foreign Policy'. There is no point, therefore, in discussing these subjects further except to note once again that the United Nations, the many and varied Foreign Aid agencies, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, to mention some of the major international organizations, are really nothing more than enormous self-serving public bureaucracies that hard-working men and women, the

world over, are required by their governments to support. It tells us something of the hypocrisy of politicians that most of them purport to favour a free society yet they continue to endorse and to support, both politically and financially (with other people's money), huge international bureaucratic empires that could not and would not be tolerated in a free society! Organizations such as the United Nations with its multitude of offshoots, an almost limitless array of Foreign Aid and Relief Agencies, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank are really nothing more than international extensions of the Welfare State and the Mixed Economy concepts. It is difficult to imagine anyone with even a modicum of intellectual honesty not bothering to question the existence of these institutions. Yet apparently most politicians do not. Is it that they are so imbued with collectivist doctrine that they find such monstrosities appealing or is it that they find it easier merely to take the line of least resistance and let things slide? Why should they rock the boat and risk offending people the world over, not least amongst them, the degenerate leaders of a whole host of countries who find it easier to live off international hand-outs than to put their own houses in order? Why should a politician risk upsetting the men and women of the Media most of whom would, almost certainly, bring their big guns to bear to defend the 'status quo' and to attack the politician who dared to question it? "Let some foreign politician and his government set the ball rolling by withdrawing from these organizations, but please don't ask me or my government to be the first to do so. In the meantime, let us all shut up, go along with everyone else, pay up and do what others want us to do even if it does mean that we will be acquiescing in irrationality, immorality, corruption and just plain stupidity." This state of thinking goes by the name of 'politics'. The mania for keeping up with the international Joneses, however, is elevated to a higher plane. It is known as 'Foreign Policy'.

Before closing this section and whilst we are in the pruning mood, let us take a fleeting look at Embassies and Consulates. Nearly all governments, those of big and small countries alike and those of even the newest and poorest of them, invariably feel obliged to keep up with their international neighbours and spend vast sums of other people's money staffing large numbers of huge ostentatious embassies with countless well-paid public bureaucrats many of whom live like noblemen of old. When we consider that there are over two hundred different countries in the world and that many of these countries have embassies in most other countries of the world, the mind boggles at the number of public bureaucrats who are living the good life on easy street at other people's expense.

As if this were not enough, there are also the Consulates, not one for each country, as is the case with the Embassies, but one for each city and perhaps, for good measure, one for each large town as well throughout the world! Each consulate has its consul and each consul has his staff – once again, large numbers of them paid for by long-suffering taxpayers somewhere. As consulates are primarily government institutions designed for the specific purpose of supervising the commercial business of the State, and as they are obviously redundant if the State is not involved in commerce which it should not be, one cannot help but wonder why we have them at all.

In an age of aircraft, telephones, radios, fax machines and sophisticated electronic devices which enable presidents, prime ministers and dictators to talk to one another whenever they wish it, there is no longer need for such fripperies as ambassadors

and their embassies. In essence, they are really no more than extravagant relics of a bygone age. Frequently, an ambassadorship is little more than an expensive gift, paid for by someone else, but bestowed by a grateful politician on an old political crony in return for personal services or money rendered to his party in the past. At other times, an ambassadorship may serve as a lavish place of exile for a political rival who may be breathing too heavily down an ambitious politician's neck. Not everything is always as it seems.

Having got rid of the Embassies we have also, automatically, got rid of that iniquitous system known as 'diplomatic immunity' which allows the ambassador and at least some of his staff to break as many of the host country's laws as they please. Should the spirit move them, they may commit the most heinous of crimes with impunity. If the Ambassador's mistress has passed her 'use-by date' or if one of his Attachés has grown tired of his 'toy-boy', what is there to stop these men from getting rid of their lovers – permanently? If they happen to be caught and charged with murder then they may claim diplomatic immunity and walk away unscathed. This government-to-government mutual protection arrangement potentially puts tens of thousands of international public bureaucrats, the world over, above the law and empowers them to do exactly as they wish in their host countries. The diplomats in the Middle Ages surely did not enjoy greater privileges than this.

If individuals wish to visit or work in foreign countries they should understand that they will be subject to the laws of those countries. If they do not like those laws they would be well advised not to visit or work in those countries. If they do visit them, however, and break their laws then the responsibility for the consequences should be theirs. If they choose to travel to areas that are potentially dangerous, the responsibility should be theirs. Should they get into trouble, the responsibility should be theirs and not that of their home government. It is not the proper rôle of governments to act as nursemaids to anyone least of all to people who wish to take risks in foreign lands for their own personal gratification.

Just as people can poke their noses into other people's business, so governments can poke their noses into the activities of other governments. When, however, governments do meddle internationally, they are playing dangerous games that can have disastrous consequences for large numbers of people. When there are inadequate constitutional restraints imposed upon governments, it is little wonder that politicians should, at times, lead their countries into adventures that have far-reaching and disastrous consequences. It is only by looking at governments and defining their proper rôle that such ill-conceived adventures can be avoided.

BIGOTED MATTERS

Nationalism
Sport

NATIONALISM

Everyone must obey the state authorities, because no authority exists without God's permission, and the existing authorities have been put there by God. Whoever opposes the existing authority opposes what God has ordered; and anyone who does so will bring judgement on himself.

*Paul's Letter to the Romans
Chapter 13 (Good News Bible)*

There are two sides to Nationalism – one side, ugly and dangerous; the other, harmless. The ugly, dangerous side is the one that predominates. This side is all about such matters as big governments and power and conscription and militarism and wars. It is also about deceiving people and manipulating them and showing contempt for their rights including their property rights. Nationalism is an end-product of all those concepts that we have decried so far in this book – the altruist philosophy; the concept of society as a tribe with a chieftain, elders and underlings – the underlings being morally obliged to obey and to serve the tribe as personified by the chieftain and his elders; the concept of 'the common good', 'the public good' or 'the national interest'; the concept of might being right. It is these concepts that, in logic, lead straight to Nationalism. It is not a coincidence that it was these same concepts that dominated the thinking of most of the German people when they acquiesced so readily in the dictatorship of Adolph Hitler and his gang of thugs; that dominated the thinking of those people in the Old Soviet Union who supported Lenin, Stalin and the tyrants that followed them; and that dominated the thinking of all those who helped to establish Mao Tse Tung as the all-powerful ruler over the Chinese people.

They are the same concepts that, today, determine the course of Western democratic societies and capture the imaginations of most of the 'intelligentsia' and the 'leaders' of our different countries. Listen to today's politicians and one will hear slogans that could just as readily have come from the mouths of Hitler, Stalin, Mao Tse Tung, Castro and all the other dictators of the world, past and present. It is because our present leaders have been influenced by the very same thinkers who influenced Hitler, Stalin and Mao Tse Tung that they think along fundamentally similar lines and utter the same disturbing phrases. As we have noted already, political systems are all about ideas – good ideas and bad ideas and the ideas that people accept and those that they reject. In the current culture, most of the 'intelligentsia' continue to peddle bad ideas. As a consequence, bad ideas predominate. Nationalism is just one example of what happens when bad ideas take hold in a culture. The acceptance of nationalism demonstrates clearly how, over time, most people readily allow themselves to be manipulated into accepting ideas that are contrary to their own long-term interests.

When a political leader says:— "Do it for your Country", what he is really saying is:— "Do it the way I and my Government are proposing as it should help us to win votes at the next election." When the political leader extols the 'Country's achievements' he is saying, in effect, "look how lucky you all are to have a government such as mine". Worse, however, is yet to come. When the political leader hears about some fine individual achievement by a member of the community, his immediate response is invariably to claim some credit for it himself. "We did it", he says. Perhaps it was a fine performance by an individual athlete or by a team of sportsmen or maybe the

achievements of an inventor or a great scientist or an artist or perhaps the spectacular success of some business entrepreneur. It matters little. To the political leader it is 'we' who did it – not the achievers themselves or those intimately involved with them but 'we' – we, the people, we, the Country, and it goes without saying – we, the politicians. It is this nebulous 'we', the men and women who are ever ready to climb on to the backs of the true achievers who always want to claim for themselves a share of the greatness of others. It is this claim on someone else's success or courage or persistence or some other fine quality that, in the name of Nationalism, must be encouraged – not the quality itself but the stealing of it. It is this theft of the recognition rightfully due to someone else that must be raised to the level of a virtue! It is this concept that is at the core of the term 'nationalism'. It is this jaded concept that must be fully recognized and fostered if the demagogue is ever successfully to manipulate people to his own advantage.

That we should all be prepared to work towards 'the common good' or to commit ourselves to 'the public good' or to sacrifice ourselves 'in the national interest' is just another way of saying that the word 'we' is of greater significance than the word 'I'; that one's street neighbours are more important than one's own self or one's own family. We should not be surprised to learn that this was the very message that Hitler and Stalin successfully drummed into the heads of their respective peoples.

Nationalism, however, need not be ugly or dangerous. Were it to arise spontaneously from individual pride in a certain way of life, it would be an honourable concept. Were one to live in a truly free country in which individual rights, including property rights, were respected and in which people were able to live in peace and harmony, there would be much for which to be proud. In a society in which the emphasis was placed on the individual and not on the overbearing State, then the irrational, manipulative and belligerent brand of nationalism would not emerge.

SPORT

'.....sport represents one of the modern world's most magnificent vehicles for the undisputed exercise of pure, unalloyed, blatant, stark-naked power'.

*Viv Simson and Andrew Jennings
(The Lords of the Rings)*

It is a sorry indictment of our politico-economic system that it should be considered necessary to discuss such a topic as 'sport' in a book of this nature. The fact that it is necessary highlights the manner in which people have allowed their governments to travel down the collectivist path with barely a murmur of dissent.

Although many competitive games are looked upon as sport by most people, they are, to others, an occupation not unlike other occupations that provide people with an income. It would probably be more accurate, therefore, to refer to these people not as sportsmen but as professional entertainers. When people condemn the professionalism of sport they are prone to miss this salient point.

The tragedy of today's sport is not the professionalism that has become such a part of it but the manner in which governments have spread their tentacles into it so that in many democratic countries, such as my own, there is actually a separate government department with its own huge public bureaucracy concerned with nothing else but controlling sport! Not so long ago, people played sport, even at the highest levels, purely for the fun of it. Nearly all players were amateurs and government interference into sport was an alien concept. The first cracks began to appear when some universities in the United States of America began offering sports scholarships to promising young athletes thus blurring the boundaries between the amateur and the professional and, in the process, giving some American 'amateur' athletes an edge over those of other countries.

In the communist countries, particularly the old Soviet Union and its satellites, the State early took over as the financial benefactor and controller of all sporting activities so that their more successful athletes were really professionals but in amateur guise. To many people in the Western World, at that time, this hypocritical approach to sport was looked upon with abhorrence. It is interesting to note, however, that it was not long before the so-called 'free' countries of the world had followed the example set by the communist States and made sport a political issue themselves!

Once a person has accepted the Welfare State ideology and taken it for granted that education is an area in which governments should be in total or near-total control, then one has but a short step to take in order to argue that sport is an essential aspect of education. On that premise, one can then maintain that as education is concerned with preparing young people for an occupation in later life, special government 'schools' should be funded by the taxpayer to train them for such occupations. That such occupations should happen to be golf, cricket, football, baseball, ping-pong, figure skating or synchronized swimming is immaterial! Another line of argument that is commonly heard runs something like this— 'sport helps to ensure that young people remain healthy, and so long as people are healthy they will be less of a liability on the government health system: therefore governments should become heavily involved in sport for economic reasons!' Silly? Yes it is, but it is the

sort of silliness that one will frequently hear from one's politicians regardless of their party affiliations. The truth of the matter is that in a free or even in a semi-free society, there is no place whatsoever for governments in sport whether it be at the kindergarten or at the Olympic Games level. Why people who do not participate in sport or else who participate in it but only in a spirit of friendship, should be compelled to support those who do take sport seriously, has never been satisfactorily explained except by resorting to the primitive philosophy of the ant and the anthill. Nor has it ever been satisfactorily explained why it is acceptable for governments to milk the tobacco industry of vast sums of money yet unacceptable for tobacco companies and sportsmen to come together freely for their mutual benefit. Could it possibly be that humbug, hypocrisy, woolly thinking and bully-boy behaviour are not really wretched little vices after all but inspiring and ennobling virtues?

