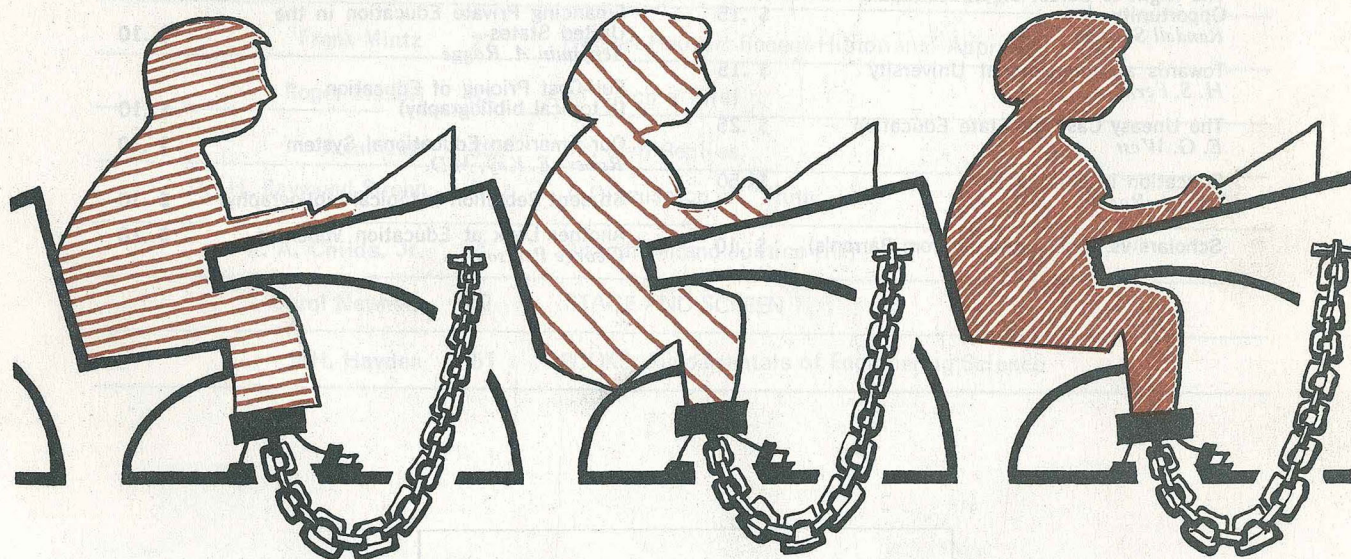


INDIVIDUALIST



JULY-AUG. 1971

\$1.00

The purpose of the Center for Independent Education is to strengthen independent education. Many persons have misgivings about the values inculcated by the state schools and increasingly find in them only more government controls and chaos in educational standards. Reasons favoring the creation and growth of independent education become more obvious every day. Such reasons are found in our articles.



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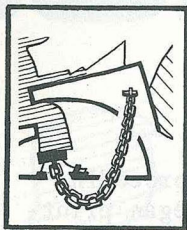
CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT EDUCATION
of Wichita Collegiate School

9115 East Thirteenth, Wichita, Kansas 67206

INDIVIDUALIST

journal of the society for individual liberty

VOLUME 3 NUMBERS 7&8 JULY/AUGUST 1971



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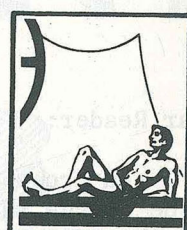
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Direct all editorial correspondence to the INDIVIDUALIST, 400 Bonifant Road, Silver Spring, Maryland 20904. Unsolicited manuscripts are welcomed, but must be accompanied by return postage. The INDIVIDUALIST 319 Fifth Street, S.E., Washington D.C. 20003. Second Class postage paid at Washington D.C. The INDIVIDUALIST, the monthly journal of the Society for Individual Liberty, is a member of the Libertarian Press Association. The editors of this magazine do not necessarily agree with signed articles, which represent the opinions of their authors. Copyright 1971 by the INDIVIDUALIST. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. No part of this magazine may be reproduced in any form without written permission.

A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Reader:

You probably noted the significant change in our format in the preceding issue of the INDIVIDUALIST. Beginning with the June 1971 issue we began printing the INDIVIDUALIST by a new and a much less expensive process which required the abandonment of glossy covers, but which, simultaneously, made possible the expansion of the number of pages included in each issue and the addition of a second color.

These changes mean two things to you: *First you can count on a regular publication schedule as soon as we are caught up.* A good portion of our problems in the past were caused by printing costs, which have now been drastically reduced. *Secondly, you will now get more for your money.* While there will be no more glossy covers for at least the next four to six months, each issue of the INDIVIDUALIST starting with the October 1971 issue will contain at least 28 pages compared to 24 previously (and 20 pages only a few issues ago). We believe that you will agree that this expansion in magazine size more than makes up for the temporary loss of glossy covers.

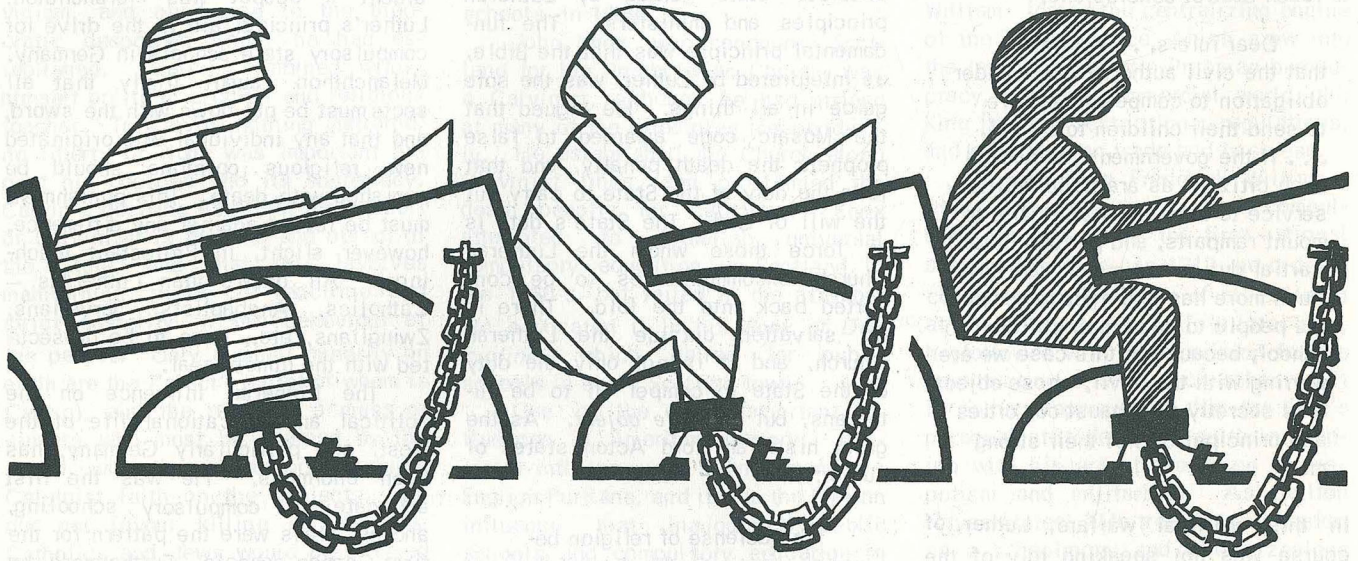
For contributors, our new reduced printing costs will have yet another added benefit: *After we are caught up, payment for articles will be greatly increased.* This will mean both a greater remuneration for libertarian writers and an increase in the quality of articles appearing in the INDIVIDUALIST.

I would also like to announce at this time that in response to requests by many readers we will be including a variety of short, easy-to-read features every month, including: (1) STAGE AND SCREEN, a monthly review of popular films and plays by and for libertarians (starts this month); (2) LETTERS; (3) THE LIBERTARIAN BULLETIN; and (4) SPOTLIGHTING THE NEWS. (The latter features have appeared only sporadically in the past.) We also have made arrangements to have fiction appear in the INDIVIDUALIST every other month.

It is our belief that our expanded format and content will make the INDIVIDUALIST invaluable to every libertarian in America. We promise to continue to strive to create an ever better magazine, and we solicit your comments and suggestions for further improvements.

Jarret B. Wollstein
EDITOR

EDUCATION: FREE & COMPULSORY



MURRAY N. ROTHBARD

(Part I of this article appeared in the April, 1971, *INDIVIDUALIST*)

PART II: COMPULSORY EDUCATION IN EUROPE

The record of the development of compulsory education is a record of State usurpation of parental control over children on behalf of its own; an imposition of uniformity and equality to repress individual growth; and the development of techniques to hinder the growth of reasoning power and independent thought among the children.

Origins

We need not linger long over the status of education in ancient Greece and Rome. In Athens, the original practice of compulsory state education later gave way to a voluntary system. In Sparta, on the other hand, an ancient model for modern totalitarianism, the State was organized as one vast military camp, and the children were seized by the State and educated in barracks to the ideal of State obedience. Sparta realized the full logical conclusion of the compulsory system:

absolute State control over the "whole child"; uniformity and education in passive obedience to State orders. The most important consequence of this system was that it provided the ideal for Plato, who made this educational system the basis of his ideal State, as set forth in the *Republic* and the *Laws*. Plato's "Utopia" was the first model for later despotisms — compulsory education and obedience were stressed, there was "communism" of children among the elite "guardians" who also had no private property, and lying was considered a proper instrument for the

State to use in its indoctrination of the people.

In the Middle Ages, the problem of compulsory state education did not present itself in Europe. Instruction was carried on in Church schools and universities, in private schools, and in private guild schools for occupational training. The first modern movement for compulsory state education stemmed directly from the Reformation. A prime force was Martin Luther. Luther repeatedly called for communities to establish public schools and to make attendance in them compulsory.¹ In his famous letter to the German rulers in 1524, Luther used Statist premises to reach Statist conclusions:

Dear rulers. . . I maintain that the civil authorities are under obligation to compel the people to send their children to school. . . . If the government can compel such citizens as are fit for military service to bear spear and rifle, to mount ramparts, and perform other martial duties in time of war, how much more has it a right to compel the people to send their children to school, because in this case we are warring with the devil, whose object it is secretly to exhaust our cities and principalities of their strong men.

In this spiritual warfare, Luther of course was not speaking idly of the "devil" and the war against it. To him the war was a very real one.

As a result of Luther's urgings, the German state of Gotha founded the first modern public schools in 1524, and Thuringia followed in 1527. Luther himself founded the Saxony School-Plan, which later became, in essence, the state education system for most of the Protestant States of Germany. This plan was put into effect first in Saxony in 1528, through an edict drawn up by Luther's important disciple Melancthon, setting up state schools in every town and village. The first compulsory state system in the modern world was established in 1559 by Duke Christopher, Elector of Wurtemberg. Attendance was compulsory, attendance records were kept and fines were levied on truants. Other German states soon followed this example.

What was the spirit behind Luther's call for compulsory state educa-

tion? A common view is that it reflected the Reformers' democratic spirit and the desire to have everyone read the Bible, the presumption being that they wished to encourage each one to interpret the Bible for himself.² The truth is quite otherwise. The Reformers advocated compulsory education for all as a means of inculcating the entire population with *their* particular religious views, as an indispensable aid in effective "war with the devil" and the devil's agents. For Luther, these agents constituted a numerous legion: not only Jews, Catholics, and infidels, but also all other Protestant sects. Luther's political ideal was an absolute state guided by Lutheran principles and ministers. The fundamental principle was that the Bible, as interpreted by Luther, was the sole guide in all things. He argued that the Mosaic code awarded to false prophets the death penalty, and that it is the duty of the State to carry out the will of God. The State's duty is to force those whom the Lutheran Church excommunicates to be converted back into the fold. There is no salvation outside the Lutheran Church, and it is not only the duty of the State to compel all to be Lutherans, but *its sole object*. As the great historian Lord Acton stated of Luther:

The defense of religion became. . . not only the duty of the civil power, but the object of its institution. Its business was solely the coercion of those who were out of the (Lutheran) Church.³

Luther stressed the theory of passive obedience, according to which no motives or provocation can justify a revolt against the State. In 1530, he declared: "It was the duty of a Christian to suffer wrong, and no breach of oath or of duty could deprive the Emperor of his right to the unconditional obedience of his subjects." In this way, he hoped to induce the princes to adopt and compel Lutheranism in their domains. Luther was expressly adamant that the State power be used with utmost severity against people who refused to be converted to Lutheranism. He required that all crimes should be punished with the utmost cruelty. The chief object of this severity was to

be, of course, against the chief crime, refusal to adopt Lutheranism. The State must exterminate error, and could not tolerate heresy or heretics, "for no secular prince can permit his subjects to be divided by the preaching of opposite doctrines." In sum:

Heretics are not to be disputed with, but to be condemned unheard, and whilst they perish by fire....