In 1936, Hitler's Germany hosted the Olympic Games. This was to be the showcase for the new German ideology and to prove to the world the superiority of the German people and the new Nazi regime. For the Germans it was to be not a gathering of athletes competing in a spirit of friendly rivalry but a vast propaganda exercise designed to extol the virtues of the German race. When one looks back on this event, what hits one is the striking parallels that exist between those games and the games of the present day. However much people may attempt to deny it, the fact remains that the Olympic Games, like those of Hitler's Germany, have become not so much friendly contests between individual athletes as bloodless battles between different countries. When the competitors, assisted by their coaches and helpers, succeed in their events, it is the parasites who invariably claim the victory. "It is we, the public; we, the Country; or we, the race, that did it. We won, proving that we are the best." When it is over, most of the individual names, except those of one's own countrymen, are quickly forgotten. That Fanny Smith won this event; that Antonio Russo won that event or that Oko Homo won something else is soon yesterday's news. What is remembered is that on that occasion the United States won most of the athletic events; China won most of the swimming events (but it cheated); that Bulgaria won most of the weightlifting events and that 'our man thrashed that bloody Cuban in the heavyweight boxing final'. This nationalistic fervour with racist overtones initiated and encouraged by governments and whipped up by the Media is so reminiscent of the propaganda generated by Hitler and his mate, Goebbles, in 1936 that one cannot help but wonder whether our so-called leaders and the Media moguls have learnt anything of significance in those intervening years.

With so much nationalistic ballyhoo and pressure placed upon athletes and their coaches, it is hardly surprising that performance-enhancing drugs should be so frequently used. Now that governments have become so intimately involved in sport, drug taking will inevitably reflect upon countries rather than upon those individuals who are actively involved in providing and taking such drugs. As accusations of drug taking by athletes of one particular country can now easily escalate into an international incident, there is the ever-present tendency for politicians and public bureaucrats to brush such unpleasant matters under the carpet and so perpetuate the problem. Such is the way of politicians.

The concept of a Government Department for Sport, a Government Department for Horse Racing and so many other silly government departments each with its own

silly Minister in Parliament helps to make a mockery of governments. This, however, may not necessarily be a bad thing as governments will, sooner rather than later, collapse under their own weight and leave the way clear for people to begin afresh, this time, hopefully, with a political system based on sound moral principles and economic good sense.

EMOTIONAL MATTERS

Egalitarianism

Racism

The Indigenous People

Immigration

Charity

EGALITARIANISM

The finest opportunity ever given to the world was thrown away because the passion for equality made vain the hope for freedom.

Lord Acton

Like the word 'racism', the word 'egalitarianism' appears to have emerged, or else to have re-emerged, in the latter half of the twentieth century. Following the modern trend in thought that 'near enough is good enough', this word has come to mean almost anything that people want it to mean. Although the Concise Oxford Dictionary (6th Edition) defines 'egalitarianism' as 'the principle of equal rights etc. for all persons', this is not what most people, including the so-called 'intelligentsia', mean by the word. To most of them, the word means merely 'equality' – the concept that 'Jack is as good as his master and that, if he is not, then he damned well should be'. To some, this distinction between the two interpretations of the word may appear pedantic. It is not. The first concept states, in effect, that all people have equal rights and, therefore, it implies that they should be equal before the Law. The second concept states that all people should be equal and implies that if they are not, then they should be made equal by legislation. Throughout this book, I have stressed the importance of ideas and how ideas, both good and bad, can change the world. Here is yet another such example of that statement. The two concepts – one, that 'egalitarianism' means the principle of equal rights for all people and the other that all people should be equal are opposites concepts. The first concept is one that a capitalist/lover of liberty would endorse; the second is one that a socialist/communist would endorse. It is this second concept that most of our politicians and public bureaucrats find so attractive.

Obviously not all men and women are born equal. Some are born healthy; others unhealthy; some are born with all parts and senses intact; others are born with missing parts and senses; some are born to wealthy parents; others to poor parents; some show early intellectual promise; others are not so fortunate; some have natural good looks; others do not. Nature does not endow all with equal attributes, physical or mental.

It is not necessarily the fact that people are born unequal that many 'intellectuals' find so distasteful. It is the fact that governments have often neglected to atone for the effects of these inequalities that irks them. In time, such crazy thinking slowly worked its way through the educational system and eventually found its way into the heads of the politicians who took such ideas at their face value and translated them into such legislation as the 'Anti-Discrimination' and 'Equal Opportunity' Laws. In so doing, they created a legal minefield so vast and destructive in its scope that it altered the whole face of human relationships and escalated further the open warfare that the politicians had already provoked between people of different groups and different races.

It is a fact of life that just as people vary in their physical and mental capabilities so they also vary in their personalities and character traits. As a consequence, the choices that people make in their lives vary greatly. One young man may choose to discipline himself and work long hours day and night studying for one of the professions whilst another may choose to idle away his time watching television, 'partying' and 'chasing the sun'. In time, one of these men may end up with a bigger

house, a smarter car and an income substantially higher than the other and it is this inequality that eats at the heart of the 'all people should be equal' egalitarian.

It was the popular egalitarians of years past who were the driving force behind the iniquitous concept of progressive taxation. "If he works harder, tear him down; if he succeeds in business, tear him down; if he does things better than anyone else, tear him down; if he dares to succeed in his life's work, tear him down". If progressive taxation does not bring a man to heel, then there are always the Fair-Trading Laws or the Anti-Trust Laws or the Licensing Laws or the Anti-Discrimination Laws or the Equal Opportunity Laws or a thousand other laws that can be brought to bear to break a man's spirit and bring him back into the fold. This is the motivation driving the exponents of popular egalitarianism – the morbid dread that a tall poppy might somehow emerge and overshadow the others. This egalitarianism has nothing to do with raising people up but is all about tearing them down. Egalitarianism, in its popular form, is but another expression of the altruist philosophy that men have no right to exist for their own sakes but that they have a moral obligation to sacrifice their lives for the good of others. It is that anthill mentality all over again – "what does that ant think it is doing stepping out of line and daring to act alone when it should be submitting to all the other ants?"

The exponent of popular egalitarianism is a destroyer rather than a builder; he relates to mediocrity and is jealous of excellence; he finds success abhorrent but failure emotionally appealing; he feels uncomfortable in the company of winners but at home in the company of losers. It is this cult of popular egalitarianism that, as a philosophic concept, ends up discouraging hard work, originality and excellence; pitting one man against another; cluttering up the Law Courts; depriving people of more and more of their freedoms; retarding economic progress and ultimately helping to destroy the whole fabric of society.

RACISM

All those who are not racially pure are mere chaff.

*Adolf Hitler
(Mein Kampf)*

The word 'racism' means many things to many people. Even the compilers of dictionaries disagree with one another. Some of the older dictionaries do not even acknowledge that such a word exists at all, whilst others give definitions that would not stand up to even the most cursory critical examination. For the word 'racism' to have any significant meaning, it must be considered as a theory that people of different races behave differently because their intelligence levels, characters, values and ways of thinking etc. are genetically different from those of other races and that these traits are, therefore, beyond the individual's control. To be a racist is to believe, for example, that the people of some races are inherently slow-witted; that some are inherently belligerent; that some are inherently docile; some are inherently cruel; some are inherently cowardly; some are inherently over-sexed; some are inherently dishonest and some are inherently superior to all the others.

There is no denying that when large numbers of people of a racial group or a country behave badly, they are likely to give their own racial group or country a bad name. The response to such unacceptable behaviour is natural. People of many racial groups or countries, at various times, have given their races or countries bad names – the Japanese, Russians, Chinese, Americans, Germans, Italians, Irishmen, Englishmen, Iranians, Iraqis, Australians, Israelis, Palestinians, and so on. In fact, it is hard to think of a race of people or a country that has not, at one time or another, been the subject of vilification because of the bad behaviour of some of its members. However rational or irrational this response may be, it is not racism unless it is claimed that the bad behaviour is prompted by the genetic make-up of the people involved and that they are merely behaving as they are genetically programmed to behave.

Different races of people tend to behave differently. Most Japanese women will behave differently to most Irish women; most Iranian women will behave differently to most Swedish women; most Chinese men will behave differently to most Scotsmen, not because their intelligence levels, characters, personalities and habits are genetically programmed along different lines but because they have been brought up differently in different cultures. If one is not attracted to the culture of another, that does not make one a racist.

Furthermore, a person who decides that he does not like a particular race of people or a person of that particular race, is entitled to his opinion even though that opinion may not be a rational one. If he chooses not to employ a man because of his race, that is his choice, and his freedom to choose should be respected even if one does not respect him for the reason that prompted him to make that choice. Not to allow him to make his own free choice is tantamount to turning him into a slave. In a free society, or even in a semi-free society, a man must be able to express his honest opinions, however unpalatable those opinions may be to some other people.

It is because most people do not have a clear idea of what they mean by 'racism' and apparently lack the will to analyse their thinking, that emotions are prone to boil over and give way to violence usually for the wrong reasons. If we are to have any hope of understanding what racism is about; why some people are accused of being racist but are not racist; why others are considered not to be racist but are, in fact, racist; why governments get embroiled in this area which is an area in which they should not get embroiled; and why some people find themselves at almost constant war with others over this issue, then we must attempt to understand this topic. As far as I am aware, there is no firm scientific evidence anywhere to show that the peoples of some races have better genes that make them intellectually and morally superior to people of other races. Even if there were evidence of intellectual superiority in some races, however, it would not be of much significance as it would be fallacious to assume that one would automatically be more successful in life or be a better person because one had more or better neurones than another. Nor is there any evidence to show that the content of one's mind – one's convictions, one's values and one's character traits are determined genetically. Nevertheless, this is exactly what the racist claims. To the racist, a man must be judged not for his own traits (good and bad) but for the traits of some of his ancestors and the ancestors of his compatriots. A good man, however, is a good man regardless of the number of bad men who may belong to his race or country. The racist is essentially a collectivist who claims that he can determine how a man will think, what form his personality and character will take and how he will act under different circumstances merely because of his racial origin.

Sadly, in today's climate of big government, the Welfare State and the Mixed Economy, the subject of racism has become hopelessly intertwined with politics so that most people, and the politicians in particular, are unable to separate one from the other. By its nature, the Welfare State is concerned with stealing money from Peter in order to give it to Paul. With such a political philosophy, one should not be surprised when Peter becomes angry particularly when he sees his hard-earned money showered on people of one particular racial group whom he believes should not be receiving it. Furthermore, when he is confronted with a huge public bureaucracy specifically designed to ensure that the public trough is always full to overflowing, he possibly becomes angrier still. When he learns that the recipients of those hand-outs, including the members of a selected racial group, are demanding more and more of his money and getting it, he may, understandably, blow a safety valve. This is not racism.

In our present politico-economic climate, politicians and public bureaucrats determine which people and from which countries of origin they will admit as immigrants. If people disagree with the politicians and public bureaucrats, that does not automatically make them racists. A man has a right to express his opinion on this matter just as do the politicians. It may, in fact, indicate that the man who speaks up and disagrees with the politicians is a more responsible citizen than are those who blindly follow their leaders. When a man considers that it is not in the best interests of his country for it to be flooded with people from an alien culture who may change the existing character of his Country, it is not racism.

When a government attempts to control the ways in which people think, speak or show their personal preferences, that country is in deep trouble for it has already

entered the danger zone in which the concepts of slavery and freedom have become inexorably blurred. If this trend is not reversed quickly the path along which that country is travelling can lead only to disaster.

THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

There never was much chance that a real rapprochement could be made between the white men and the (Australian) aborigines in their wild state. The gap between them was too great. The black man may have been a better physical specimen than the white, but he had to change if he was going to adjust himself to the European way of life, and in making that change he lost his strength and his virility. The few aborigines who now, little by little, began to come into the settlement to beg for food and tobacco – and eventually liquor – and who paraded themselves in dirty and ragged cast-off clothing, were not half the men they had been when they were living with their tribes in the bush. It seems a strange thing to say, but apartheid might have saved them.

*Alan Moorehead
(The Fatal Impact)*

Many countries, including Australia, were occupied by so-called 'indigenous people' long before the main white immigration began. Some of these indigenous people have continued to live more or less as their ancestors did and have only limited contact with the 'white man'. Others live in their own communities but not as their ancestors did. Large numbers, however, both of pure blood and of mixed blood have moved into the towns and cities and now live either as well-adjusted or not-so-well-adjusted citizens. There is not, therefore, just one area of concern for those who are genuinely interested in the indigenous people but many – the most important being that of land for the exclusive use of many of these people. In general principle, there would probably be few people who would not be in agreement with those indigenous people who wanted to own suitable tribal land so long as it was not stolen from someone else or involved the breaking of existing contracts. Having said that, however, the reaction of the new breed of leaders who have usurped the rôle of spokesmen for many of the indigenous people in my own country, Australia, is little different from that of any other pressure group once it has recognized the huge prizes to be 'won' if political pressure on governments is sustained.

What began in Australia as genuine demands by honourable members of the indigenous people quickly degenerated into a land and money grab of massive proportions largely by non-tribal political agitators many with barely a trace of indigenous blood in their veins. These people and their hangers-on, together with a vast self-serving public bureaucracy which has evolved 'to help them', stand to gain the world and lose nothing. When anyone has the temerity to tell the story as it really is and says 'enough is enough', the cry of 'racism' is hurled at that person with a venom that is usually reserved for such people as murderers and rapists. The 'intellectuals' bare their teeth and demand blood; the politicians ever ready to run with the hares and hunt with the hounds join in the outcry hoping to pick up votes; whilst the Media whip up emotions, sell more newspapers and increase radio and TV ratings. Such is the sordid spectacle of democracy and pressure-group politics in action.

In a civilized society, the indigenous people and those of mixed blood are people and citizens of a country just as are the immigrants old and new. They should not be treated as privileged people nor as under-privileged people. They should not be granted special dispensations to live off other people any more than other people should be granted special dispensations to live off them. Once they own their own

land either as individuals or on a tribal basis (whichever they prefer) they should be able to use that land and dispose of it in any way they wish provided they respect the equal rights of others whether white, black, or something in between. In a civilized society, laws are the same for all. If they are not, then those laws are immoral, unjust and, in practice, ultimately destined to destroy society.

IMMIGRATION

“.....culture— that great cargo of shared beliefs, values, associations, myths, taboos, imperatives, customs, traditions, manners and ways of thought, speech and artistic expression which ballast every society——.....”

*John Keegan
(A History of Warfare)*

Immigration is a subject largely dominated by petty politics, favouritism, emotion, religion, dishonesty and frank stupidity. In a Mixed Economy, no-one can possibly be in a position to arbitrarily declare that a certain number of immigrants should be absorbed into a country over a set period of time. Nor can any politician or public bureaucrat possibly hope to know whether people from this country or from that country, from this race or from that race will, at any one time, contribute more or less to the future well-being of a country. This means that whatever reasons the politicians and public bureaucrats may give for their immigration policies, such reasons will almost certainly not be based on rational grounds.

So long as politicians remain mesmerized by the Welfare State and the Mixed Economy, most of the immigrants will be supported, at least in part, either directly or indirectly, by government hand-outs. This money must be extracted, one way or another, by the threat of force, from longer-established residents. It is, therefore, hardly surprising that some of these longer-established residents should, at times, express their disapproval of a government's immigration policy. Different opinions on immigration, however, are rarely tolerated and, in my own Country, at least, they are invariably met with an official response that is both swift and violent. Without even listening to what is being said or attempting to understand the critic's genuine concerns, many political spokesmen in Australia will fly into an immediate tantrum and smear the critic with a venom that would leave most schoolchildren gasping in admiration. If, by distorting the facts, the politician can present the critic as a racist and so besmirch the poor fellow's character, the politician will have won a great political victory! Such a victory, however, cannot be fully achieved without the backing of the Media.

In Australia, this is how criticism of a government immigration policy is handled. It is not a pretty spectacle. Perhaps it differs little from the reaction to similar concerned criticism once heard in the United Kingdom when its government decided upon a reckless policy of massive selective immigration following World War II. The tragedy of such vitriolic official and semi-official responses to criticism is that most people learn to keep their opinions to themselves and not to become publicly embroiled in controversy. It takes a strong man or woman to stand up to constant smearing and character assassination. This is why such men and women are usually few in number. When, however, they do emerge, they quickly find themselves with a large army of silent supporters. It is never healthy, in any country, for criticism to be stifled. It is immaterial whether this stifling is carried out as overt government policy as it is in totalitarian States or whether it is carried out by way of a more subtle government and Media-led campaign of smearing. The end-result will always be the same. Discontent will continue to simmer but it will go underground and remain there until such time as another leader emerges to take over the baton.

It is not necessarily racism when a critic expresses his or her concern over the number of immigrants entering a country, nor is it necessarily racism when a critic expresses his concern over the racial, religious and cultural mix of immigrants.

It is not the different colours of the immigrants' skins that, in most cases, cause concern nor is it their different cultures nor their predominantly different religions but the impact that large numbers of people of different races, of different religions and of different cultures will have when they flood an existing culture. The fear is that they will either significantly alter the existing culture of a country or that most of them will end up living apart in ghettos as foreigners in an alien land. Furthermore, in a system of pressure-group politics, it is never long before the new immigrants learn how to manipulate the politicians to their own advantage and hence to the disadvantage of others. Experience has repeatedly shown that the new immigrants will soon be demanding that the government bring into the Country the new immigrants' mums and dads, their uncles and aunts, their cousins and their cousins' cousins. "Grant us our demands", they say, "and you will win our votes: refuse our demands and you will lose our votes." The bribes and the threats are clear. Like so many other people in the community, the new immigrants quickly learn that in a system of unlimited majority rule, special privileges are to be had if one plays one's cards correctly; and one of the best ways for one to do this is by using one's vote in the game of political blackmail. Usually, there are not many politicians who possess the moral fibre to stand up to such threats or to resist such political bribery. In the final analysis, the fears of the critics are probably directed not so much at the immigrants as at the politicians whom they have good reason not to trust. Perhaps most politicians, in their intellectually more honest moments, sense that such is the case and their vicious outbursts are really nothing more than bluster to hide this fact not merely from the public but from themselves as well.

It is interesting to observe how critical some foreigners and their governments can be of the immigration policies of other countries when their own countries virtually close their borders to immigrants of most other countries and races. It is not to the credit of many immigrants that they neglect to point out these double standards and even tacitly endorse them. What do we imagine the reaction would be if a hundred thousand white Australians, Englishmen or Americans applied to emigrate to Egypt, China or Niger; or else if fifty thousand Jews from Israel applied to emigrate to Pakistan or Indonesia; or if twenty thousand Arabs from Iraq applied to emigrate to Israel? Hypocrisy has become so much a part of our culture that one cannot help but wonder whether young people are able, any longer, to differentiate between humbug and reality.

One of the more fashionable words in Australia is 'multiculturalism', a word that has come to mean almost anything that a person wants it to mean. This ugly, recently coined word is used to indicate a government policy whereby people of different races and from different countries are to be encouraged to immigrate and to maintain their own separate cultural identities which, presumably, would be best accomplished if they lived together in their own communities. Thus, it is claimed, 'society will be enriched'. The concept is not unlike that of having animals in a free ranging zoo – great places of entertainment which people may visit if they wish to observe strange creatures behaving in unusual ways in their own surroundings. This 'multiculturalism' was originally proposed by some of our sillier politicians as an

alternative to 'assimilation' which was considered a most inappropriate way for new immigrants to behave. Using our animal analogy, assimilation means something akin to tossing the border collies in with the red setters. Nature being what it is, the two breeds would soon get together and produce litters of lovely little cross-breeds. That, however, was not considered a good idea by our racially conscious politicians as the border collies and the red setters would perhaps ultimately die out as separate breeds and hence would no longer be around for us all to enjoy when the local dog show next came around. It is interesting, at least in Australia, to note that the words 'assimilation' and 'integration' have now been surreptitiously dropped from official jargon. The implication, once again, is all too obvious – that politicians, public bureaucrats and their hangers-on have no doubts whatsoever that it is they and they alone who know best how immigrants should henceforth live their lives! Such paranoiac tendencies, of course, are not peculiar to Australian politicians.

Some champions of 'multiculturalism' appear to view their chosen system as little more than an opportunity for them to visit 'ethnic' restaurants in the 'ethnic' quarter of the city there to sample new 'ethnic' fare served in an 'ethnic' manner in 'ethnic' surroundings by 'ethnic' waiters dressed in 'ethnic' finery. Thus can they claim to be members of a cultural 'élite'. Such a picture, however, is but one side of the coin. There is another side and one that we would do well not to forget. We have already noted how government hand-outs play a significant part in immigration policies especially in a climate of high unemployment. We have also seen how pressure-group politics is quickly established amongst most immigrant groups enabling them to acquire special privileges for themselves at the expense of other people. In another Section, we saw how a country's foreign policy may sometimes be determined by such pressure-groups and how even hand-outs to people in far-off lands may be granted by home governments in order to buy the votes of different racial groups within a country, with the local taxpayers footing the bill for these favours. We see also some immigrant groups bringing their own racial and religious hatreds with them so that their petty warring continues in their new home. In some countries we learn that organized crime is a part of their culture so that it is taken for granted by some of these immigrants that they will pay tribute to their own immigrant gangs in exchange for a peaceful existence.

When anyone dares to present this other side of the immigration coin, the cry of racism is again raised in the hope that the smear will obliterate the facts. The truth of the matter is that the Welfare State, the Mixed Economy, pressure-group politics, government immigration schemes and Multiculturalism, in particular, are a bad mix and can lead only to trouble. People are people regardless of their race, skin colour, age, sex, state of health or beliefs. Being people, they all have rights and one person's rights can never be greater nor less than those of another. It does not make sense nor can it ever be morally justified to consider the rights of some people as being superior or inferior to the rights of others. Yet this is the assumption of all those who accept such concepts as Unlimited Majority Rule, the Welfare State, the Mixed Economy and Multiculturalism. When politicians and public bureaucrats confer on immigrants hand-outs and special privileges at the expense of longer-established residents, they are holding the rights of the older residents in contempt. That there is not more friction than there already is can only be explained either by an unusual degree of tolerance shown by most people or else by a general apathy induced, perhaps, by the knowledge that it is now virtually impossible to find a

person who is not, in one way or another, to some degree, parasitic on someone else. What friction there is over immigration, however, will not go away merely by pretending that it is not there.

In a civilized society, if people wished to immigrate it would be taken for granted that they would be obliged to pay their own way, to stand on their own two feet and not be granted special privileges or hand-outs at the expense of their hosts. The hand-out and special privileges concept, however, has become so deeply ingrained into our culture that its corollary – the ridiculous concept of superior and inferior rights – is seldom questioned. There is no reason why immigrants should not come into a country if they are able to support themselves when they arrive, either by having a job awaiting them or else by being self-employed. It is sheer madness for a government to invite people into a country and then have them supported by the local taxpayers because there is not work for them. Such, however, is the inevitable result of government immigration policies designed according to ill-conceived, emotionally driven, theoretical formulae. Governments wallow because governments do not know who should be invited into a country. It is only individual people who know and, even then, it is not just any people but those people who are prepared to put their money where their mouths are and offer jobs to foreigners or else undertake to support them for other reasons. Employers know the types of people whom they wish to employ. If such men and women cannot be found locally, then the logical course for employers to take is to advertise overseas. The countries in which an employer might choose to advertise are his decision alone. Nevertheless, if he hopes to survive against strong competition in his field, it is unlikely that he will allow himself to be prejudiced against the best applicants merely because of the colour of their skin, the shape of their noses or their particular choice in hats.