Such was the goal of the initial force behind the first compulsory state school system in the Western world, and such was the spirit that was to animate the system. No less ardent a despot was Melancthon, Luther's principal aid in the drive for compulsory state schools in Germany. Melancthon taught firmly that all sects must be put down with the sword, and that any individual who originated new religious opinions should be punished with death. This punishment must be levied against any difference, however slight, in Protestant teachings. All others than Lutherans — Catholics, Anabaptists, Servetians, Zwinglians, etc., were to be persecuted with the utmost zeal.

The Lutheran influence on the political and educational life of the West, and particularly Germany, has been enormous. He was the first advocate of compulsory schooling, and his plans were the pattern for the first German schools. Furthermore, he inculcated Lutherans with the ideals of obedience to the State and persecution of all dissenters. As Acton states: he "impressed on his party that character of political dependence, and that habit of passive obedience to the State, which it has ever since retained."⁴ A succinct estimate of Luther's influence on politics and compulsory education by an admirer follows:

The permanent and positive value of Luther's pronouncement of 1524 lies not so much in its direct effects as in the hallowed associations which it established for Protestant Germany between the national religion and the educational duties of the individual and the state. Thus, doubtless, was created that healthy public opinion which rendered the principle of compulsory school attendance easy of acceptance in Prussia at a much later date than in England.⁵

Aside from Luther, the other leading influence toward the establishment of compulsory education in the modern world was the other great Reformer John Calvin. Calvin went to Geneva in 1536, while the town was successfully revolting against the Duke of Savoy and the Catholic Church, and was appointed chief pastor and ruler of the city, which position he held until 1564. In Geneva, Calvin established a number of public schools, at which attendance was compulsory. What was the spirit that animated Calvin's establishment of the State school system? The spirit was the inculcation of the message of Calvinism, and obedience to the theocratic despotism which he had established. Calvin combined within himself political dictator and religious teacher. To Calvin, nothing mattered, no liberty or right was important except his doctrine and its supremacy. Calvin's doctrine held that the support of Calvinism is the end and object of the State, and that this involves maintaining purity of doctrine and strict austerity in the behaviour of the people. Only a small minority on earth are the "elect" (chief of whom is Calvin), and the rest are a mass of sinners who must be coerced by the sword, with the conquerors imposing Calvinist faith on the subjects. He did not favour killing all heretics. Catholics and Jews would be allowed to live, but all Protestants other than Calvinists must be killed. In some cases, however, he changed his position and advocated the severest punishment for Catholics as well.

Calvin, too, was adamant in asserting the duty of obedience to rulers regardless of their form of government. Government has divine sanction, and as long as it was Calvinist, it could pursue any other course without deserving protest. Not only must all heretics be killed, but the same punishment should be meted out to those who deny the justice of such punishment. Calvin's leading disciples, such as Beza, were at least as ardent in promoting the extermination of heretics.

Calvin's influence on the Western world was wider than Luther's because, with diligent propaganda efforts, he made Geneva a European center for the widespread diffusion of his principles. Men from all over Europe came

to study at Calvin's schools, and read his tracts, and the result was Calvinist influence throughout Europe.

As the Calvinists became important throughout Europe, they agitated for the establishment of compulsory state schools.⁶ In 1560, the French Calvinists, the Huguenots, sent a memorandum to the King, requesting the establishment of universal compulsory education, but were turned down. In 1571, however, Queen Jeanne d'Albret, of the Estates of Navarre, under Calvinist influence, made primary education compulsory throughout that part of France. Calvinist Holland established compulsory public schools in 1609.

John Knox, who conquered Scotland for his Presbyterian Church, was a Calvinist, although he had arrived at many of the principles independently. He established the Church along Calvinist lines, and proclaimed the death penalty for Catholics. Knox attempted to establish universal compulsory education in Scotland in the 1560's, but failed in the attempt. He advocated it in his *Book of Discipline*, which called for public schools in every Scottish town.

One of the most important influences in American history. Calvinist influence was strong among the English Puritans, and it was the Puritan influence that inaugurated public schools and compulsory education in New England, from whence it finally conquered the whole United States. The history of American compulsory education will be treated below.

Prussia

It is hardly coincidence that the most notoriously despotic State in Europe — Prussia — was the first to have a national system of compulsory education, nor that the original inspiration, as we have seen, was Luther and his doctrine of obedience to State absolutism. As Mr. Twentyman put it: "State interference in education was almost coincident with the rise of the Prussian state."

German education, as well as most of its other institutions and civilization, was completely disrupted by the Thirty Years War, in the first half of the Seventeenth Century. At the close of the conflict, however, the various state governments moved to make attendance of children at school compulsory upon penalty of fine and

imprisonment of the children. The first step was taken by Gotha in 1643, followed by such states as Heil-desheim in 1663, Prussia in 1669, and Calenberg in 1681.⁷

The state of Prussia began to rise to power and dominance at the beginning of the Eighteenth Century led by its first king Frederick William I. Frederick William believed fervently in paternal despotism, and in the virtues of monarchical absolutism. One of his first measures was to effect a huge increase in the Prussian army, founded on an iron discipline which became famous throughout Europe. In civil administration, King Frederick William forged the centralizing engine of the Civil Service, which grew into the famous autocratic Prussian bureaucracy. In the commercial world, the King imposed restrictions, regulations, and subsidies on trade and business.

It was King Frederick William I who inaugurated the Prussian compulsory school system, the first national system in Europe. In 1717, he ordered compulsory attendance of all children at the state schools, and, in later acts, he followed with the provision for the construction of more such schools. It is perhaps appropriate that the King's personal attitudes were quite in keeping with his ardent promotion of despotism and militarism. As Cailfon Hayes states: "He treated his kingdom as a schoolroom, and like a zealous schoolmaster, flogged his naughty subjects unmercifully."

These beginnings were carried forward by his son Frederick the Great, who vigorously reasserted the principle of compulsory attendance in the state schools, and established the flourishing national system, particularly in his Landschulreglement of 1763. What were the goals that animated Frederick the Great? Again, a fervent belief in absolute despotism, although this was supposed to be "enlightened". "The prince," he declared, "is to the nation he governs what the head is to the man; it is his duty to see, think and act for the whole community." He was particularly fond of the army, spent public funds freely upon it, and inculcated especially constant drill and the strictest discipline.

Modern Prussian despotism emerged as a direct result of the disastrous defeat inflicted by Napoleon. Beginning with 1807, the Prussian

nation began to reorganize and gird itself for future victories. Under King Frederick William III, the absolute State was greatly strengthened. His famous minister vom Stein began by abolishing the semi-religious private schools, and placing all education directly under the Minister of the Interior. In 1810, the ministry decreed the necessity of State examination and certification of all teachers. In 1812, the school graduation examination was revived as a necessary requirement for the child's departure from the state school, and an elaborate system of bureaucrats to supervise the schools was established in the country and the towns. It is also interesting that it was this reorganized system that first began to promote the new teaching philosophy of Pestalozzi, who was one of the early propounders of "progressive education."

Hand in hand with the compulsory school system went a revival and great extension of the army, and in particular the institution of universal compulsory military service.

Frederick William III continued the reorganization after the wars, and strengthened the compulsory state school system in 1834 by making it necessary for young entrants into the learned professions, as well as all candidates for the civil service and for university students to pass the high school graduation examinations. In this way the Prussian state had effective control over all the rising generation of scholars and other professionals.

We will see in detail below that this despotic Prussian system formed an inspiring model for the leading professional educationists in the United States, who ruled the public school systems here and were largely responsible for its extension. For example, Calvin E. Stowe one of the prominent American educators of the day, wrote a report on the Prussian system and praised it as worthy of imitation here.⁸ Stowe lauded Prussia; although under the absolute monarchy of Frederick William III, it was the "best-educated" country in the world. Not only were there public schools in the elementary and higher grades, for pre-university and pre-business students, but also 1700 teachers' seminaries for the training of future state teachers. Furthermore,

there were stringent laws obliging parents to send their children to the schools. Children must attend the schools between the ages of 7 and 14, and no excuses were permitted except physical inability or absolute idiocy. Parents of truants were warned, and finally punished by fines, or by civil disabilities, and as a last resort, the child was taken from its parents and educated and reared by the local authorities. Religious instruction was given in the schools in accordance with the religion of the locality, but the children were not obliged to attend these. However, it was compulsory for them to receive religious instruction in the home or from the church, in that case. Furthermore, the minister of education had to be a Protestant.

Private schools began to be permitted, but they were obliged to have the same standards of instruction as the state schools, and through these and the graduation examination requirements, the State was able to impose its control on all of the schools in the country.

Stowe felt that the Prussian methods of securing universality and uniformity of attendance were admirable. Another principle that he admired was that the Prussian State thereby imposed uniformity of language. Stowe asserted that the parents had no right to deprive their children of the unifying influence of the national language, "thus depriving them of the power of doing all the service to the State which they are capable of rendering."

The system of compulsory state education has been used as a terrible weapon in the hands of governments to impose certain languages and to destroy the languages of various national and linguistic groups within their borders. This was a particular problem in Central and Eastern Europe. The ruling state imposes its official language and culture on subject peoples with languages and cultures of their own, and the result has been incalculable bitterness. If the education were voluntary, such a problem would not have arisen. The importance of this aspect of compulsory education has been emphasized by economist Ludwig von Mises:

The main tool of compulsory denationalization and assimilation

is education. . . . In the linguistically mixed territories it turned a dreadful weapon in the hands of governments determined to change the linguistic allegiance of their subjects. The philanthropists and pedagogues. . . who advocated public education did not foresee what waves of hatred and resentment would rise out of this institution.⁹

The Prussian educational system was extended to the rest of Germany upon the formation of Germany as a national state. Furthermore, a decree in 1872 strengthened the absolute control of the state over the schools as against any possible incursions by the Catholic Church. The spirit that animated German compulsory state was well expressed in a laudatory work:

The prime fundamental of German education is that it is based on a national principle. Culture is the great capital of the German nation. . . . A fundamental feature of German education: Education to the State, education for the State, education by the State. The Volksschule is a direct result of a national principle aimed at national unity. The State is the supreme end in view."¹⁰

Another indication of the course that was set in the earliest and most eminent of the compulsory school systems, Prussia and Germany, is revealed in a book of essays by leading German professors, setting forth the official German position in the first World War.¹¹ In this work, Ernst Troeltsch characterized Germany as being essentially a militaristic nation, greatly devoted to the army and to the monarchy. As for education:

The school organization parallels that of the army, the public school corresponds to the popular army. The latter as well as the former was called into being during the first great rise of the coming German state in opposition to Napoleon. When Fichte considered the ways and means of resurrecting the German state, while the country was groaning under the Napoleonic yoke, he advised the infusion of German culture into the mass of the people, through the

creation of national primary schools along the lines laid down by Pestalozzi. The program was actually adopted by the different German states, and developed during the last century into a comprehensive school system. . . . This has become the real formative factor of the German spirit. There is in this school system a Democratic and State-Socialist element such as Fichte intended.¹²

France

Universal compulsory education, like compulsory military service, was ushered into France by the French Revolution. The revolutionary Constitution of 1791 decreed compulsory primary instruction for all. The Government could not do much to put these principles into effect at first, but it tried its best. In 1793, the Convention prescribed that the French language be the sole language of the "republic, one and indivisible". Little was done until the advent of Napoleon, who established a comprehensive state education. All schools, whether public or nominally private, were subject to the strict control of the national government. Dominating the entire system was the "University of France", which was established to insure uniformity and control throughout the entire French educational system. Its chief officials were appointed by Napoleon, and no one could open a new school or teach in public unless he was licensed by the official university. Thus, in this law of 1806, Napoleon acted to secure a monopoly of teaching to the State. The teaching staff of the public schools were to be routed through a normal school operated by the state. All these schools were directed to take as the basis of their teaching the principles of loyalty to the head of the state, and obedience to the statutes of the university. Due to lack of funds, the system of public schools could not then be imposed on all. By the end of the Napoleonic era, slightly less than half of French children attended public schools, the rest largely in Catholic schools. The private schools, however, were now under the regulation of the State and were obliged to teach patriotism on behalf of the rulers.

With the Restoration, the Napoleonic system was largely dismantled

and education in France became largely a Catholic Church affair. After the revolution of 1830, however, the minister Guizot began to renew state power in his act of 1833. Attendance was *not* made compulsory, and the private schools were left intact, except for the significant requirement that all educational institutions must teach "internal and social peace". Complete liberty for private schools was restored, however, by the Falloux Law, passed in 1850 by Louis Napoleon.

With the exception, then, of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic periods, French education remained free until the latter part of the nineteenth century. Just as Prussian compulsion and absolutism had received a great impetus from the defeat at the hands of Napoleon, so did French compulsion and dictation receive its inspiration from the victory of Prussia in 1871. The Prussian victories were considered the victories of the Prussian army and the Prussian schoolmaster, and France, driven by the desire for revenge (*revanche*), set about to Prussianize its own institutions. In acts of 1882 and 1889, it inaugurated universal military conscription on the Prussian model.

Leader in the new policy was minister Jules Ferry. Ferry was the main champion of a new policy of aggressive imperialism and colonial conquest. Aggressions were carried on in North Africa, in lower Africa, and in Indo-China.

Demands for compulsory education arose from the goal of military *revanche*. As a leading politician Gambetta put it: "the Prussian schoolmaster had won the last war, and the French schoolmaster must win the next." To this end, a clamour arose for extension of the school system to every French child, for training in citizenship. Also, there were demands for compulsory education so that every French child would be inoculated in republicanism and immune to the lures of monarchical restoration. As a result, Ferry, in a series of laws in 1881 and 1882, made French education compulsory. Private schools were nominally left free, but actually were greatly restricted by the compulsory dissolution of the Jesuit Order and its expulsion from France. Many of the private schools in France had been run by the Jesuits. Moreover, the

laws abolished many monastic orders which had not been formally "authorized" by the state, and forbade their members to conduct schools. Attendance at some school was compulsory for all children between 6 and 13 years of age.

The effect of the new regime was to dominate the private schools completely, since those that were not affected by the anti-Catholic laws had to subsist under the decree that "private schools cannot be established without a license from the minister, and can be shut up by a simple ministerial order."¹³ Private secondary schools were severely crippled by the Walleck-Rousseau and Combes acts of 1901 and 1904, which suppressed all private religious secondary schools in France.

Other Countries

The story of compulsory education in the other countries of Europe is quite similar, with the added element of compulsory languages in most of them. The Austro-Hungarian Empire strived for a uniform, centralized absolute monarchy, with the language to be solely, while the Hungarian segment of the Empire attempted to "Magyarize" its minority nationalities and abolish all languages except Hungarian within its borders. Spain has used its compulsory school acts to suppress the Catalan language and to impose Castilian. Switzerland has a system of compulsory schooling ingrained into its Constitution. In general, every country in Europe had established compulsory education by 1900, with the exception of Belgium, which followed by 1920.¹⁴

To Herbert Spencer, China carried out the idea of compulsory education to its logical conclusion:

There the government publishes a list of works which may be read; and considering obedience the supreme virtue, authorizes such only as are friendly to despotism. Fearing the unsettling effects of innovation, it allows nothing to be taught but what proceeds from itself. To the end of producing pattern citizens, it exerts a stringent discipline over all conduct. There are 'rules for sitting, standing, walking, talking, and bowing, laid down with the greatest precision.'¹⁵

The Imperial Japanese system of compulsory state education is worth noting carefully, because of the many similarities which it displays with modern "progressive" education. As Lefacadio Hearn observed:

(The) object has never been to train the individual for independent action, but to train him for cooperative action. . . . Constraint among us begins with childhood, and gradually relaxes (which would be the best for the child as his reasoning powers develop and he could be allowed more freedom and less guidance); constraint in Far Eastern training begins later, and thereafter gradually tightens. . . . Not merely up to the age of school life, but considerably beyond it, a Japanese child enjoys a degree of liberty far greater than is allowed Occidental children. . . . The child is permitted to do as he pleases.... At school, the discipline begins, but there is no punishment beyond public admonition. Whatever restraint exists is chiefly exerted on the child by the common opinion of his class; and a skillful teacher is able to direct that opinion.... The ruling power is always the class sentiment. . . . It is always the rule of the many over the one; and the power is formidable.

The spirit inculcated is always the sacrifice of the individual to the community, and a crushing of any individual independence. In adult life, any deviation from the minutiae of state regulation was instantly and severely punished.¹⁶

England

The tradition of voluntarism was at its strongest in England. So strong was it that, not only was there no compulsory education in England until the late 19th century, but there was not even a public school system. Before the 1830's, the State did not interfere in education at all. After 1833, the State began to make ever-increasing grants to promote indirectly the education of the poor in private schools. This was strictly philanthropic, and there was no trace of compulsion. Finally, compulsion was introduced into English education

in the famous Education Act of 1870. This act permitted county boards to make attendance compulsory. London county immediately did so for children between 5 and 13, and other large towns followed suit. The rural counties, however, were reluctant to impose compulsory attendance. By 1876, 50% of the school population was under compulsion in Britain, and 84% of the city children.¹⁷ The Act of 1876 set up school attendance boards in those areas where there were no school boards, and attendance was compulsory in all of those remote areas, except where children lived more than two miles from school. Finally, the Act of 1880 compelled all the county school boards to decree and enforce compulsory attendance. Thus, in a decade, compulsory education had conquered England.

The great legal historian A. V. Dicey analyzed this development in no uncertain terms as part of the movement toward collectivism:

It means, in the first place, that A, who educates his children at his own expense, or has no children to educate is compelled to pay for the education of the children of B, who, though it may be having means to pay for it, prefers that the payment should come from the pockets of his neighbors. It tends, in the second place, as far as elementary education goes, to place the children of the rich and of the poor, of the provident and the improvident, on something like an equal footing. It aims, in short, at the equalization of advantage.¹⁸

The compulsory collectivist principle represented quite a clash with the individualist tradition in England. The notable Newcastle Commission in 1861 rejected the idea of compulsory education on the grounds of individualistic principle. Trenchant criticism of the compulsory state education plan as a capstone of growing State tyranny was levelled by Herbert Spencer¹⁹ and by the eminent historian and jurist Sir Henry Maine.²⁰ In recent years, Arnold Toynbee has pointed out how compulsory state education stifles independent thought.²¹

The movement for compulsory education in England and Europe in the late 19th century was bolstered

by trade unionists who wanted more popular education, and upper classes who wished to instruct the masses in the proper exercise of their voting rights. Each group in society characteristically wished to add to State power with their particular policies hopefully prevailing in the use of that power.

The change of opinion in England was particularly swift on this issue. When Dicey wrote in 1905, he declared that scarcely anyone could be found to attack compulsory education. Yet, when John Stuart Mill wrote his *On Liberty* in 1859, he declared that scarcely anyone could be found who would not strenuously oppose compulsory education. Mill, curiously enough, supported compulsory education, but opposed the erection of any public schools, and, indeed, it turned out that in England, compulsion came before public schools in many areas. Mill, however, at least recognized that compulsory state schooling would abolish individuality on behalf of State uniformity, and would naturally make for obedience to the State.

Mill's argument for compelling education was successfully refuted by Spencer in *Social Statics*. Mill had asserted that in education the consumer does not know what is best for him, and that therefore the government is justified in intervening. Yet, as Spencer points out, this has been the excuse for almost every exercise in State tyranny. The only proper test of worth is the judgement of the consumer who actually uses the product. And the State's judgement is bound to be governed by its own despotic interests.

Another common argument in England for compulsory education was also prevalent in the United States. This was Macauley's argument education would eliminate crime, and since it is the duty of the State to repress crime the State should institute compulsory education. Spencer showed the speciousness of this argument, demonstrating that crime has little to do with education. This has become all too evident now: a glance at our growing juvenile delinquency rate in compulsorily educated America is proof enough of that. Spencer investigated the statistics of his day, and demonstrated that there was no correlation between ill-educated areas and criminal areas; indeed, in many

cases, the correlation was the reverse — the more education, the more crime.

Fascism, Nazism and Communism

It is a grave and unanswerable indictment of compulsory state education that these modern totalitarianisms were eager to institute compulsory state schooling in their regimes. Indeed, the indoctrination of the youth in their schools was one of the chief mainstays of these slave-states. As a matter of fact, the chief difference between the 20th century horrors and the older despotisms is that the present ones have had to rest on mass support more directly, and that therefore compulsory literacy and indoctrination have been crucial. The compulsory state system already developed were grist for the totalitarian mill.²² At the base of totalitarianism and compulsory education is the idea that the children belong to the State rather than to their parents. One of the leading promoters of that idea in Europe was the famous Marquis de Sade, who insisted that children are the property of the State.

There is no need to dwell on education in Communist countries. Communist countries impose compulsory state schooling, and enforce rigid indoctrination of obedience to the rulers. The compulsory schooling is supplemented by State monopolies on other propaganda and educational fields.

Similarly, National Socialist education subordinated the individual to the State and enforced obedience. Education belonged exclusively to the National Socialist state for indoctrination in its principles.

A similar use of state schools and indoctrination for obedience to the absolute State was employed in Fascist Italy. Italy is particularly interesting for the activities of the first Fascist Minister of Education Giovanni Gentile. For in lax old Italy, education had stressed the intellectual development of the individual child and his learning of subjects. Gentile's Fascist regime instituted the methods of modern "progressive education". He introduced and emphasized manual work, singing, drawing, and games. Attendance was enforced by fines. Significantly, Gentile taught that "education must be through experience, it must be achieved through action."²³ The children were

to be free to learn through their own experiences, of course "within the limits necessary for development of culture." Curricula were therefore not prescribed, but children were free to do as they wanted, with the only emphasis of study placed on "the study of heroes (such as Mussolini) as symbols of the national spirit."²⁴

FOOTNOTES

PART II

1. Cf. John William Perrin, *The History of Compulsory Education in New England*, 1896.

2. For example, cf. Lawrence Cremin, *The American Common School, an Historic Conception*, (Teachers College, New York, 1951), p. 84.

3. Cf. John, Lord Acton, "The Protestant Theory of Persecution" in his *Essays on Freedom and Power*, (Glencoe, Ill., 1948), pp. 88-127.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 94.

5. A. E. Twentyman, "Education; Germany", *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 14th Ed., Vol. 7, pp. 999-1000.

6. Cf. Perrin, *op. cit.*

7. Cf. Henry Barnard, *National Education in Europe*, (New York, 1854).

8. Calvin E. Stowe, *The Prussian System of Public Instruction and Its Applicability to the United States*, (Cincinnati, 1830).

9. Ludwig von Mises, *Omnipotent Government*, (New Haven, 1944), pp. 82-83.

10. Franz de Houre, *German and English Education. A Comparative Study*, (New York, 1917).

11. *Modern Germany, In Relation to the Great War*, trans. by W. W. Whitlock, (New York, 1916).