CHARITY

Charity deals with symptoms instead of causes.

Lord Samuel (1870-1963)

Charity is injurious unless it helps the recipient to become independent of it.

John D. Rockefeller (1874-1937)

Charity is private, voluntary or uncoerced giving. There is no other form of charity. When a government takes money from people using the threat of force to get it and then hands it over to others, as it does in a Welfare State, it is not charity. It is extortion. To talk, as do many people, of the Welfare State as a form of charity is gross intellectual dishonesty. Many 'do-gooders' maintain that it is degrading for a person to accept charity. Therefore, they say, the Welfare State was devised to enable people to receive help without them having to be subjected to this indignity. What these 'do-gooders' are saying, in effect, is that for a person to accept something that is given voluntarily, generously and as an act of kindness is degrading whereas to accept something that has been stolen from someone else is not only to receive one's rightful due but is also to receive it honourably. Such is the philosophical, moral and intellectual degeneracy of the Welfare Statist!

Even in the most prosperous of societies, there will always be those who, for one reason or another, fall on bad times. Such set-backs may or may not be of a person's own making; they may or may not be of a permanent nature. Nevertheless, regardless of the cause and the extent of each individual hardship, the most effective response by any charitable person or organization has always been to help the unfortunate person to get back on his feet as quickly as possible so enabling him, thereafter, to help himself. Earlier generations of more virile people grew up with such maxims as 'God helps those who help themselves'; 'pray to God and row to shore'; and 'give a man a fish and he will eat well today, but teach him how to fish and he will eat well for the rest of his life'. Sadly, today, when it sometimes appears that a disproportionately large number of university graduates are either social workers or psychologists, the tried, tested and practical methods of help are often either forgotten or else consciously rejected. For many, it is easier to refer the unfortunate person to one of the many government welfare agencies which will probably give him a hand-out for as long as he wants it.

It is sometimes argued that if it were not for big governments and the Welfare State, people in their thousands would be starving and dying on the streets of big cities throughout the Western World. It is not to the credit of many university professors in the Humanities faculties that this sort of nonsense still emanates from University lecture halls around the world. For one to advocate, as do many academics, a politico-economic system that creates poverty and misery and then to decry the misery that one has helped to create and to postulate ways of alleviating it – ways that will inevitably lead to even further misery – is to plumb the depths of academic ignorance and stupidity.

If one does not wish to see needless hardship, one should advocate a politico-economic system that does not inevitably lead to needless hardship. Even in the

best of societies, there will always be some instances of hardship. It would be foolish to pretend otherwise, as tragedies will always happen wherever there are people. The difference, however, is that in a truly free society, hardship and misery are not institutionalised. They are not built-in components of the system. It is for this reason that it is fair to assume that charity (private voluntary giving) might be capable of doing infinitely better with love, kindness and infinite generosity than does a massive bureaucratic-ridden Welfare State that has to steal in order to survive and that can carry out its sordid task only when it is backed up by the hidden batons and guns of compliant police forces.

In a free society with a small government restricted to protecting people's rights rather than to violating them, people prosper. When people prosper, they are more able to look after themselves in adversity and are in a better position, financially, to voluntarily help those in need. It has been demonstrated, time and time again in history, that prosperous people have nearly always been prepared to give away vast sums of money in order to help people whom they believe are worthy of it. One has only to look, today, at the large sums of money that are voluntarily given by people – 'poor', 'middle-income', and 'rich' alike – to appreciate the extent of the charity of which people are capable even when they, themselves, have already been hit hard by crippling taxation. To fear any lack of generosity from people in a society not subject to the Welfare State with its crippling taxation, its destructive inflation and its massive counterproductive public bureaucracy is really to heap insult on to all those kind, generous people who already regularly give to charities of their choice, and often to other charities as well.

MISUNDERSTOOD MATTERS

POLITICAL LABELS

Conservatism

Liberalism

The Labor (Australia), Labour (UK) and Democratic (US) Parties

Socialism / Communism

Fascism and Nazism

Collectivism or Statism

Democracy

Libertarianism

Anarchy

The Mixed Economy

Capitalism / Free Enterprise

POLITICAL LABELS

The first step to wisdom is getting the right name.

Chinese Proverb

This whole Section should be read in conjunction with that entitled 'The Political Spectrum'. Like that Section, it would not have been necessary for me to have written it had not so many academics in the 'Humanities' faculties of our Universities and seniors schoolteachers been so confused about the meaning of many important words. Sadly, their woolly thinking has gradually worked its way through 'the System' via the men and women of 'the Media' so that, today, most people, including the politicians, do not have any clear idea as to what they mean by many of the words that they constantly use.

As is mentioned elsewhere in this book, words have meanings. If they did not, people would not be able to carry on intelligent conversations with one another and, all too often, this is exactly what happens. People usually do not have difficulty identifying the characteristics of tangible objects such as clothes, motorcars and furniture. It is only when they come to intangible things and to concepts, in particular, that their intellectual laziness becomes apparent. For hundreds of years, scientists have recognized the need to think objectively and to define their words, terms and concepts accurately. This is one of the major reasons why the pure sciences are light-years ahead of the so-called 'Humanities' and pseudo-sciences as branches of learning. In the 'Humanities' and in the ever-proliferating pseudo-sciences, it is sloppy thinking that so often categorizes them as third-rate branches of learning. Let us now turn our attention to a series of political topics and see if we can make some sense out of the prevailing confusion that surrounds them.

CONSERVATISM

The simple truth is that our businessmen do not want a government that will let business alone. They want a government that they can use.

*Albert Jay Nock
(Cogitations)*

The word 'conservative' with a capital 'C' may be used for the name of a major political party as is the case in the United Kingdom. With a little 'c', the word is used fairly universally, as it is in Australia and in the United States of America, as a descriptive word to refer to supporters of similar parties to the UK Conservative Party such as the Liberal and National Parties in Australia and the Republican Party in the United States of America. The word 'conservative' is usually used by those tending towards the left of the political spectrum to indicate someone whom they consider to be opposite to them politically which would place the conservative, in their eyes, towards the right of the spectrum. To a socialist or to one tolerant of socialistic ideas, conservatism is usually associated with capitalism (free enterprise), big business, lack of concern for the poor and a certain degree of callousness towards 'the disadvantaged'. To the conservatives, themselves, however, the term may mean almost anything that they want it to mean. In most cases, it probably means that they wish to conserve all that they consider to be worthy of conserving in society such as 'the old-fashioned values', patriotism, duty, tradition, the Christian Faith and the remnants of capitalism which they invariably call 'free enterprise'.

Objectively, what does all this mean? As the so-called conservative parties lack firm principles to guide them and as they consist merely of a hotchpotch of disconnected ideas and policies, it would be impossible for anyone to satisfactorily define the word 'conservative' in a political context. The best we could do is to describe it as a political party or movement which, philosophically, accepts the concepts of altruism, pragmatism and contempt for individual rights including property rights; which, politically, accepts the concept of unlimited majority rule, the Welfare State and the need for big government, and which, economically, favours and supports the concept of a Mixed Economy thus making 'conservatism' fundamentally indistinguishable from its major political opposition. The 'conservative' is not a capitalist (or free-enterpriser) nor is he an advocate of individual liberty. Perhaps 'conservatism' could also be described as a party or movement consisting of a conglomerate of isolated and often conflicting ideas, without principles, without direction, without goals and without intellectual virtues.

LIBERALISM

Many 'isms' and their 'ists' have over the years changed sides.

*Fritz Spiegl's
In-Words & Out-Words*

This is a slightly more difficult word as its meaning has changed radically since it was first coined. In the 19th Century, the word 'liberal' was associated with individual liberty, free enterprise and international free trade. In the United Kingdom at that time, liberal-minded people were represented by the Liberal Party. With the coming of the 20th Century, however, the Liberal Party was gradually supplanted in political importance by the recently-emerged socialistically-inclined Labour Party. With the passage of time, the UK Liberal Party underwent change and degenerated to such a degree that it began to adopt policies that were philosophically opposite to those that it once proudly espoused. It had become a left-wing alternative to the Labour Party! In Australia, the Liberal Party is what is popularly called a 'conservative' party and, like the UK Conservative Party, it is a mishmash of disconnected ideas. (See Conservatism). In the United States of America, the word 'liberal' has come to mean left-wing and is more likely to be used when one is referring to someone with more marked socialistically inclined ideas and who is probably a supporter of the Democratic Party. In some quarters, in all countries, the word 'liberal', however, is still used in its original sense, particularly amongst people who believe passionately in individual liberty and in laissez-faire capitalism.

As socialism and capitalism/individual liberty are opposing concepts and as the Australian Liberal Party is a 'conservative' Party, people should indicate clearly what they mean by 'liberal' whenever they use the word – whether they are using the word to mean capitalism/individual liberty, socialism or something akin to it, or else 'conservatism'. So long as people continue to use the word 'liberal' without specifying what they mean by it, confusion will inevitably reign.

THE LABOR (AUSTRALIA), LABOUR (UK) AND DEMOCRATIC (US) PARTIES

Last year Labor made a gaggle of promises of the sun, moon and stars. This time they have left out some of the stars.

Sir Robert G. Menzies

I like to have logic on my side, but I'd rather have the numbers.

Labor Party Saying

As far as I am aware there is not a satisfactory single word in popular usage to cover the political ideas of those people who would consider themselves to be neither conservatives nor socialists but something 'in between'. This is why I have had to fall back on this rather clumsy heading. [As the spelling is different between the parties in Australia and the United Kingdom, I will here use the spelling 'Labour' to cover both.] The name 'Labour' is interesting as this word was originally meant to represent the types of people whom the Labour Parties wished to attract – those people who laboured and who became known as the 'workers'. The implication is clear. To the early socialists, society consisted of those who laboured or worked and those who did not work. Those who worked got their hands dirty such as labourers, semi-skilled and skilled tradesmen. There were, of course, large numbers of clerks, who did not get their hands 'dirty' but who, nevertheless, were placed in the category of 'workers'. Others, however, such as professional engineers, architects, doctors, dentists, accountants, inventors, managers, entrepreneurs and the self-employed were not considered workers! The implication clearly was that they were, in some unspecified way, parasites! Thereafter, the Labour hierarchies continued to perpetrate this monumental intellectual fraud on the public by implicitly claiming the words 'labour' and 'workers' as their own.

Unlike the Democratic Party in the USA, the Australian and UK Labour Parties were, from the outset, heavily influenced by the socialist movement and, at various times in their respective histories, these ideas have played a more or less prominent part in their platforms and policies. The socialist influence was particularly strong in the UK during the post-World War II years and in Australia in the 1970's. Since the collapse of Communism in Europe and the ensuing general disenchantment with socialism, however, Labour politicians of both countries have been increasingly hesitant to advertise their philosophic connections to socialism.

Whereas the Labour Parties of Australia and the United Kingdom could be regarded as having the same parentage and hence be considered as sister parties, the Democratic Party in the USA grew from different roots. It did not grow out of the socialist movement and, therefore, could be better described as a cousin. Like the Labour Parties, the Democratic Party is more likely to appeal to city dwellers, blue-collar workers, people with lower incomes and limited education, fairly recent immigrants, the majority of the young and most 'intellectuals'. There are, however, strong conservative elements within the Democratic Party just as there are conservative elements within the Labour Parties (and conversely, many socialistically-inclined elements within the conservative parties.) When principles are of no consequence and pragmatism is the prevailing philosophy, such is inevitable.

When the Labour Parties were openly socialist parties, whatever one may have thought of their ideology, one could not have accused them of being without principles. It was when many of their members realized that a socialist platform was no longer likely to further their careers that they either discarded or hid their socialist principles and became merely pragmatic politicians primarily intent on winning votes thus making them virtually indistinguishable, on fundamental issues, from their so-called opponents – the conservatives. This means that the same philosophic, political and economic doctrines are now espoused by both major political groupings in most countries. Where they differ from one another and what they argue about are mere trivialities. Such is the sham of politics.

SOCIALISM / COMMUNISM

The control of the production of wealth is the control of human life itself.

Hilaire Belloc

Philosophically, socialism and communism are the same thing. In practice, the only difference between them is the means by which their common goal is to be achieved. To the socialist, the goal will be achieved through the ballot-box; to the communist, it will be achieved through bloody revolution. The fact that the ballot-box sounds harmless compared to bloody revolution lures most people into believing that socialism is a more benign system than is communism. It is not: it is the same system. In the terminology of Marx and Engels the words are synonymous. A second reason that socialism may appear more benign than communism is that people usually see not socialism but a system in transition towards socialism – a system in which the trap that is being set for them has not yet sprung shut. What, then, is socialism/communism? It is a theory or social system that advocates vesting the ownership and control of the means of production i.e. land, capital etc. in 'the community' which means in the hands of the State which further means, in practice, in the hands of the current government. To the socialist, all is to be done 'for the common good' about which we have already spoken. Socialism is the ultimate expression of the altruist philosophy that a man has no right to exist for his own sake; that his life and his work do not belong to him but to society and that society may dispose of him in any way and for any reason that pleases it. The essential characteristic of socialism is the denial of individual property rights. Under socialism, the right to property (which means the right to own, use and dispose of property) is vested in 'society as a whole' with production and distribution controlled by the State which means, as we have already seen, by the current government. Since material goods are produced by the minds and effort of individuals for the purpose of sustaining their lives, any person or government that denies a person the right to his own material goods denies that person the right to his own life. To deny property rights, therefore, means to turn people into slaves of the State. When people or governments claim the 'right' to 'redistribute' the wealth produced by individuals, they are claiming a 'right' to control people's lives and their property and to do with both whatsoever they wish. In spite of this, socialism/communism is the political system that prides itself in having as its goals – economic prosperity, freedom, the abolition of poverty, progress, peace, benevolence, human dignity and the brotherhood of man!

Psychologically, the predominant emotion that drives the socialist/communist is envy, the hatred of the good for no other reason than that it is the good. It means hating a person because that person possesses attributes that the envious man would like to possess, himself, but does not. The envious man does not necessarily want to acquire great wealth himself, but prefers to tear down and to denigrate those who do succeed, honestly, in acquiring wealth. Preferably, the envious man would like to see the successful man come crashing down to his own uninspiring level.

Socialism is invariably portrayed as a movement of the people. It is not and never has been. It is a movement of the 'intelligentsia'. Nevertheless, it is a movement that cannot blossom fully without the 'intellectuals' entering into an unholy alliance

with ruffians and thugs – the people who are necessary to provide the physical violence that the system ultimately requires in order to sustain itself.

As a philosophy, socialism was stillborn. Nevertheless, it has captured, and goes on capturing, the imaginations of countless people the world over who lack the ability or the will to scratch away its fine words and see it for what it really is – merely another variant of tyranny.

FASCISM and NAZISM

The Nazis did not gain power against the country's wishes. In this respect there was no gulf between the intellectuals and the people. The Nazi party was elected to office by the freely cast ballots of millions of German voters, including men on every social, economic, and educational level.

*Leonard Peikoff
(The Ominous Parallels)*

These two totalitarian political systems can be considered together even though there are certain differences between them, most notably the racist aspect of German Nazism which was not a factor with Italian Fascism. Fundamentally, however, Fascism and Nazism are the same thing. Although both systems of government emerged between the two World Wars, the philosophic spadework which helped to cultivate the soil necessary for the growth of these two systems had already been done. This meant that, in reality, all that happened in a philosophic sense was that Mussolini in Italy and Hitler in Germany attached new labels to a series of old worn-out ideas. It is significant that Mussolini was an ardent Marxist before he saw his chance to rule the roost in Italy. The program of the original Fascists, as drafted in 1919, was vehemently anticapitalist. Likewise, the philosophy of the Nazis (the German National Socialist Labour Party) was consistently socialist and rabidly anticapitalist. By the turn of the twentieth century, the vast majority of Germans were already ardent supporters of socialism and aggressive nationalism. The Country was ripe for a dictator. Had that dictator not been Hitler it would have been another tarred with the same brush.

If Fascism and Nazism were so steeped in socialism, what then distinguishes them from 'democratic' Socialism and Communism? As 'democratic' Socialism is socialism in transition i.e. Socialism that has not yet come to full bloom, its basic philosophy must be judged rather than any pragmatic policies that different Socialist parties, in different countries at different times, may have adopted along the way. In a socialist/communist society, the means of production are owned by the State whilst distribution and exchange are controlled by it. The key word is 'ownership'. If the State owns the means of production (land, capital etc.) it goes without saying that it also controls it. With regard to Fascism/Nazism, the State nominally allows private individuals to own the means of production but it maintains that it is the State's rôle to control it. Were you and I to 'own' property but have someone else control it we would not, of course, effectively own it as the controller would be able to do with it whatsoever he wished – even sell it. In effect, therefore, under Fascism/Nazism the means of production are effectively owned by the State making such systems mere variants of Socialism/Communism just as Socialism /Communism are mere variants of Fascism/Nazism.

So much for the 'intelligentsia' who, regardless of facts and logic, still persist in treating Socialism/Communism and Fascism/Nazism as opposing ideologies. Socialism/ Communism and Fascism/Nazism come from the same stable. All four are characterized by an omnipotent or totalitarian government that 'can do no wrong'. All systems show not the least respect for individual rights and subordinate the individual to 'the collective' which means the State. If one steps out of line and dares question the rulers or their ideology one risks death or else prolonged internment in a State prison or concentration camp 'in the national interest'. As with

Socialism/Communism, Fascism/Nazism is the natural outcome of the altruist philosophy which states that a man has no right to exist for his own sake, that service to others is the only justification for his existence and that self-sacrifice is his highest moral duty, virtue and value. Joseph Goebbles, Hitler's Propaganda Minister, summed it up succinctly when he stated: 'To be a socialist is to submit the I to the thou; socialism is sacrificing the individual to the whole'.

COLLECTIVISM or STATISM

Such was the government of the Third Reich, administered from top to bottom on the so-called leadership principle by a vast and sprawling bureaucracy, having little of the efficiency usually credited to the Germans, poisoned by graft, beset by constant confusion and cut-throat rivalries augmented by the muddling interference of party potentates and often rendered impotent by the terror of the S.S. – Gestapo.

*William L. Shirer
(The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich)*

As the reader will have observed already, it can become most unwieldy having to refer to Communism, Fascism and Nazism every time one wishes to discuss a system of total government and to explain that although socialism is philosophically the same as communism, in the practical area of politics it has not yet arrived there. Furthermore, one could go on adding to the above list of political systems that fall into this category and include Pharaohism, Caesarism, Theocracy, Oligarchy, Muslim Fundamentalism, The Divine Right of Kings to mention but a few of them. One could, of course, use the term ‘totalitarianism’ to embrace all these systems but such a term limits us as it is absolute in its meaning. My Concise Oxford Dictionary defines ‘totalitarianism’ as ‘a form of government that permits no rival loyalties or parties, usually demanding entire subservience of the individual to the State’. Using this definition, ‘totalitarianism’ does not allow us the opportunity to consider drifts either towards or away from total government. It is for this reason that the words ‘collectivism’ and ‘statism’ serve the excellent purpose of covering a wide range of political systems, parties and ideas that have in common the principle of the individual being subservient to the collective or the State.

The difference between the words ‘Collectivism’ and ‘Statism’ is a minor one only and, for practical purposes, both words can be used interchangeably. ‘Collectivism’ means the subjugation of the individual to a group or ‘the collective’. Whether that group is a tribe, a race, a class of people or the State itself is immaterial. ‘Collectivism’ holds that the individual does not have any rights and that his life and the products of his life belong to the group. The group may sacrifice him ‘in the group’s interests’ whenever and however it wishes. The only way the group can achieve its goal is by the use of brute force or by the threat of it.

When the group is specifically the State, then the word ‘Statism’ is commonly used. Whether one chooses to use the more general term ‘collectivism’ or the more specific term ‘statism’ does not matter. The assumption of them both is that people are generally so stupid, incompetent and nasty that they must be ruled by a special élite of people who are called to their ‘noble’ task either by some mystical being or by some deep insight into their own intellectual and spiritual superiority. It is this self-delusional superiority that convinces some people that they have the right to push others around, to threaten them, to rob from them and to kill them, if necessary, for the good of the community as a whole. How often people must be pushed around, in what manner, for what purpose and for whose benefit, is irrelevant. The Statist is either a dictator or a would-be dictator.

It makes no difference whether a man calls himself a socialist, communist, fascist, nazi, conservative, democrat, liberal or something else, so long as his philosophy is

such that he is prepared to sacrifice the individual for the so-called 'common good', he is a collectivist or statist to some degree. The degree will depend upon the extent to which he is prepared to go in order to achieve his goals. Today, in most western countries, it is virtually impossible to find an activity in people's lives that is not, either directly or indirectly controlled or influenced in some way by politicians and public bureaucrats. This tells us how far people have allowed their politicians to travel down the statist path without any serious attempt to bring them to heel.

DEMOCRACY

The Constitution of the USSR is the only thoroughly democratic constitution in the world. What millions of honest people in capitalist countries have dreamed of, and still dream of, has already been realized in the USSR..... the victory of full and thoroughly consistent democracy.

Joseph Stalin

The word 'democracy' is hardly ever subjected to serious scrutiny remaining ever elusive and generally steeped in emotional hocus-pocus. The blame for this must be laid fairly and squarely at the feet of the 'intelligentsia' who claim a special position in society analogous to that of traffic cops. Instead of directing traffic, however, they direct people's thinking along lines that they hope will lead to some political nirvana controlled by people such as themselves.

The picture of democracy that the 'intelligentsia' would have us accept is that of a system of government which acts as a bulwark against Communism, Fascism, Nazism and all those other unpleasant political systems. Democracy, they tell us, is a system in which men and women are free and in which their rights are fiercely defended by their governments. At regular intervals, free elections are held enabling the people to elect their leaders who will then legislate 'in the interests of everyone'. Not even God himself could have devised a better, fairer, sounder, more noble, more humanitarian system both philosophically and in practice. That, at least, is the popular picture presented to us by our self-appointed intellectual betters.

It is significant that the Communist leaders of the old Soviet Union also considered their totalitarian system of government to be democratic because, to them, the private ownership of the means of production was regarded as undemocratic; education was available to all; and the subordination of every interest and activity to the State ensured that 'the common good' took precedence over all private interests.

If the reader is not now confused then he is, indeed, fortunate in having a mind that is capable of quickly separating the wheat from the chaff for this we must do if we are to get down to basic fundamentals and understand this elusive word 'democracy'. Elsewhere, we exposed the myth of 'the common good' and identified the falseness of the popular concept of 'rights'. We could add to these concepts that of 'freedom within the law' which we are told we all enjoy, without also being told that the concept is utterly meaningless. [See 'Why Doesn't the Government Pass a Law?']