12. Ernest Troeltsch, "The Spirit of German Kultur", *Modern Germany*, *op. cit.*, pp. 72-73. Also see Alexander H. Clay, *Compulsory Con-*

tinuation Schools in Germany, (London, 1910).

13. Herbert Spencer, *Social Statics*, (New York, 1890), p. 333.

14. For a detailed tabulation of the compulsory education laws in each country of Europe at the turn of the century, see London Board of Education, *Statement as to the Age at Which Compulsory Education Begins in Certain Foreign Countries* (London, 1906). The vast majority had compulsory schooling from the ages of 6 or 7 until 14.

15. Spencer, *op. cit.*, pp 333-334.

16. Quotations from Lafcadio Heam, *Japan*, (New York, 1894), in Isabel Paterson, *The God of the Machine*, (New York, 1943), pp. 251-53.

17. Henry Barnard, *A Short History of English Education, 1760-1744*, (London, 1947). Strictly, the first element of compulsion had been introduced in 1844, since some of the Factory Acts had required children to be educated before beginning to work.

18. A. V. Dicey, *Lectures on the Relation between Law and Public Opinion in England*, (New York, 1948), pp. 276-278.

19. In *The Man Versus the State*, (Caldwell, Id., 1946).

20. Sir Henry Maine, *Popular Government*, (London, 1885).

21. Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History*, Vol. IV, p. 196-97.

22. See Erik von Kuschnelt-Laddihn, *Liberty or Equality*, (Caldwell, Id., 1952), pp. 63-64.

23. The similarity to John Dewey's dictum of "learning by doing" is obvious. This will be discussed below. See Franklin L. Burdette, "Politics and Education", pp. 410-423, esp. 419, in *Twentieth Century Thought*, ed. by J. Roucek, (New York, 1946).

24. See, among others, H. W. Schneider and S. B. Clough, *Making Fascists*, (Chicago, 1929); George

F. Kneller, *The Educational Philosophy of National Socialism*, (Yale, 1941); Walter Lando, "Basic Principles of National Socialist Education", *Education for Dynamic Citizenship*, (U. of Penn., 1937); Howard R. Marraro, *The New Education in Italy*, (New York, 1936); Albert P. Pinkevitch, *The New Education in the Soviet Republic*, (New York, 1929). Also of interest is Edward R. Niesner, *Nationalism and Education Since 1789*, (New York, 1922) for background.

Part III: Compulsory Education in the United States

The Development of Compulsory Education

Perhaps some people might feel that identification of compulsory education with tyranny could not be applicable to a free country such as the United States. On the contrary, the spirit and record of compulsory education in America points up very similar dangers.

In the majority of American colonies, education was in the English tradition, i.e. voluntary parental education, with the only public schools those established for poor families free to make use of the facilities. This system obtained in the Middle and in the Southern colonies. The crucial exception was New England, the sparkplug of the collectivist educational system in America. In contrast to the other colonies, New England was dominated by the Calvinist tradition, among the English Puritans who settled Massachusetts, and later the other New England colonies. The ruthless and ascetic Puritans who founded the Massachusetts Bay Colony were eager to adopt the Calvinist plan of compulsory education in order to insure the creation of good Calvinists and the suppression of any possible dissent. Only a year after its first set of particular laws, the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1642 enacted a compulsory literacy law for all children. Furthermore, whenever the state officials judged that the parents or guardians were unfit or unable to take care of the children properly, the state could seize the children and apprentice them to the state appointees, who would give them the required instruction.

This law of June 14, 1642, was a notable one, because it was the first establishment of compulsory education in the English-speaking world. It therefore deserves quoting in some detail:

For as much as the good education of children is of singular behoof and benefit to any commonwealth, and whereas many parents and masters are too indulgent and negligent of their duty of that kind, it is ordered that the selectmen of every town . . . shall have a vigilant eye over their neighbors, to see first that none shall suffer so much barbarism in any of their families, as not to endeavor to teach, by themselves or others, their children and apprentices....²

In 1647, the colony followed up this law with the establishment of public schools. The major stress in the compulsory education was laid on the teaching of Calvinist-Puritan principles.

It is significant that the slightly older and more religiously liberal Pilgrim colony of Plymouth did not set up a compulsory educational system. When the Plymouth colony was merged into the Massachusetts Bay, however, the latter's education laws prevailed.

What was the sort of government that set up the English-speaking world's first compulsory educational system, the future inspiration for the educational systems of the other states? The spirit of the government was Calvinist absolutism. Everyone in the colony was forced to attend a Congregational Church, although not everyone could qualify as a member. Only Church members, however, could vote in the state elections. The principles of this theocratic government were that of "order", with the superior and the inferior put in their proper place. The ministerial authority of the elders of the church was to prevail. In order to be admitted to church membership (and voting rights), the candidate had to be scrutinized by the elders of the church, who determined whether or not there was "something of God and Grace" in his soul, and therefore fit as a member. The great spiritual Puritan leader the Rev. John Cotton, however, declared

that hypocrites who merely conform to the elders' rules without inner belief could still be members — provided that they were not idle in their occupations. It is interesting to note that the colony set up Harvard College in one of its first acts, in 1636, as a state college. The authorities declared that schools must depend on the magistrates, in order to prevent the corruption of sound doctrines.

Another leading Puritan minister and ruler the Rev. William Hubbard declared that it is found by experience "that the greatest part of mankind are but as tools and instruments for others to work by, rather than any proper agents to effect anything of themselves." They are always sheep requiring a shepherd. The magistrates are the governing force, the "head" of society. The Rev. John Davenport advised the electors to choose good rulers, because it was imperative for them to submit to the ruler's authority:

. . . You must submit to their authority, and perform all duties to them whom you have chosen. . . whether they be good or bad, by virtue of their Relation between them and you.

Thus, formal democracy was early seen to be compatible with despotism of the rulers over the ruled.

The most important influence in shaping the Massachusetts Bay Colony was its first governor John Winthrop, who ruled the colony for twenty years from its inception in 1630. Winthrop believed that natural liberty is a "wild beast" which must be restrained by "God's ordinances". Correct civil liberty means being good "in a way of subjection to authority". Winthrop regarded any opposition to the policies of the governor, particularly when he was the governor, as positively seditious.

The governing of Massachusetts was fully in keeping with these principles. Heretics and assumed witches were persecuted and hounded, and Puritan austerity and strict conformity in almost all areas of life were enforced. Dissenters, like Roger Williams and Anne Hutchinson, had to leave the state.

The Puritans soon spread out to other states, and Connecticut was governed in the same spirit. Rhode Island, however, was far more liberal,

and it is no coincidence that Rhode Island was the exception in New England in the setting up of state school systems during the colonial period.

During the 18th century, the colonial religious severity gradually weakened its hold on the community. More sects arose and flourished. Massachusetts and Connecticut, however, enacted repressive laws against the Quakers, forbidding them also to establish schools. Furthermore, Connecticut, in a vain attempt to suppress the "New Light" movement, enacted a law in 1742 forbidding the New Lights from establishing any schools. Their reasons: that this

may tend to train youth in ill principles and practices, and introduce such disorders as may be of fatal consequences to the public peace and weal of this colony.³

Some of the motivation for the religious indoctrination and compulsory education in the colonial period was economic. Servants were particularly required to be instructed, as many of their masters believed that the servants were less prone to be independent and to "give trouble" when imbued with the catechism and the Puritan Bible.

Finally, the Revolutionary wars disrupted the entire education system, and the independent states were ready to begin anew.

The new States met the problem very much as they had done as colonies. Once again, Massachusetts led the way in establishing compulsory education, which her colonial laws had always provided. She took the unusual step of including in her State Constitution of 1780 a provision expressly granting authority to the legislature to enforce compulsory attendance at school. This authority was promptly exercised, and in 1789 school attendance was made compulsory in Massachusetts. Connecticut followed in 1805 with a law requiring all parents to educate their children.

Connecticut followed this compulsory literacy with a law in 1842 requiring all employed children under 15 to attend school for three months during a year, thus adding a compulsory *schooling* to its general elementary compulsory education, or literacy, laws. Massachusetts's laws were

lax on truants, however, and in 1845 Boston attempted to pass a bill against truancy of unemployed children, but lost on the ground that the rights of parents were threatened. The bill did pass in 1846, however. In 1850 Massachusetts authorized its towns to make provisions for habitual truants, and provided that they could be confined in prison. Finally in 1852, Massachusetts established the first comprehensive statewide, modern system of compulsory schooling in the United States. It provided that all children between 8 and 14 had to attend at least 13 weeks each year. Massachusetts, over the rest of the century, continued to extend and strengthen its compulsory education laws. In 1862, for example, it made jailing of habitual truant children mandatory, and extended the age from 7 to 16. In 1866, school attendance was made compulsory for six months during the year.

This is not the place for a discussion of the "battle for the public schools" that transformed the American educational system from 1800 to 1850. The goal of the proponents of the drive will be analyzed. But suffice it to say that, between 1825 and 1850, the propaganda work had been such that the non-New England states had changed from a system of no public schools, or only pauper schools, to the establishment of free schools available to all. Furthermore, the spirit of the schools had changed from philanthropy to the poor to something which *all* children were induced to attend. By 1850, every state had a network of free public schools.

In 1850, all the states had public schools, but only Massachusetts and Connecticut were imposing compulsion. The movement for compulsory schooling conquered all of America in the late 19th century. Massachusetts began the parade, and the other states all followed, mainly in the 1870's and 1880's. By 1900, almost every state was enforcing compulsory attendance.⁴

There seemed to have been little debate over the issue of compulsory schooling. We can only guess at the reason for this neglect of a fundamental issue, a neglect that is evident, furthermore, in every history of education. It may well be because the professional "educationists" knew that the issue might be a touchy one

if the topic were unduly stressed in public debate. After citing some of the pro- and con-opinions on the compulsory schooling laws, we will investigate the development of the "educationists" and their propaganda movements, since they were instrumental in establishing public schools and in ruling their operations to this day.

Arguments for and against Compulsion in the U.S.

The individualist tradition on this matter was well presented in the early 19th century by Thomas Jefferson. Although an ardent advocate of public schools to aid the poor, Jefferson squarely rejected compulsion:

It is better to tolerate the rare instance of a parent refusing to let his child be educated, than to shock the common feelings and ideas by the forcible transportation and education of the infant against the will of the father.⁵

Similarly, a fellow Virginian of that period warned against any transfer of the rights of the parents to the government, thereby jeopardizing the vital relation between parent and child.⁶

By the late 19th century, however, the individualist tradition had dwindled sharply. Typical in support of compulsory education was a report prepared by one of the professional educationist groups, the Public Education Association of Philadelphia in 1898.⁷ It resolved that as long as there are ignorant or selfish parents, compulsion must be used in order to safeguard the child's rights. The report complained that the Pennsylvania compulsory education law of 1895 did not take effect in the city of Philadelphia, and recommended that it do so. It indicated that one of the major forces for such laws came from the budding trade union movement.⁸

The report greatly praised the Prussian system and its compulsory attendance record. It praised Massachusetts and Prussia for their systems of only permitting schooling in private schools when they fulfilled the requirements imposed by the government school committee. It also lauded the fact that Massachusetts and New York had set up truant schools, and if parents refused to give permission for

their truant child to be sent there, the courts could commit him to the institution.

The spirit of the professional educationists is indicated in some of the statements mentioned in this report. Thus, a Brooklyn educator criticized the existing system of discharging truant children on July 31 of each year, and advocated that the sentence be extended *indefinitely* until evidence of reform is shown, or until the child is past school age. In other words, complete seizure and incarceration of young truants. A school superintendent of Newburgh, New York, suggested that children over 14 who had not attended school, and who were therefore above the age limit for compulsion, should be forced to attend schools for manual training, music, and military drill.

Prussia was also the ideal for a prominent newspaper supporting compulsory education. The influential New York *Sun* declared that children must have education, and that they should be obliged to receive it from the state; it praised the universality of the compulsory education system in Prussia and other German states.⁹

In 1872, Secretary B. G. Northrup of the Connecticut State Board of Education felt it self-evident that the children had "sacred rights" to education, and that growing up in ignorance was a "crime". (We have seen — in Part I — that everyone, including the illiterate, attain knowledge and "education", even if not formally instructed.)