When we cut through all the nonsense, all the emotion, all the humbug, what we are left with, in essence, is a system of government in which people freely elect their representatives either according to the British/Australian system or according to the system in the USA. [For the sake of simplicity I will confine myself to the British/Australian systems.] The representatives of the people may or may not be members of established political parties. In practice, the numerically strongest party or grouping forms a government and its job is to rule the Country for a specified period of time. After the prescribed time, another election is held for the same purpose. In Australia and in the United States of America their governments may pass any laws they wish provided they do not go beyond the bounds laid down by

the written constitutions of those respective countries. In the United Kingdom, which does not have a formal written constitution, the government may legislate on any matter whatsoever without there being any restraints imposed upon it. The British Common Law is not a check on tyrannical governments as Statute Law (as is also the case in Australia and the United States of America) will always take precedence over the Common Law. If a written constitution is definite and limiting, then the laws permitted to a government will also be limited in their scope. If the constitution is poorly-conceived, vague and sloppy then the government may pass laws on almost any subject it wishes and turn the people into virtual slaves if that is the wish of those who put the government in power. The political game is to attract as many votes as possible for candidates of one's own party so ensuring that that party has the numbers in parliament to form a government. Having succeeded in that, the government is then granted the privilege of being allowed to push everyone around the way it wants to push them around rather than have its opposition do the pushing around the way it wants to do it. So a man and his team have the privilege of acting as virtual dictators until the next election comes around by which time they will have bestowed untold favours and fortunes on their favourites and created incalculable harm to an enormous number of other people. If the leader of the government and his team have the numbers backing them then they can do virtually as they please to whomsoever they wish. That is their reward for having majority support. There was a time when such actions were considered to be those of a lynch mob – being actions in which the mob claimed that right was on its side merely because it was a mob and had the numbers to prove it.

When democracy means that right is that which the majority claims to be right without reference to any objective rules of right or wrong, it is mob rule whether we are prepared to acknowledge it or not. Admittedly, democracy has some minor sophisticated refinements that put it a notch or two above the common lynch mob but the principle and the parallel are obvious for all who have the intellectual honesty to see it. Such a system that can trifle with people's lives and even destroy them is not a bulwark against totalitarianism; it is not a system consistent with the concept of individual liberty; it is not a system that recognizes or protects people's rights; it is not a good system, a fair system, a sound system, a noble system, a humanitarian system nor can it produce any long-lasting economic and social stability.

So long as democracy continues to be a system of unlimited majority rule, it will continue to pit one man against another, tend to stifle initiative, create permanent uncertainty, tempt more and more people to the public trough, encourage mediocrity, raise parasitism to the level of a virtue and drive ever more nails into the coffin of liberty. Democracy is not the noble system that it is claimed to be. Fundamentally, it is a primitive system for the simple reason that numbers are not, in themselves, synonymous with wisdom and morality.

LIBERTARIANISM

Libertarians oppose both of these alternatives (the 'conservatives' and the 'liberals'), and for the same reason. Each approves, to varying degrees, the use of force by government to make an individual act contrary to his voluntary choice. Both tend to curb the freedom of an individual to act in accordance with his choices even when it does not interfere with the equal freedom of others to do the same.

*John Hospers
(Libertarianism)*

Like the word 'liberalism' from which it evolved, the word 'libertarianism', has many different meanings. Neither my Concise Oxford nor my Webster Dictionaries provides any enlightenment on the subject. This is hardly surprising as the word is commonly used by some conservatives, some socialists, a mixed bag of so-called 'civil libertarians', believers in a limited government and anarchists alike to describe their respective beliefs. It is because the word has connotations of individual liberty that so many divergent groups see virtue in describing themselves as 'libertarian'. To understand why conservatives and socialists should, at times, both call themselves 'libertarian' we should understand the fundamental similarities and differences between these two political 'systems'. In spite of the many fine words that emanate from the conservative political parties, their members are nearly all advocates of big government as indeed are the socialists (and the non-socialists in the Labour and Democratic Parties). Where the conservatives and socialists differ fundamentally from one another is in those areas in which they wish to be seen as representing individual liberty. The conservative hopes to give the impression that he believes in free enterprise (which he does not) but he is usually most intolerant of people's personal freedoms in those areas that he believes are an affront to good clean living and solid Christian principles such as abortion, homosexuality, prostitution, gambling, alcohol, drugs, sexually explicit magazines, sex shops and so on. The socialist, on the other hand, is uncompromisingly opposed to free enterprise but is generally far more tolerant in his approach to people's personal choices in non-economic areas. It is because the socialist is generally more tolerant or liberal in such areas that some of them use the word 'libertarian' to describe themselves whilst some conservatives use the word to describe themselves because they claim to advocate free enterprise. The mixed bag of so-called 'civil libertarians' usually use the word in the same limited sense as do some socialists.

Advocates of a Limited Government who believe in free enterprise and freedom of choice in personal matters sometimes use the term for the sake of convenience as there is no satisfactory term except 'capitalism' to describe the politico-economic system to which they subscribe. As the word 'capitalism' has been distorted, abused and smeared over the years by a predominantly socialist 'intelligentsia', many advocates of a 'limited government' prefer the less controversial word 'libertarianism'. Other advocates of a limited government prefer not to shelter beneath an umbrella term such as 'libertarianism' where they find themselves sharing a bed with people of a different ilk. They, therefore, prefer to meet their opposition head on and call themselves 'capitalists' despite the fact that they will almost certainly be misrepresented. Anarchists (or philosophic anarchists) also believe in free enterprise and freedom of choice although they differ fundamentally from the advocates of a limited government. The anarchists fairly generally use the word 'libertarian' to describe their beliefs.

Unless one understands how this word 'libertarianism' is both used and abused one could easily end up in a philosophic mess.

ANARCHY

I have simplified my politics into an utter detestation of all governments.

Lord Byron 1814

The word 'anarchy' has two dictionary meanings – the first being the doctrine that all governments should be abolished or the theory that all forms of government are undesirable; and a second meaning defining the word as 'political and social confusion'. The first meaning is a philosophic concept (and is the meaning that I will use in this Section); the second is someone's subjective opinion as to where anarchy would lead in practice. As philosophic anarchy has never been tried in an 'advanced' industrialized nation, it would be presumptuous for anyone to declare, without any serious thought whatsoever, that anarchy would automatically lead to 'political and social confusion'. For very good reasons, however, many thoughtful people believe that it is an unworkable 'system'. Nevertheless, people should be prepared to give the anarchists a hearing in the same way as they have given the socialists, the communists, the fascists, the conservatives, the liberals and a whole string of other 'political' ideas a hearing.

The philosophic anarchist recognizes the enormous harm that governments do and argues that if they can do that much harm, why do we need them at all? The anarchist has the insight to understand that the greatest threat to individual liberty has always been, and still is – governments. He understands that mankind's progress is the result of the achievements of individuals and not that of governments. The philosophic anarchist believes that there is no place whatsoever for governments in a modern society. He maintains that everything that is currently run by governments can be better run by individuals – even the armed forces, the police forces and the law courts. It is in this area that the advocates of a limited government and the philosophic anarchists part company.

THE MIXED ECONOMY

Oblivious of the origin of the disorder, people said that the modern economy is too complicated to be allowed to go its way all by itself; it was necessary for “experts” to draw up plans and for the governments to put them into effect. There was no dearth of experts nor of governments desirous of extending the sphere of their authority nor of bureaucrats ready to take advantage of opportunities for easy and well-paid jobs in the new offices that governmental intervention in economic affairs required.

*Faustino Ballvé
(Essentials of Economics)*

The mixed economy is not merely an economic system; it is a politico-economic system. It is a system in which government controls are superimposed upon free enterprise (capitalism); a system in which statism is superimposed upon individual liberty. The mixed economy is not free enterprise (capitalism) nor is it synonymous with a free society. When white is mixed with black it becomes grey. It is no longer white. So it is with the mixed economy. When free enterprise is mixed with government controls it is no longer free enterprise. When individual liberty is arbitrarily controlled, it is no longer individual liberty. None of us live in a capitalist society; none of us live in a free society. We live in a mixed economy. It is a measure of the ignorance, the foolishness or the dishonesty of a man when he maintains that we live in a free society, a capitalist or a free enterprise society. We do not, yet most of our so-called leaders, both ‘intellectual’ and political, attempt to deceive us into believing that we do, in fact, live in such a society. They undertake this deception for a very good reason. When the mixed economy, which is notoriously unstable, flounders, which it often does, they are able to lay the blame, not on the politicians and the public bureaucrats who did the interfering and so caused the instability, but on the pretended system itself viz. capitalism (or free enterprise). It is one of the oldest tricks in the book. Even witch-doctors in the most primitive of societies play the same game. They build an effigy of their enemy in straw and then burn it down claiming that they have thereby destroyed their enemy! Their enemy, however, does not go away as easily as this. If the ‘intellectuals’ and politicians are so persistently deceitful, what is their motivation? The answer is simple. They hate and fear capitalism. Why? Because in a capitalist society there are moral principles to be followed and severe restraints imposed upon reckless legislators. The Law comes down heavily on people who initiate the use of physical force against other people and on those who threaten them with such force. It also comes down heavily on people who perpetrate fraud. As politicians and public bureaucrats are subject to the same restraints as everyone else, this means that they, too, must behave themselves. In a capitalist system, there are no free rides at someone else’s expense unless that other person voluntarily chooses to provide the ride. In such a system, woolly thinking is unlikely to be over-valued as it is today and this, in itself, would probably be sufficient to scare the pants off most of our ‘intellectuals’.

The mixed economy is the ultimate in pragmatic politics. There are no principles to be followed – merely a series of ‘ad hoc’ decisions to be made and a never-ending stream of often conflicting laws to be obeyed. People are controlled in endless ways – economically and socially – ways in which most people are usually not even aware. The majority of these controls, sooner or later, lead to some form of disruption which invariably ‘necessitates’ the enactment of further controls in order to

correct this disruption. This 'correcting' legislation, however, creates its own particular disruptions and so the 'need' arises for yet further legislation; and so the controls escalate and go on escalating.

The mixed economy is a system which puts the lives of everyone in the hands of a wide range of different pressure groups, each group trying to get at the ears of the legislators at the expense of everyone else. It is a system in which no-one knows what tomorrow will bring – whether a 'good' decision today will not, perhaps, end up as being a bad decision next month; whether it will be safe or hazardous to retire next year; whether one's money will be safer in the bank, under the mattress, invested in this or that or converted into antiques; whether one should expand one's business or shed some of it. It is a system (or rather an anti-system) that pits one man against another; one group against another. It is a system that feather-beds the least productive people and ultimately destroys the most productive of them. It is a system that thrives on corruption.

If the mixed economy is left to run its course, it has only one way to go – downhill to economic and social chaos. Well before that time arrives, people will have to make a choice. More of the same, however, is not a choice as by this time, the end of the road will be in sight. The choice that will have to be made is between a full-blown statist system or a full-blown capitalist system – tyranny or freedom. It is difficult to imagine that any sensible, honest person could possibly make the wrong choice.

CAPITALISM/FREE ENTERPRISE

The very principle of capitalist entrepreneurship is to provide for the common man. In his capacity as consumer the common man is the sovereign whose buying or abstention from buying decides the fate of entrepreneurial activities. There is in the market economy no other means of acquiring and preserving wealth than by supplying the masses in the best and cheapest way with all the goods they ask for.

Ludwig von Mises

Throughout this book I have used the words 'capitalism' and 'free enterprise' interchangeably. In this Section, I will use the word 'capitalism' exclusively not only for the sake of simplicity but to drive home the point that 'capitalism' is not a dirty word but a noble one. When I use the word 'capitalism', I mean pure 'laissez-faire' capitalism. I do not mean the mixed economy with its statist element merely reduced to some ill-defined level. Almost daily there are attempts by influential people from all walks of life to denigrate capitalism, not merely by misrepresenting it, but also by distorting the facts of history in order to make it appear something that it is not. Their motive is clear. It is to destroy capitalism as an ideal and so leave the way open for their own statist doctrines.

The world has never known a capitalist society. The nearest man came to it was in the 19th Century when the mixed economy consisted of a large component of capitalism and a relatively small component of statism. It was during this period of history that Great Britain and the United States of America, in particular, forged ahead at an unprecedented rate. It was only in the 20th Century when the pendulum began swinging the other way, against the capitalist element of the mixed economy and towards the statist element, that the rot set in. That rot has continued to eat away at the vitals of our societies ever since.