The leading educationist body, the National Education Association, resolved in its 1897 meeting in favour of state laws for compulsory attendance.¹⁰

Thus we see that the professional educationists were the major force, assisted by the trade unions, in imposing compulsory education in America.

There was a flurry of opposition to compulsory education in the early 1890's, but by that time the movement was on its way to a clear victory. Twice, in 1891 and 1893, Governor Pattison of Pennsylvania, a state with a tradition of freedom in education, vetoed compulsory education bills on the ground that any interference with the personal liberty of the parents is un-American in principle. The law passed in 1895, however, when Gover-

nor Hasting signed the bill with great reluctance.¹¹ In 1892, the Democratic Party National Platform declared:

We are opposed to state interference with parental rights and rights of conscience in the education of children as an infringement of the fundamental Democratic doctrine that the largest individual liberty consistent with the rights of others insures the highest type of American citizenship and the best government.¹²

The Goals of Public Schooling: The Educationist Movement

It is important to consider the goals of the establishment of public schools, particularly since professional educators were the prime force in both the establishment of free common schools and of compulsory instruction.

In the first place, the desire for public schools by such quasi-libertarians as Jefferson and Paine was based on a belief that republican government is best suited for well-schooled citizens, and that the government should make such institutions available for those too poor to afford them privately.¹³ Certainly, many of those who advocated the establishment of public schools did it simply for this reason.

There were other and more dangerous goals, however, particularly among the educationists who were the main forces in the drive, and who took control of the state boards of education and teacher's training colleges which instructed the public school teachers. As early as 1785, the Rev. Jeremy Belknap, preaching before the New Hampshire General Court, advocated equal and compulsory education for all, emphasizing that the children belong to the State and not to their parents.¹⁴ The influential Benjamin Rush wanted general education in order to establish a uniform, homogeneous, and egalitarian nation.

The doctrine of obedience to the State was the prime goal of the founder of the public school system in North Carolina Archibald D. Murphey. In 1816, Murphey planned a system of state schools as follows:

all children will be taught in them . . . in these schools the precepts of morality and religion should be

inculcated, and habits of subordination and obedience be formed. . . . The state, in the warmth of her solicitude for their welfare, must take charge of those children, and place them in school where their minds can be enlightened and their hearts can be trained to virtue.¹⁵

By the 1820's, their goals of compulsion and statism were already germinating over the country, and particularly flourishing in New England, although the individualist tradition was still strong. One factor that increased the power of New England in diffusing the collectivist idea in education was the enormous migration from that area. New Englanders swarmed south and west out of New England, and carried their zeal for public schooling and for state compulsion with them.

Into this atmosphere was injected the closest that the country had seen to Plato's idea of full State communistic control over the children. This was the plan of two of the first socialists in America — Frances Wright and Robert Dale Owen. Owen was the son of one of the first British "Utopian" Socialists, and with Robert Owen, his father, had attempted an experiment in a voluntary-communist community in New Harmony, Indiana. Frances Wright was a Scotswoman who had also been at New Harmony, and with Owen, opened a newspaper called the *Free Enquirer*. Their main object was to campaign for their compulsory education system. Wright and Owen outlined their scheme as follows:

It is national, rational, republican education; free for all at the expense of all; conducted under the guardianship of the State, and for the honour, the happiness, the virtue, the salvation of the state.¹⁶

The major aim of the plan was that *equality* be implanted in the minds, the habits, the manners, and the feelings, so that eventually fortunes and conditions would be equalized. Instead of the intricate apparatus of common schools, high schools, seminaries, etc., Wright and Owen advocated that the states simply organize a series of institutions for the "general reception" of all children living within that district. These establishments would be devoted to

the complete rearing of the various age groups of children. The children would be forced to live at these places twenty-four hours a day. The parents would be allowed to visit their children from time to time. From the age of two every child would be under the care and guidance of the State.

In these nurseries of a free nation, no inequality must be allowed to enter. Fed at a common board; clothed in a common garb; . . . raised in the exercise of common duties. . . in the exercise of the same virtues, in the enjoyment of the same pleasures; in the study of the same nature; in pursuit of the same object. . . say! would not such a race. . . work out the reform of society and perfect the free institutions of America?

Owen was quite insistent that the system not "embrace anything less than the whole people." The effect will be to "regenerate America in one generation. It will make but one class out of the many." Frances Wright revealed the aim of the system starkly, calling on the people to overthrow a moneyed aristocracy and priestly hierarchy. "The present is. . . a war of class."

Thus, we see that a new element has been introduced into the old use of compulsory education on behalf of state absolutism. A second goal is absolute equality and uniformity, and compulsory school system was seen by Owen and Wright to be ideally suited to this task. First, the habits and minds and feelings of all the children must be moulded into absolute equality; and then the nation will be ripe for the final step of equalization of property and incomes by means of State coercion.

Why did Owen and Wright insist on seizing the children for twenty-four hours a day, from the age of 2 on, only releasing them when the school age was over at 16? As Owen declared:

In republican schools, there must be no temptation to the growth of aristocratical prejudices. The pupils must learn to consider themselves as fellow citizens, as equals. Respect ought not to be paid to riches, or withheld from poverty. Yet, if the children from these state schools are to go every evening,

the one to his wealthy parent's soft carpeted drawing room, and the other to its poor father's or widowed mother's comfortless cabin, will they return the next day as friends and equals?

Likewise, differences in quality of clothing invoked feelings of envy on the part of the poor and disdain by the rich — which should be eliminated by forcing one uniform upon both. Throughout his plans there runs the hatred of human diversity, particularly of the higher living standards of the rich as compared to the poor. To effect his plan for thoroughgoing equalization by force, the schools

must receive the children, not for six hours a day, but altogether; must feed them, clothe them, lodge them; must direct not their studies only, but their occupations and amusements; must care for them until their education is completed...

It might be asserted that the Owen-Wright plan is unimportant; that it had purely crackpot significance and little influence. The contrary is true. In the first place, the plan had a great deal of influence: certainly the ideas of promoting equality were dominant in the thinking of the influential group of educationists that established and controlled the public schools of the nation during the 1830's and 1840's. Furthermore, the Owen plan pushes the whole idea of compulsory state schooling to its logical conclusion — not only by promoting State absolutism and absolute equality, to which the system is admirably suited, but also because Owen recognized that he had to educate the "whole child" in order to mould the coming generation sufficiently. Is it not probable that the "progressive" drive to educate the "whole child" aims to mould the child's entire personality in lieu of the complete Owen-Wright compulsory communist seizure, which no one in America would accept?

The influence of the Owen-Wright plan is attested by the fact that a contemporary laudatory historian of the public-school movement places it first in his story, and devotes considerable space to it.¹⁷ Cremin reports that a great many newspapers reprinted Owen's essays on the plan,

and approved them. Owen began expounding his project in the late 1820's and continued on until the late 1840's, when he wrote the elaborated plan with Miss Wright. It had a considerable influence on workers' groups. It exerted a great influence on the widely noted report of a committee of Philadelphia workers in 1829 to report on education in Pennsylvania. The report called for equality, and equal education and proper training for all. And this and similar reports "had a considerable influence in preparing the way for the progressive legislation of the middle thirties." (Cremin)

Shortly thereafter, there arose on the American scene a remarkable phenomenon: a closely-knit group of educationists, or what Cremin calls "educational reformers" whose tireless propaganda was instrumental in pushing through public schools, who then came to control the schools through positions on the state boards of education, as superintendents, etc.; through the control of teachers' training institutions, and thereby of the teachers. This same grouping, under different names, continues to dominate primary and secondary education to this day, with their own tightly knit ideas and jargon. Most important, they have managed to impose their standards on state certification requirements for teachers, so that no one can teach in a public school who does not go through a course of teacher-training instruction run by the educationists. It was this same group that pushed through compulsory education, and alter more and more "progressive" education, and therefore they deserve close scrutiny.

Some Americans pride themselves that their educational system can never be tyrannical, because it is not federally, but state, controlled. This makes very little difference, however. Not only does this still mean the government, whether state or Federal, but also the educationists, through national associations and journals, are almost completely coordinated. In actuality, therefore, the school systems are nationally and centrally controlled, and formal Federal control would only be the crowning step in the drive for national conformity and control.

Another important source of tyranny and absolutism in the school system

is the fact that the teachers are under Civil Service. As a result, once a formal examination is passed — and this has little relation to actual teaching competence — and a little time elapses, the teacher is on the public payroll, and foisted on the children for the rest of his working life. The government bureaucracy has fostered Civil Service as an extraordinarily powerful tool of entrenchment and permanent domination. Tyranny by majority vote may be unpleasant enough, but at least if the rulers are subject to democratic checks, they have to please the majority of the voters. But government officials who cannot be voted out at the next election are not subject to any democratic check whatever. They are permanent tyrants. "Taking something out of politics" by putting it under Civil Service certainly does "increase the morale" of the bureaucracy. It elevates them into near-perpetual absolute rulers in their sphere of activity. The fact that teachers are under civil service is one of the most damning indictments against the American compulsory system of today.

To return to the first educationists, the main figures in the movement were such men as New Englanders Horace Mann in Massachusetts, and Henry Barnard in Connecticut. Also James Carter, Calvin Stowe, Caleb Mills, Samuel Lewis, and many others. What were their methods and their goals?

One of the methods to achieve their aims was to found a welter of interlocking educational organizations. One of the first was the American Lyceum, organized in 1826 by Josiah Holbrook. A major aim was to influence and to try to dominate state and local boards of education. In 1827, the first "Society for the Promotion of Public Schools" was opened in Pennsylvania. This society engaged in an extensive program of correspondence, pamphlets, press releases, etc. Similar organizations were formed in the early 1830's throughout the West, with lectures, meetings, memorials to legislatures, and lobbying featured. Hundreds of such associations formed throughout the land. One of the principal ones was the American Institute of Instruction, established in New England in 1830.

The annual meetings and papers of this Institute were one of the leading clearing houses and centers of educationist movements.

Secondly, the educationists formed educational journals by the dozen, through which the leading principles were disseminated to the followers. Principal ones were the American Journal of Education, the American Annals of Education, the Common School Assistant, and the Common School Journal. The most important route of educationist influence was obtaining leading positions in the state school systems. Thus, Horace Mann, editor of the Common School Journal, became secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education, and his annual reports during the 1840's were extremely influential in setting the educationists' "line". Henry Barnard became secretary of the Connecticut Board of Education, Calvin Wiley became head of the public schools in North Carolina, Caleb Mills in Indiana, Samuel Lewis in Ohio, etc.

The educationists, particularly under the influence of Horace Mann, did not go as far as advocating compulsory education. But they went up to that point in calling on *everyone* to go to the public schools, and in disparaging private schools. They were particularly eager to induce everyone to go to the public schools so that all might be moulded in the direction of equality. Virginia's educationist Charles Mercer wrote a eulogy of the common school which it might be well to compare with Owen's plan:

The equality on which our institutions are founded cannot be too intimately interwoven in the habits of thinking among our youth; and it is obvious that it would be greatly promoted by their continuance together, for the longest possible period; in the same schools of juvenile instruction; to sit upon the same forms; engage in the same competitions; partake of the same recreations and amusements, and pursue the same studies, in connection with each other; under the same discipline, and in obedience to the same authority.

And Mercer was the leader in Virginia's educationist movement. The vigorous championing of the public

school's levelling role appeared again and again in the educationists' literature. Samuel Lewis particularly stressed that the common schools would take a diverse population and mould them into "one people"; Theodore Edson exulted that in such schools the good children must learn to mingle with the bad ones, as they will have to do in later life. The influential Orville Taylor, editor of the Common School Assistant, declared: "let all send to it (the common school); this is duty." And in 1837, words very much like Mercer's and Owen's:

where high and low are taught in the same class, and out of the same book, and by the same teacher, this is a republican education.¹⁸

Hand in hand with such sentiments went disparagement of the private schools. This theme appeared almost universally in the educationist writings. James Carter stressed it in the 1820's; Orville Taylor declaimed in terms reminiscent of Owen that if a rich child is sent to a private school, he will be taught "that he is better than a public school child. This is not republicanism."