So much nonsense had been written about capitalism, particularly by those who have opposing views, that for most people, capitalism has no clear meaning. Perhaps they imagine it to be something to do with the means of production and distribution being predominantly privately owned and operated for profit. Perhaps, as Karl Marx has told us, it is a system in transition – one that is destined to wither away and give place to a paradise on earth known as socialism or communism. Or is it simply a system in which the rich get richer and the poor get poorer? Maybe it is a system in which the concentration of capital gets into fewer and fewer hands until ultimately just a few people control the nation's economic life. Perhaps, after all, it is a system of planless anarchy that leads to recurrent crises because of a lack of co-ordination of the various elements of the economy. Or is it a system specifically designed by the rich to feather the nests of employers and exploit the workers? Furthermore, what sort of capitalism are we talking about? Are we talking about conventional capitalism, state capitalism, a type of socialistic capitalism, monopolistic capitalism or the very latest 'media' varieties, crony capitalism and gangster capitalism? Maybe to some people, capitalism is all of these things. Maybe to others it is something altogether different but equally bizarre. Who knows? Who cares? [Incidentally, none of the above is satire. Most of these concepts were taken, sometimes 'verbatim', from about a dozen so-called reputable reference books!]

What then is capitalism in reality? Is it an economic concept? Is it a political concept or is it a philosophic concept? It is all three but predominantly it is a philosophic concept. Over the years, most people have found that there are great advantages to be had in living together in societies rather than in living in isolation as semi-hermits. Living in a society enables a man to trade his particular skills or products with other men so enabling each person to benefit from the others' skills and to concentrate, himself, on those things that he does best. In such a society, it is imperative that everyone be protected against human predators both from within and without that society. Were they not protected, there would be insufficient incentive for people to spend their time and money in establishing successful businesses. As we are talking about individual people, their individual lives and their individual aspirations, we should understand that each of these individuals is dependent for his success in life on his ability to use his brain intelligently, to make sound decisions and to produce goods and services that he can voluntarily exchange with other people to the mutual advantage of both parties. If a man is unable or unwilling to think rationally or to assume a productive rôle, the only way he can survive is by attaching himself, as a parasite, to someone who does, in fact, think rationally and produce things of value to other people. If the law grants the parasite special privileges allowing him to attach himself to a productive person with impunity and so live off him, the parasite then assumes the rôle of master and the host becomes his slave. When this is allowed to happen, an inordinate amount of the host's productive time is taken up merely in attempting to survive and in finding ways, either legal or illegal, to protect himself and his property. Capitalism is a social system that recognizes a man's right to his own life and to the products of his life which gives us the concept of 'property rights'. Capitalism does not accept the concept of serfdom or slavery in any shape or form. It puts the individual where he should be – fully in charge of his own life and not subservient to anyone else. When he deals with other people he does so voluntarily as a trader – not in a master-slave relationship. It may be that, sometimes, he will give his goods or services away for nothing. If he does so, it is a decision freely made by him. He does not do it because he is ordered to do it by a politician or a public bureaucrat on pain of severe punishment. He does it because he chooses to do it. This is the meaning of the word 'charity'. There is no other meaning of this word. Money or services extracted from people by the threat of physical force and given to someone 'in need' is not charity. It is extortion. Capitalism does not tolerate extortion. It does not tolerate the initiation of physical force, or the threat of it under any circumstances whatsoever. Nor does it tolerate fraud.

Under the Feudal System, the serf was little better than a chattel and was answerable to the local nobleman; but the nobleman was anything but a free man himself for he was directly answerable to the King. The noble held his lands only so long as he was permitted to hold them by the King. If the noble blotted his copy-book and fell out of royal favour, the King promptly expropriated his lands. In such a system there was no understanding of property rights. With time, the kings and nobles were compelled to give up their powers to parliaments. With this transition, however, little changed. The relationship of the people to the new rulers in parliament was, in principle, unaltered. Instead of the people being subservient to a noble or to a king, they merely moved sideways and became subservient to 'the State' which was claimed to be the embodiment of 'the people'. If, for any of a thousand different reasons, people's lives or property were 'needed' by the State, the

State would simply act in its capacity as 'representative of the people' and expropriate those lives or that property 'in the public interest' in the same way as did the king for his personal interest. This is best exemplified by such acts as conscription (in which lives are expropriated), the resumption of land (in which real property is expropriated) and the ever-growing money grab that is called taxation (in which personal property is expropriated). All such acts are perpetrated by the people's representatives for the so-called 'good of the people'. That laws should be enacted enabling some people to ride rough-shod over other people – trampling on their individual and property rights – is seldom questioned. It is nearly always assumed that the end justifies the means – that the minority must suffer for the good of the majority – the very same doctrine that Adolf Hitler and his gang of thugs so readily espoused. Capitalism does not tolerate such contempt for people's fundamental rights. Capitalism puts principles before pragmatism. It respects the individual. It does not consider him as a mere cog in a huge machine nor as an ant in an anthill. To a capitalist, the individual is supreme. To the Statist, the State is supreme. The mixed-economist, on the other hand, wants a bit both ways and calls himself civilized because he is a compromiser willing to sell off someone's freedom in exchange for someone else's vote. The mixed-economist is happy to sell his soul to the Devil if it means that he can portray himself as a 'moderate'. The mixed-economist is a man or woman without convictions, without morals, without principles, without dignity, without self-respect. It is such men and women as these who are, today, some of our most influential philosophic mentors and political 'leaders'. It is no wonder that our countries are in a mess.

Most people are led to believe that they are free because they are allowed to vote at election times. [In my own Country, they are compelled to do so!] They are led to believe that they are free because they can read what they like (within certain limits, of course); say what they like (within certain limits, of course); worship as they wish (within certain limits, of course); teach children how and what they choose to teach them (within certain limits, of course); sell their products how they wish (within certain limits, of course); design their homes how they wish (within certain limits, of course); grow the types of plants that they wish (within certain limits, of course); manufacture goods that they wish (within certain limits, of course); practise good medicine as they believe it should be practised (within certain limits, of course); employ whomsoever they wish (within certain limits, of course); and remain 'free' to perform hundreds of other activities within certain prescribed limits, of course. The people who set these limits are the politicians and public bureaucrats. If a man steps outside any of these prescribed limits, he will be confronted by the full power of the State. More often than not, however, the mere threat of this power will be sufficient to keep most people within the set limits. This is but a minor taste of that which most people have been conditioned to believe is 'freedom'.

In a political sense, freedom or individual liberty has only one meaning and that is 'the absence of political coercion'. What, then, does this tell us about our governments? What does it tell us about the relationship of people 'vis-à-vis' their rulers? It should not have to be spelt out that people, today, wherever they live, are certainly not free. Something, then, must have gone horribly wrong when we realize that for thousands of years men and women all over the world have been fighting and dying for 'freedom' and never achieving it. Why? Is it because most people have never learnt the true meaning of freedom and how to identify those who would

deprive them of it? Throughout history, the story has been the same. People have consistently fought to cast off one tyrant only to find themselves falling victim to another.

Capitalism and individual liberty are interchangeable terms. We cannot have one without the other. A man who is economically 'free' but who is controlled in other areas of his life is not a free man any more than is the man who is 'free' in other areas of his life but who is controlled economically. If people value their own lives and wish to be free to live them in the manner of their own choosing whilst, at the same time, respecting the similar wishes of others, they are well along the road to becoming capitalists. If people sincerely believe in individual liberty, and provided they are intellectually honest, they are capitalists whether they know it or not. If people genuinely believe in a society in which individual rights including property rights are recognized and respected, they are capitalists whatever they currently call themselves. Capitalism is not some weird callous discredited relic of a bygone age as so many 'intellectuals' would have people believe. It is a noble ideal for the future which people are free to accept or reject as they wish. If they reject it, however, they should know that they are not free to escape from the consequences of their decisions.

THE ANSWER

THE ANSWER

Never sing in chorus, if you do you won't be heard.

Jules F. Archibald

The hottest places in hell are reserved for those who, in a period of moral crisis, maintain their neutrality.

Dante

So far we have discussed the monstrous mess that masquerades as politics and economics. It is now time for us to put doom and gloom behind us and to look forward to the future with some degree of optimism bearing in mind that optimism cannot be converted into reality without some effort on our part. If changing one's ideas is the price that one must pay, then change those ideas one must, however difficult it may be. The alternative is a steady slide into some new Dark Age.

Now that we are in a better position to distinguish between political sanity and political insanity, let us look at politics afresh and analyse its true nature. What do our chosen representatives do with their time in those corridors of power? A small percentage of it is taken up, albeit often ineffectively, in supervising those agencies that are designed to protect us from criminals and potential foreign aggressors. A smaller amount of it is spent in supervising the running of our courts of law. We could also include the time spent in overseeing the construction and management of roads, bridges, dams, sewerage systems and such like, bearing in mind that these activities would be better undertaken privately. The great bulk of their time and energy, however, is devoted to other matters, predominantly those concerned with:—

1. catering to the wishes and wants of large numbers and groups of people, showering on them vast sums of money which have been forcibly extracted from other people;
2. deciding when and to what extent they should fraudulently debase the currency; deciding also when to slow down this process;
3. determining from whom they will borrow more money and on what terms;
4. thinking up ever more ways in which to interfere into the market-place under the delusion that they are improving its efficiency;
5. interfering yet further into the market-place with the intention of correcting the distortions that they have already created by their previous interferences;
6. devising new and different ways in which to control people's lives;
7. denigrating their opponents both inside and outside the parliament;
8. feathering their own nests and those whom they hope will vote for them at the next election;
9. working out ways in which they might stay in power longer;
10. pretending to be important.

In summary, most of the time and energy that politicians expend whilst they are in parliament is concerned with activities that could best be described either as absurd, immoral or counterproductive. To advise the politicians and to oversee their edicts is a huge, largely parasitic public bureaucracy that all of us are compelled to support under threat of incarceration in a government prison.

How then, is it possible for us to get rid of this Juggernaut before it crushes us all under its sheer weight? The answer to this question will be discussed under six headings – Why? What? Where? How? Who? and When?

Why must the Juggernaut be dismantled?

It should now be obvious to any thoughtful reader that the ‘intellectuals’ have let us down badly and have given us a disastrous set of philosophic concepts, a seriously flawed political system and silly economic doctrines that are more political in their nature than economic. The end-result has been big and powerful governments, serious loss of individual liberty and an appalling economic mess. If we continue along the present path, governments will inevitably get even bigger, more powerful and more expensive; individual freedoms will be further eroded and ultimate economic chaos will be a virtual certainty. The prospect is not a happy one.

What must take the Juggernaut’s place?

Let us look at this subject under our usual three headings – philosophical, political, and economic.

(a) Philosophical changes

If the individual is important and is not merely an insignificant object analogous to a little cog in a giant piece of machinery, then that individual’s right to his or her own life must be respected and protected. If the individual has a right to his own life, then obviously that person has a right to sustain his life. This introduces us to the concept of property rights – what is yours is yours; what is mine is mine. If these rights are not acknowledged and protected by governments, then individual liberty is impossible and the door is left open for tyranny in any of its many forms. A philosophy that treats men, women and children as human beings is diametrically opposed to a philosophy that maintains that people have a moral obligation to sacrifice their lives for the good of others or to live as ants solely for the good of the colony of ants.

Furthermore, if we feel strongly enough about the importance of individual rights, including property rights, then we must do all in our power to ensure that these rights are recognized and respected by governments and not held in contempt by them. We should understand that for most politicians there is always a plausible reason why principles should be sacrificed to pragmatism. There can, however, never be a moral justification for such behaviour. If an honourable man finds himself in a dilemma in which his principles are incompatible with the course of action that he considers to be right, then he has no option but to question the morality of that course of action or else to change his principles and be judged accordingly. The concept of ‘individual rights’ and the concept of ‘the common good’ are opposite concepts. If we accept one, we cannot accept the other. It is no accident that every tyrant in history since the beginning of time (not least amongst them Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin) has called upon the people to sacrifice themselves and live and work for ‘the common good’ or ‘for the public good’ or ‘in the national interest’ or ‘for the Country’ or ‘for the Fatherland’ or ‘for the Motherland’ or for

some other catch-phrase that was likely to capture the imaginations of unthinking people who would be destined to become the tyrant's slaves. The particular terminology used is not important. It is the philosophic concept that it represents that is important. Whenever one hears such slogans, one should immediately be on one's guard for if one is not in the presence of a tyrant already, one is certainly in the presence of a would-be tyrant.