The educationists thought it essential to inculcate the children with moral principles, and this meant religious faith as well. They could not be sectarian, however, and still induce all the religious groups to send their children to public schools. Therefore, they decided to teach the fundamentals of Protestant Christianity in the public schools, as the common faith of everyone. This solution might not have been too glaring in the early period, but heavy immigration of Catholics soon after mid-century created insuperable difficulties in such a program. Another interesting facet of this period was an indication of the great limitation imposed on the educationists because instruction was still *voluntary*. Since parents could choose or not to send their children to the public schools, the teaching bureaucracy could not have full sway — the parents were still in control. Therefore, there could not be any religious absolutism. Furthermore, Horace Mann was emphatic in insisting that for all controversial political subjects, *the teacher must be neutral*. If he is not strictly neu-

tral, then the parents of opposing views would not send their children to the public schools, and the ideal of uniform, equal education for all would be defeated.

Thus, we see the enormous importance of voluntary education as a check on tyranny. The public schools had to be kept politically as well as religiously neutral.¹⁹ One basic flaw in this plan, of course, is that in dealing with political and economic subjects, it is almost impossible to treat them intelligently and accurately while being strictly neutral and avoid-all controversy. It is obviously the best plan, however, given the establishment of public schools.

The educationists chafed at these restrictions, and looked toward the Prussian model where these difficulties did not arise. Actually, they were only politically neutral where no great controversies existed, and they inculcated American nationalism and uniformity of language. Calvin Stowe urged adoption of the Prussian methods, although he claimed of course that in America the results would be republican and not despotic. Stowe urged the universal placing of school duty on the same plane as military duty. The influential Stowe spoke in almost the same terms, in 1836, as had Martin Luther three centuries before:

If a regard to the public safety makes it right for a government to compel the citizens to do military duty when the country is invaded, the same reason authorizes the government to compel them to provide for the education of their children — for no foes are so much to be dreaded as ignorance and vice. A man has no more right to endanger the state by throwing upon it a family of ignorant and vicious children, than he has to give admission to spies of an invading army. If he is unable to educate his children, the state should assist him — if unwilling, it should compel him. General education is as much certain, and much less expensive, means of defense, than military array. . . . Popular education is not so much a want as a duty. . . as education. . . is provided by the parents, and paid for by those who do not profit by its results, it is a duty.²⁰

Another principle of the Prussian system which Stowe admired was its compulsory uniformity of language. He also praised its vigorous compulsory attendance and anti-truant laws.

Stowe's report on Prussian education was enormously influential among the educationists, and they took his lead on the subject. Mann and Barnard held similar views, although the former hesitated on compulsion. Barnard was not reluctant, however. Praising the Prussian educational system, he wrote:

The regular attendance at the school shall be an object of specific control and the most active vigilance; for this is the source from which flow all the advantages the school can produce. It would be very fortunate if parents and children were always willing of themselves. . . . Unhappily, this is not the case, particularly in great cities. Although it is lamentable to be forced to use constraint, it is almost always necessary to commence with it.²¹

Horace Mann's sincerity was certainly open to question. In his annual reports, he denounced property rights, and talked of social control and the one Commonwealth's property. On the other hand, while asking for gifts from the industrialists for the schools, he abandoned this line and his talk of political neutrality, and declared that he thoroughly approved of indoctrination against Jacksonian democracy and mobocracy.²² Henry Barnard also approved of indoctrination, for property as against mob rebellion. It is obvious that the educationists chafed hugely against the restraints of voluntarism. What was needed to permit State indoctrination and uniformity was the Prussian system of compulsion. This was adopted in the late 19th century, and the wraps were off; neutrality would no longer need to be imposed or claimed.

Another educationist declaration on behalf of State authority was made by the influential Josiah Quincy, Mayor of Boston and president of Harvard, who declared in 1848 that every child should be educated to obey authority. George Emerson, in 1873, asserted

that it was very necessary for people to be accustomed from their earliest years to submit to authority. These comments were printed in leading educationist journals *Common School Journal* and *School and Schoolmaster*, respectively. The influential Jacob Abbott declared, in 1856, that a teacher must lead his students to accept the existing government. The Superintendent of Public Instruction of Indiana, declared in 1853 that school policy was to mould all the people into one people with one common interest.

Progressive Education and the Current Scene

It is obvious that there is little time or space here to enter into an extensive discussion of the much-criticized system of permissive-progressive education, and the state of current teaching in the public schools. Certain broad considerations, however, emerge, particularly in the light of the triumph of the Rousseau-Pestalozzi-Dewey system in this country since 1900:

1) The effect of progressive education is to destroy independent thought in the child, indeed to repress any thought whatsoever. Instead, the children learn to revere certain heroic symbols (Gentile), or to follow the domination of the "group" (as in Lafcadio Hearn's *Japan*). Thus, subjects are taught as little as possible, and the child has little chance to develop any systematic reasoning powers in the study of definite courses. This program is being carried forward into high school, as well as grammar school, so that many high school graduates are ignorant of elementary spelling or reading, and cannot write a cogent sentence. The ruling set of educationists are on the way to establishing colleges of this type, in which there would be no systematic courses, and have largely succeeded in the case of their teacher-training schools. The policy of letting the child "do what he likes" is an insidious one, since the children are encouraged to continue always at their original superficial level, without receiving guidance in study. Furthermore, the 3R's, the fundamental tools, are neglected as long as possible, with the result that the child's chance to develop his mind is greatly retarded. The

policy of teaching words via pictures instead of by the alphabet tends to deprive the young child of the greatest reasoning tool of all.

2) Equality and uniformity are pursued more than ever, even under the guise of letting individuals do as they like. The plan is to abolish grades, by which better and worse children know the extent of their progress, and instead to grade "subjectively" or not at all. Subjective grading is a monstrous scheme to grade each student on the basis of what the teacher arbitrarily thinks the capacities of the child are, the grading to be rated on the extent to which the child fulfills these capacities. This places a terrible handicap on the bright students and grants special privileges to the moronic ones, who may get A's if they are no more moronic than they truly are. Studies tend to be pursued now at the lowest common denominator, rather than at the average — so as not to "frustrate" the more moronic. As a result, the bright pupils are robbed of incentive or opportunity to study, and the dull ones are encouraged to believe that success, in the form of grades, promotions, etc., will come to them automatically.

Individuality is suppressed by teaching all to adjust to the "group". All emphasis is on the "group", and the group votes, runs its affairs by majority rule, etc. As a result, the children are taught to look for truth in the opinion of the majority, rather than in their own independent inquiry, or in the intelligence of the best in the field. Children are prepared for democracy by being led to discuss current events without first learning the systematic subjects (politics, economics, history) which are necessary in order to discuss them. The whole effect is to substitute slogans and superficial opinion for considered individual thought. And the opinion is that of the lowest common denominator of the group.

It is clear that one of the major problems comes from the duller group. The progressive educationists saw that the duller could not be taught difficult subjects, or, indeed, simple subjects. Instead of drawing the logical conclusion of abandoning compulsory education for the uneducable, they decided to bring education down to the lowest level so that the

dullest could absorb it — in fact, to move toward the elimination of subjects or grading altogether.

3) The emphasis on "frills" — on physical education, play, and numerous trivial courses again has the effect of being comprehensible to the most moronic, and hence insuring completely equal instruction for all. Furthermore, the more such subjects are emphasized, the less room there is for systematic thought.

4) The idea that the school should not simply teach subjects, but should educate the "whole child" in all phases of life, is obviously an attempt to arrogate to the State all the functions of the home. It is an attempt to accomplish the moulding of the child without actually seizing him as in the plans of Plato or Owen.

5) Unquestionably, the effect of all this is to foster dependence of the individual on the group and on the State.

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FOOTNOTES

PART III

1. John William Perrin, *The History of Compulsory Education in New England*, 1896; Lawrence Cremin, *The American Common School, an Historic Conception*, (Teachers College, New York, 1951); and Forest Chester Ensign, *Compulsory Attendance and Child Labor* (Iowa City, 1921).

2. Perrin, *op. cit.*

3. Merle Curti, *The Social Ideas of American Educators*, (New York, 1935).

4. For a list of the dates of the of the establishment of the compulsory laws in the states, cf. Edgar W. Knight, and Clifton L. Hall, *Readings in American Educational History*, (New York, 1951). For a detailed chart of the compulsory education laws in force in various states in 1905, see *Report of the Commissioner of Education for*

1906, Chap. 28, "Compulsory Attendance and its Relation to the General Welfare of the Child", (Washington, 1906).

5. Cf. Saul K. Padover, *Jefferson*, (New York, 1952), p. 169.

6. "A Constituent", *Richmond (Va.) Enquirer*, January, 1818.

7. *Compulsory Education*, prepared for the Public Education Assn. of Philadelphia, 1898.

8. Cf. Phillip Curoe, *Educational Attitudes and Policies of Organized Labor in the United States*, (Teachers College, N.Y., 1926).

9. *New York Sun*, April 16, 1867.

10. *Journal of Proceedings and Addresses*, N.E.A., 1897, p. 196.

11. Knight and Hall, *op. cit.*

12. *Ibid.*; and H. L. Mencken, *A New Dictionary of Quotations*, (New York, 1942), pp. 333-34.

13. Cremin, *op. cit.*

14. Hans Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism*, (New York, 1934), p. 104.

15. *The Papers of Archibald D. Murphey*, Vol. II, (Raleigh, New York, 1914), pp. 53-54.

16. Robert Dale Owen and Frances Wright, *Tracts on Republican Government and National Education*, (London, 1847). Also, see Cremin, *op. cit.*

17. Cremin, *op. cit.*, pp. 37 ff.

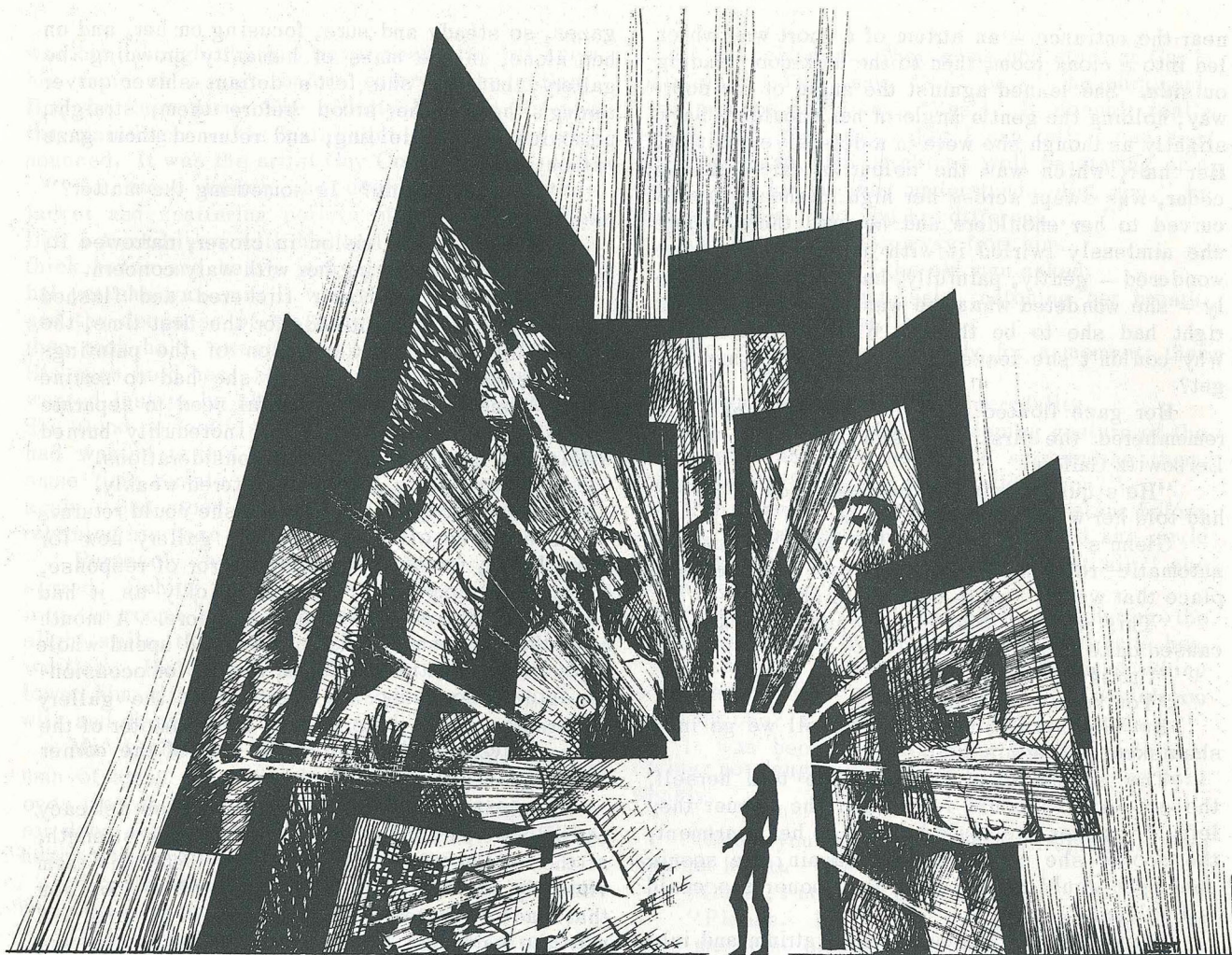
18. *Common School Assistant*, Vol. II, 1837, p. 1. For Mercer's statement, see Charles Fenton Mercer, *A Discourse on Popular Education*, (Princeton, 1826). Mercer's expression antedated Owen's. Also see the various annual lectures before the American Institute of Instruction.