(b) Political changes

We should heed the advice of Lord Acton who long ago reminded us that "power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely". If there are no effective restraints imposed upon governments then, inevitably, governments will grow like Topsy and soon become a law unto themselves. So long as democracy means 'unlimited majority rule', there is no place for it in a civilized society. Only when an elected government is severely restricted by the constitution of a country to those powers that are necessary to protect people's genuine rights and liberties can it justifiably call itself civilized. In a civilized society, a government is not authorized, nor does it take it upon itself, to violate people's rights and liberties as is accepted practice today. As a protector of rights and liberties, there are obviously very few areas in which governments should become involved. In a civilized society, the initiation of physical force, fraud and coercion by anyone or by any group of people against another person or group would naturally be outlawed. It should not have to be spelt out that politicians and public bureaucrats, either singly or as a group, would be obliged to obey the laws just as would everyone else.

So long as the Welfare State persists, nothing will improve. The concept of a public feeding trough is a degenerate one. People should re-learn how to stand on their own two feet. They should make the mental effort to question the nonsense that the 'intellectuals' have made part of our culture. People should understand that governments are not producers of wealth. They are consumers of wealth – other people's wealth. Governments do not make countries great or rich. Individuals do that – individual explorers, individual pioneers, individual inventors, individual innovators and entrepreneurs, individual scientists, individual artists, individual men and women of great ability and drive in their chosen fields; individuals who are prepared to risk their money for an idea; individual men and women in all walks of life who are prepared to put in a fair day's work for a fair day's pay.

People should understand that politicians and public bureaucrats do not give them their health care. It is the individual doctors, nurses, physiotherapists and similar people who provide that care. Politicians and public bureaucrats do not give children their education. It is the parents and the individual teachers who do that. All the politicians and their vast hordes of public bureaucrats do is interfere and control the doctors and the teachers just as they interfere and control the tradesmen and the business men, the factory owners, the wholesalers, the retailers, the builders, the farmers, the miners and virtually everyone else.

People should understand that most of them do not receive top-class health care and top-class education for their children at very little cost. In many

cases, people are now getting second-rate medical care for their families and, in most cases, third-rate education for their children at enormous cost – sometimes, even at the cost of their jobs for that is what happens when governments interfere into areas into which they should not interfere. When governments extort vast sums of money from people in order to support huge government service schemes in areas that would operate at a higher standard, more efficiently and more economically were governments not to interfere into them, we know that reason has been forced to take second place to political opportunism. No country can survive for long as a prosperous country if it allows itself to be bled dry by huge numbers of non-productive, and in the case of most public bureaucrats, counterproductive, people. It is only a matter of time before the parasite strangles the host, and when that happens, the parasite also dies.

(c) Economic changes

Ideally, there is no place in the economy for governments but until that time arrives, the best we can hope for is to severely limit the rôle of governments, stop their reckless spending and slash taxation levels without forgetting that taxation is, after all, merely legalized extortion. To take money from someone, against that person's will, using the threat of force to get it, is, by definition, 'extortion'. It is no less extortion because it is carried out on someone else's behalf or done for what is claimed to be a 'necessary' or 'noble' purpose, or carried out because the extortionist is backed up by a number of other extortionists calling themselves 'the Mafia' or 'the government'. Extortion is extortion and so long as it is part of our political and economic system, we should at least recognize it for what it is and cease being duped by such slippery phrases as 'one's duty', 'fiscal policy', 'tax cheats', 'tax avoidance', a 'fair tax', 'tax evasion', 'money laundering', an 'equitable tax system' and so on.

It is no longer possible to fiddle with the present system and pretend that some miracle economic cure is just around the corner. It is not. The system is now too far gone for that. If the constant threat of inflation / recession / depression (the so-called 'trade' or 'business' cycle) is to be eliminated from our economies, the monetary and banking systems must be reformed. Government-supported fractional-reserve banking, a system whereby governments encourage banks to lend more than they possess, must be recognized for what it is viz. fraud and hence it must be outlawed. If people are to protect themselves in the future and save what they have left of their shrinking dollars, pounds or other currencies which are currently based on nothing and which are constantly dwindling in value, they must be prepared to change the system and relate their currency to some objective standard such as gold. If they do not do this, governments will go on debasing the currency and continue trifling with people's lives.

People should be allowed to use, as a medium of exchange, whatsoever they mutually wish to use. If they agree to use buttons or shells or bottles of whisky as mediums of exchange, it is their business. If they elect to use gold or silver or some other metal, it is their business. It has nothing whatsoever to do with anyone else – only the people involved in the transaction. The

government's coercive monopoly of the money supply must cease as governments have repeatedly shown that they cannot be trusted in this area.

As successive governments in most countries of the world have granted enormous discretionary powers to a Central Bank particularly in the areas of expanding and contracting the supply of money and credit in a country and in varying interest rates for political purposes (which helps some people but harms others) the writing is on the wall for these powerful bureaucratic monsters to be consigned to the scrap heap. After all, a Central Bank is merely another facet of Big Government providing an aura of dignity and wisdom under cover of which further interference into the market-place is carried out disguised as 'sound and necessary economic policy'.

It is a crazy notion, verging on the paranoiac to imagine that governments, by interfering into the market-place, can improve it. It is rather like stating that gravity is inherently faulty and that, therefore, the physicists should tinker with it to make it work more effectively!

Tariffs, quotas, subsidies, bounties, licensing regulations and so on all serve only, in the short term, to benefit some sections of the community at the expense of others. In the long term, however, they harm everyone. The ever-growing number of laws, rules, regulations and sub-regulations create untold havoc in the lives of all productive people and serve mostly the interests of the public bureaucrats who not only help to devise these edicts but to enforce them as well whilst, at the same time, happily living off the people whom they are relentlessly destroying! How pointless and inane can a political system become!

So long as most economists continue to treat their subject as a branch of politics and devise economic theories to please the politicians by telling them what they want to hear, their branch of learning, as interpreted by them, will remain as a subject verging on the ridiculous and worthy only of contempt. If more people were aware of the nonsense that many university academics and teachers of economics were pumping into the heads of their children, they would take their children away from these institutions.

Where will the Juggernaut be dismantled?

There is not an 'advanced' country of the world whose leaders are not motivated to play the silly game of 'follow the leader' in philosophic, political and economic ideas. Even the dictators play the game. The only difference with them is that they push the silly ideas a little further. In answer to the question – 'where will these changes take place?' – the answer, ideally, is everywhere but in practice this may not be necessary and herein lies one great glimmer of hope for mankind. Were the people of just one country, whether it were an industrialized nation or even a small 'underdeveloped' country, to recognize the need for change, to see the potential in change and to have the wisdom and the courage to make the appropriate changes in the vital areas of philosophy, politics and economics, then other countries would have little option but, sooner or later, to follow suit merely in order to survive

themselves. As opportunities increased in the 'sound' country and as education improved; as people learnt to stand on their own two feet; as standards of living rose and economic stability was taken for granted, most of the old ills would soon become a thing of the past.

The shock-waves emitted from such a State with its vital politico-economic system would be felt all over the world as different countries, in turn, saw many of their most talented people and vast sums of investment capital leaving their shores. Such 'unsound' countries would have three courses of action open to them. Firstly, they could elect to do nothing and allow the differences between their own countries and the 'sound' country to get progressively greater. Secondly, they could do what so many politicians do when they become frightened – attempt to destroy those who challenge them by means of physical force. This means that the 'unsound' countries might unite and attack the 'sound' country in an attempt to destroy it together with its highly successful politico-economic system viewing it as a threat to their own decadent systems. The initiation of physical force is, after all, the ultimate weapon of all people who are bereft of worthwhile ideas. Thirdly and hopefully, they could feel obliged to emulate the politico-economic system of the 'sound' country in order to prevent their own countries from drifting ever more quickly into political and economic oblivion.

To the question – 'Where will the Juggernaut be dismantled?' – the answer, in the first instance, is in the minds of those men and women who possess the intellectual honesty to call a spade a spade and to recognize the monster for what it really is – an instrument of enormous size wielding enormous power and kept in place by enormous sums of money forcibly extracted from vast numbers of people. Wherever a significant number of these intellectually honest people happen to be, there will the cracks in the Juggernaut first become apparent.

How will the Juggernaut be dismantled?

There is only one way to combat 'bad ideas' and that is with 'good ideas'. Were everyone to block off to new and different ideas then there is obviously no way in the world that things would ever change. Not everyone, however, has to open his or her mind for things to change for the better – just some of them – the more thoughtful, the more open-minded, the more adventurous, the worthier, the nobler spirits amongst people. All movements, good and bad, throughout history, have begun with a small nucleus of people expressing ideas. Most of the ideas in this book did not originate with me. They originated with different thinkers in different countries at different times, in different areas of learning. I may have added an original thought here and there but what you have been reading are, in essence, the thoughts and words of some of the best brains of recent times in a number of different countries. All I have done is to take many of their ideas, particularly those of Ayn Rand and Ludwig von Mises, put them, wherever possible, into everyday language and apply them to current affairs. One does not have to be an academic philosopher, a professional student of politics or of economics to

understand the basics of these subjects. In fact, it is better that one is not as one's mind is less likely to be cluttered with rubbish.

There is no reason why anyone with average intelligence, the will to learn and the strength of character to question long-held ideas, should not play his or her part in changing the world. Along the way, that person will discover that much of the so-called 'conventional wisdom' that he has been taught to accept is really not wisdom at all but twaddle.

Who will dismantle the Juggernaut?

Once ideas, good or bad, have begun to take hold in a culture, a few academics in a few universities begin to shift ground. Perhaps a few teachers follow suit. A writer or two joins in. The odd journalist who is more independent than the rest begins to question what he has been taught and so gradually more and more people, for reasons of their own, veer away from their long-held beliefs and adopt these new ideas – some actively, some passively. Ideas may be good or bad, sane or silly but once established, they may last for centuries either enslaving people or liberating them, crippling them economically or enabling them to enjoy ever-higher standards of living.

Philosophical, political and economic ideas are not merely airy-fairy musings akin to day-dreaming. Ideas can be far more effective than the most powerful of armies. Ideas, in the past, have changed the world for good or ill. They will continue in the future to do the same. Sadly, over many centuries, men and women have allowed themselves to be indoctrinated into blindly following their leaders; into submissively doing what they are told; into conforming to certain set ways of thinking; into accepting doctrines even though those doctrines do not make sense. It is time that people broke free!

For current trends to be reversed, enough people must want change – not just change for the sake of change – but change along certain definite lines. They must have a clear idea in their minds of where they want to go and why it is essential to get there, if not for themselves then for those whom they love such as their children and their grandchildren.

When will the Juggernaut be dismantled?

It is impossible to say. It could be within the next twenty years. It could be within the next fifty years or within the next hundred years or even longer. One thing, however, is virtually certain and that is that the time will come, not for any mystical reason but because, sooner or later, people will probably come to understand that woolly thinking is slowly destroying everything that they hold dear – their families, the concept of individual liberty, economic stability, the ability to plan their futures, justice and decency.

If sanity is ultimately to prevail over insanity then the sooner people begin working towards a sane society the better.

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There are many excellent books available to those who wish to delve more deeply into the subject-matter of this book. So as not to confuse the reader, I have kept the list of recommended authors and their works to a minimum. However, if the reader should wish to explore beyond this range he will find a vast library of other first-class books.

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