19. Horace Mann's *Twelfth Annual Report*, p. 89.

20. Calvin E. Stowe, *The Prussian System of Public Instruction and Its Applicability to the United States*, (Cincinnati, 1830).

21. Henry Barnard, *National Education in Europe*, (New York, 1854).

22. Compare Cremin, and Curti, *ops. cit.*



A Distant Dream

Jesse F. Knight

Rain turned the windows of the gallery into a collection of obscure, symbolist poems in glass. Light, refracted through the descending pseudopodia splotches of rain, wavered and quivered, shifting downwards diagonally across the canvases. Slowly, a young woman moved among the paintings, a silent spectre floating through the dark panelled gallery with its florescent light winking and casting a vague, pale light on the paintings. The faded carpet muffled her footsteps. The room was empty except for the young woman, the young woman and the paintings.

She stopped, swiveled and began to move in the other direction.

Glenn could not understand why she returned day after day to the gallery and to the paintings; nor could she understand why she wandered ceaselessly among the paintings — a journey which never failed to evoke within her a haunting pain. Yet return she did, wander she did, though she knew not why. Even with the drifting wisps of pain she felt, still she was content to be alone with them. She sought nothing more.

But other thoughts drifted through her mind also. She wondered why the paintings sifted through the myriad of thoughts, memories, details and remembrances she held to focus on a time when she first came to the city, when her expectations had been as charming as a butterfly, but unfortunately, as delicate.

Glenn turned away from the gray windows, wavering with rain, and began to walk slowly around the gallery once again. She stopped finally

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near the entrance — an atrium of a short way which led into a cloak room, then to the dark door leading outside. She leaned against the angle of the doorway, holding the gentle angle of her shoulders back slightly as though she were in a defensive position. Her hair, which was the colour of rain-darkened cedar, was swept across her high forehead; then it curved to her shoulders and hovered there, where she aimlessly twirled it with her forefinger. She wondered — gently, painfully, hauntingly, yearningly — she wondered what she was doing there. What right had she to be there? Why did she return? Why couldn't she leave, once and for all, and forget?

Her gaze floated over the paintings, and she remembered the first time she had come to the Leibowitz Gallery.

"He's quite controversial, you know," Steven had told her while taking her coat.

Glenn's languid, "Oh?" had been an entirely automatic response: Steven never took her any place that wasn't "quite controversial."

"This is his first show, and he's already caused quite a stir."

"I'm sure," Glenn agreed.

"You know the critic..."

But Glenn cut him short. "Shall we go in?" she asked, taking his arm.

The sooner they went in, she told herself, the sooner they could leave; and the sooner they left, the sooner she could be back to her apartment, the sooner she could be alone again, the sooner the night would be finished, the sooner she could fall asleep.

Steven led her through a short atrium and into the gallery itself. It was a very short distance, only a few feet, but the distance from one room to the other was worlds apart. Steven slipped beyond her awareness and disappeared. She was alone... with the paintings.

These were not men and women who walked this earth. Perhaps in some far and distant age — yes; or in another place, in another land they might have existed; but not here, not now. Yet, though remote they were, as remote as her dreams, yet she recognized them. She felt the world was theirs: They seemed so right and logical and fitting for it. Then she felt that those she knew from day to day, those around her, Steven, the milling congestion of spectators in the gallery — they were usurpers who could lay no legitimate claim to this world. The men on canvas — they were the rightful owners.

Glenn felt very alone and naked before the paintings. She felt as if she were the one being examined, the one under careful, measured scrutiny; the eyes of these men and women of oil on canvas were upon her, judging, measuring, gauging her worth. At once and at the same time, Glenn wanted to run, hide, seek refuge from their omniscient

gazes, so steady and sure, focusing on her, and on her alone, in the mass of humanity crowding the gallery; but yet she felt a defiant shiver quiver through her. She stood before them, straight, unmoving and unyielding, and returned their gaze without flinching.

"Glenn... Glenn? Is something the matter?" she heard from afar.

She brought her vision in closer, narrowed it, and saw Steven watching her with wary concern.

A filament of horror flickered and flashed in her mind as she noticed, for the first time, the incredulity of the juxtaposition of the paintings and this man (it was Steven! she had to remind herself) beside her. The painful need to separate herself from the sight of this incredulity burned within her, consuming all other considerations.

"Let's... let's go," she muttered weakly,

It was only later, alone, that she could return.

Glenn was often alone in the gallery now for many hours, for after the initial furor of response, the public's curiosity died as quickly as it had been kindled. Now few came anymore. A month after the show had opened, she could spend whole days alone with the paintings, except for occasional interruptions by Mr. Leibowitz, the gallery owner, who would putter around the perimeter of the room glancing at her cautiously out of the corner of his eye.

Looking now at the paintings, at the delicacy of line that paradoxically gave them such strength, at the subtlety of shading and tone that made them vibrantly alive, at the tranquillity of composition that made them tense with drama, Glenn wondered why the paintings always took her back. No, not back exactly — rather, she was transposed, it seemed. Or the city was transposed — she could never quite determine which it was. But it was a different city, a different day; transparent she was, superimposed upon this city or this city upon her. It was the city she had imagined, the city she had thought she would be coming to... the city she had expected before she arrived, the city she had thought had a purposefulness about it, a glow, a certain pride in being, a sense of worth that had seemed to her to permeate the very air. But all that, it seemed, was a transparency now; she expected it no longer...

Behind her the door of the gallery opened; the rain hummed more loudly momentarily, the wind whistled through. Then the door closed, and the completeness of the silence returned, hovered over her, descended and filled the room again. Glenn swung away from the angle of the atrium and glanced into the cloak room slightly annoyed at the intrusion.

Glenn stopped.

At first she could have thought that one of the men had stepped down from one of the canvases. Then she recognized him. She knew it

was him, though she had never seen him, but knew his name on a sign before entering the gallery. But she knew him. The affinity between him and the paintings — his paintings! — was too pronounced. It was the artist Guy Costello.

He stood inside the doorway, shaking his jacket and scattering pellets of rain. He looked like a truckdriver, with his curly dark hair and his thick hands and heavy jacket, Glenn told herself, but yet she was sure it was him. He glanced up, and the deepness of his eyes touched her gently, then took hold, sweeping over her face and body. His eyes held her. She remained motionless. She wanted just to be able to move, but she couldn't. She stood perfectly still. She remembered how she had wanted to run from the paintings and at the same time remain before them. So she now felt again. She stood before him, wishing to flee and returning his gaze defiantly.

Purposely he relaxed his gaze, and Glenn stirred. Behind her the owner of the gallery came into the room; but the artist let her know, with a slight smile, that he was releasing her of his own volition. He slipped by her; she turned and followed him with her eyes. He nodded at Mr. Leibowitz and disappeared into the back of the gallery.

Mr. Leibowitz was a short, slightly stooped man of about fifty who had bristly, gray hair and eyes that gathered the details of a scene as a mirror does sunlight. He came towards her shuffling hesitantly as if to announce his presence.

"Can I help you?" he asked, as he had so many times in the past three weeks.

Glenn, who had been staring in the direction where the artist had disappeared, looked at the old man without comprehension. Then she realized and understood him.

"No, no," she replied hastily. "I'm just looking."

She moved away from him and self-consciously looked about the room.

"You like his work, don't you," he said, moving with her.

"What makes you say that?" she asked uneasily, glancing at him.

He chuckled with a soft, deep warmth. "How many times have you been in here since the show opened?" He chuckled again. "I can see it," he replied. "I can tell you like his paintings just by watching you."

Glenn cast a startled look at him. But the old man was paying no attention to her reaction; he seemed to accept his statement as simple fact.

His hand swept expansively around his gallery, and the motion reminded Glenn of a father displaying his only child.

"It's a pleasure," he continued, "to simply look at Guy's paintings with someone who appreciates them as I do." Glenn said nothing. "So many come — *used* to come, you know, because

of all the publicity. They come and stare at Guy's paintings. They say, 'No,' or —" he shrugged, "or perhaps they say, 'Yes,' It doesn't really matter what they say. For I can tell; I can see. In either case, they might as well be staring at a brick wall for all they understand. But you," he nodded at her, "but you are different. . . ."

Glenn was backing away from him.

"What's wrong?" the old man asked.

"Nothing," Glenn said, catching her breath. "Nothing's the matter."

He looked at her intently for a moment; then he said, "I know."

Glenn stared at him with incredulity.

Mr. Leibowitz made a sweeping gesture of the four walls and the paintings surrounding them. "You would like to buy one, wouldn't you?"

The surprise Glenn had felt an instant before surged into a fear she had not realized she could possibly contain. "No, that isn't it at all," she exclaimed.

"Don't deny it," he said, completing the sweeping gesture by lifting his palm to face her. "I understand. . . you don't want to say anything because you can't afford it. Why else would you not want one? I have seen how you look at them."

It was becoming ludicrous; but she felt like crying, not laughing. "That's not true," she said weakly.

"Would you *take* one?" he interrupted as if he had not heard. "As a gift?"

"Oh no, I couldn't do that."

"Please. I will pay for it gladly. It would give me great pleasure to know someone like you has it, is enjoying it."

"I couldn't, really."

She backed away from him and edged towards the atrium. But the old man didn't seem to notice, and he moved forward, unconsciously, with each step Glenn took backwards.

"There are so few who understand his work, so very few. Won't you take one? Most just come to see what everyone is talking about; they don't really care about the paintings. And now they don't even come. Only you, you do. You care about the paintings, I can see it; you like them. I know you do. Won't you take one? . . ."

Glenn was at the entrance of the atrium — near enough now to flee.

". . . Take any one," Mr. Leibowitz said, almost in despair, gesturing to include the whole of the gallery. "Any one."

Glenn shook her head. "It isn't possible, I tell you!" she exclaimed.

"Isn't possible?" he asked.

"No."

"Isn't possible?"

Glenn ran to the door. It was of heavy oak that moved — oh, so slowly, as she tugged. Finally, she flung it open and made good her escape.

Except for occasional pinpricks of coolness, the rain had stopped. The slick swoosh of cars, bursting through oil-shiny puddles; the eddying, rising, swirling, dying, changeable wind; the points of rain, striking her cheeks and forehead; the poignant after-taste of the rain on the breeze — all assailed her senses as she hurried down the street. But she was aware of them only distantly. They were real — yes; she would not deny that; but it was as if they disappeared into her senses without any corresponding echo in her consciousness to indicate their existence.

She focused her attention on her steps, which cracked on the rain-darkened sidewalk. She hurried on and on. There was no direction in her movement; if it had any purpose at all, it was simply to get away.

Then she heard: "Wait!"

It meant something, she was sure of it. But the meaning was swallowed up, vanished into some bottomless chasm, disappearing without an echo. She hurried on.

"Wait!"

Like electricity crackling across a gap, his voice snapped across the murmuring hum of the city's sounds. His voice held her a moment: she did not turn around. Instead, she hurried on.

He burst into the periphery of her vision. Already knowing who it was, Glenn quickened her pace, refusing to recognize him. They walked for a block before he finally broke the silence by saying, "I heard what Mr. Leibowitz said to you."

"Did you?" she replied, that and nothing more. She continued her fast pace, keeping her eyes straight ahead.

He said, "You must realize that it means a great deal to him that someone should understand and appreciate my work."

"You flatter yourself," she replied dryly, hoping that cynicism would cover and dispel the anxiety and fear that kept threatening to surface in her consciousness again. "What makes you think I understand or appreciate your work. . . or, for that matter, even care to try?"

"What makes you think it's so flattering?"

Glenn stopped and looked at him. He stopped before her, the wind tossing his dark hair, pressing his collar against his cheek, and moving the large sketch book she noticed under his arm back and forth, and returned her gaze.

"Why. . . why does the show mean so much to him? To Mr. Leibowitz," she stammered.

They started to walk again, this time more slowly.

"Primarily, I suppose, he feels that he too is on exhibition. And in a certain sense he is right. A response to a work of art is just as revealing as the work of art itself. I suppose he wished the public to feel the same way he does about the paintings, to respond in the same way he does."

"And they haven't," she said needlessly.

"He hasn't sold any, of course. When we first talked about the show, he didn't really expect to. He knows better now. Now no one comes except —" He glanced at her.

She flushed and looked down at the sidewalk.

"You. . . you like Mr. Leibowitz very much."

"You've known him long?"

He laughed. "Just slightly more than two weeks longer than the show's been on. You know the first time he saw my paintings he decided he wanted to exhibit them. He didn't care who I was or where I had exhibited before or who I had studied under. All he cared about, all he needed to know, all that mattered to him were the paintings themselves."

It began to rain again — a fine, thick mist. They began to walk faster again. And as the rain increased, so did their speed, until they were running, Guy holding himself between his sketch book and the slant of rain, Glenn running beside him.

Glenn's apartment loomed up out of the mist. It was a tall, modern, sweeping structure of glass that she hadn't been able to deny herself from the first moment she saw it. It was her only concession to a now distant dream.

Guy held the door for her; together they crossed the stillness of the lobby and waited for the elevator. They continued talking, the two of them, in subdued tones, leaning together; but of what, Glenn could not later tell. All she was aware of was the intimacy, the sense of closeness she felt with him. The quiet egoism of his words, spoken with such unassuming frankness, with such a complete lack of guardedness, warmed her.

Finally the elevator stopped. It seemed so natural for him to be walking beside her, so natural that the continuity of the scene not be broken. When she stopped in front of her door, and he followed her in, laying his sketches on the stand beside the door, as if he had done it many times before, Glenn questioned it not in the least.

* * * * *

Her apartment, Guy saw, was elegant in its simplicity. A large picture window, directly opposite the door, dominated the room; its gasp of light made the contents of the apartment — a couch, two chairs, an end table with a lamp, a bookcase with a very few books — seem delicate and airy and light, yet distinct and cleanly cut from the drab grey of the light.

Guy followed her with his eyes — this woman he had been watching and studying and sketching for three weeks — as she crossed the room. She stopped and turned slightly, shrugging off her coat; then she saw him watching her, catching her in the defenseless motion, her arms held half within the sleeves. Unnoticed, the coat slipped

from her arms; and she clenched the coat, unconsciously, while it lay half on the floor. A faint look of puzzlement, mingled with a hint of fear, as if she had, just at that moment, realized that she had allowed him to enter her apartment and that realization carried with it a grain of terror.

Her eyes, a warm chestnut, gazing steadily into his, were tinted with despair. But despair of what? It was as if Guy had come upon a scene for the first time. Examining it, studying its perspective, symmetry, balance and harmony, he could tell something was wrong. Not out of place or disjointed, it was not something that marred the beauty of the scene necessarily. On the contrary, it only made the potential fulfillment all the more apparent. But though the beauty of the scene was not marred, this indefinable something left the scene hauntingly incomplete. So Guy now felt, looking at this young woman. For all his searching, he could not know what it was that was wrong and therefore could not correct it.

He took a step towards her, and the fear, which earlier had only been a hint, became refined and distilled and distinct in her eyes. She took a faltering step back, away from him. Her coat slipped from her fingers and slid to the floor. "No, Guy," she murmured, "please, no." Desperately, she wove her head hypnotically from side to side. Guy took another step forward, then another. "Please, no," she whispered. She stopped. Her hands she clenched at her sides, as if she still held her coat. She did not move, she made no gesture, beyond lifting her hand in a wavering helplessness, to stop him. She continued to whisper, but by its very softness it was incoherent. He was aware of her speaking, but not of what.

Coming up to her, Guy folded his hand along the nape of her neck, his fingers intertwining in the richness of her hair. He tilted her head back slightly in the cradle of his hand and lifted her face to his.

For an instant, when he kissed her, for an instant so brief he caught only a fragment of a glimpse of it, Guy felt her respond. But it was only for an instant. Then he felt — in the touch of her lips, in the turn of her mouth — a shuddering withdrawal. He felt no resistance; that he would have welcomed. But in fact, he felt nothing at all.

He separated them with infinite care. He let his hand slide from her hair, from her shoulder. "What's wrong?" he asked.

"Wrong?"

"You know what I mean. I saw it the first moment you came into the gallery the first day the show opened."

She hesitated, brushing her forefinger across her temple, sweeping back the hair. She hesitated, then said, "I didn't know I was so apparent."

"You're not," Guy replied. "But you're evading my question."

She glanced away. "Yes, I suppose I am. But not really; I'm trying to. I don't know what's wrong," she replied.

Guy turned away.

"No, really," she said, touching his arm. "I honestly don't know what to tell you."

Guy went over to the large picture window. He looked down over the city, which was grey and vague with rain. He felt her watching him expectantly, but he waited. Finally she came over to stand beside him in front of the window.

"That's what I feel," she said, looking down over the city. "Nothing magnificent. I can't rage and scream. I can't hate myself or the world or... or even you. Don't look at me that way. I wish I could, then at least I would know I'm alive. No, I can't feel anything. It's an apathy that touches everything, like that misty rain, a vague nothingness, grey, unfocused and dull.

"And I can't touch it, I can't give it a shape or a substance. It yields at the slightest touch, so I can't tell you what it is or what is wrong," she said, shrugging her shoulders hopelessly.

Guy turned to her abruptly.

Taking her shoulders, he said, "I want to paint you."

"Me?"

"Why should that surprise you? You're very lovely, you know."

"Don't," she said sharply, twisting out of his grasp.

"Look," Guy said, striding across the room. "Look at what I've already done. Some sketches—"

"Sketches?"

"When you were at the gallery," he replied. He was thumbing through the sketch book; he settled on one, took it out, put the book back and started towards her. "The sketches are quite complete the way they are. Of course, they're just sketches, but they'll give you some idea —"

"No," she said.

* * * * *

Guy stumbled to a stop a few feet from her. The sketch, which he had outstretched for her, he dropped against his thigh.

"But why not?"

"No," she whispered, and Glenn was aware of how much like a whimper it sounded.

"Look at it!" he shouted.

Glenn stared at him, astonished by the violence of his voice. He had not moved in the slightest. Only a muscle in his jaw leaped spasmodically.

"Why won't you look at it?" he asked, holding the sketch up again. "That's all I ask."

She shook her head.

"Why won't you look at yourself?"

The despair in his voice angered Glenn: He had no right to feel despair for her, she thought. He had no right to feel anything for her. No right!

"Don't you realize how futile it is? How futile your work is?" she exclaimed, and at the same time thought of how unworthy she was of that futility. "Don't you know?" She sighed. "No, you don't. I can see that. Your paintings say as much."

"What do my paintings say that I wouldn't myself?"

"That's exactly it! You're so innocent. You expect so much of men, and you don't know you can't, and you don't know how much your paintings say of that expectation. But you can't expose yourself like you do. You can't and remain intact. You leave yourself so vulnerable, so open to attack. . . ." She began to cry softly; yet she continued to speak.

"I was like you when I first came to this city. It's true. And God how I suffered for it. I expected so much and found so little. I can see you are the same way. The only difference is you haven't learned better yet. But you will find out, eventually; you will learn how petty and sordid and ugly everything is. And you'll wonder why, why it has to be that way. For you have a glowing picture in your mind, a picture of something more. But the glow will dim; the years will do that. Every day erodes a bit of you away; every day will tarnish that glow until you're left with nothing. Nothing. You deserve so much more than that.

"Someday you will realize that in order to protect what is left of you, what is left of that dream, you must build a shell. A shell against the pain, the pain that isn't your fault but which you must bear as your own, for wanting something more. It is a pain that tears at you for wishing for something that cannot, apparently, exist. You must deny all that you wanted, all that you believed you could have, all that was possible, or so you thought — that is the shell you build to keep the hurt away."

She stopped speaking. In the aftersilence her breathing sounded harsh; the pitter-patter of the rain against the window echoed through the apartment. He was looking at her, without accusation, without blame. Just looking. No loathing, no hatred. Just looking.

But she wanted him to hate her, she thought. He should hate her. "Don't you see how you have exposed yourself?" she screamed, wondering dimly who she was trying to convince. "And you want me to believe in you, in what you're doing!" she exclaimed with scorn. "Well, I won't. Not again. Once is enough. So why don't you take your drawing and go back to your empty gallery? I don't want to see what you have done."

"You're wrong," Guy said. "You don't have to deny the world or yourself. It can be both. If we don't like the world the way it is, then let's remake it; let's make it the way it should be, the

way we want it to be. We can do it. But not by shutting it off and pretending it doesn't exist. But if we want it changed, then it is we, we who have to start."

"Don't you see," she said tiredly, "it's too late for that. Perhaps you can make a new beginning, but no me, it's too late for me."

"No, it isn't. I don't believe that it's ever too late."

With his free hand Guy took one of hers. "Look at what I have done," he said. "If you can deny what you see there, then I will go."

She shook her head.

He dropped her hand, and with the other, lifted the sketch towards her.

Glenn would not look at him. She ignored the sketch. She looked at the carpet. Pale patterns of light played across the carpet before her feet. She would not look up; she would not look up; she would not look up.

Softly Guy sighed. "All right," he said at last. "I'll leave it, then."

Glenn heard him place the sketch on the couch, then walk across the room. She heard him pick up his sketch book, heard him stop at the door and look at her. She would not look up; she would not look up; she would not . . . then she realized it made no difference. The door had closed:

He was gone.

* * * * *

She was shaking her head; she realized she was shaking her head — no, though she didn't know why. As though under the control of a puppeteer, as though her strings had suddenly been cut, Glenn abruptly sank to the floor. She covered her face with her hand. She was still shaking her head — no, no, and no again, until the motion itself became meaningless, and she didn't know why she continued it. She began to sob. She rocked back and forth in rhythm to the sounds. Beyond the mindless motion, there was no purpose, no reason, no direction. Time itself had no meaning, no significance for her, for it did not move and pass. It was a lump that would not diminish, but hung there, choking her.

Through her sobbing, there was on the edge of her consciousness a voice. It whispered and consoled her; it murmured of distant dreams and other worlds. There was on the edge of her awareness a beckoning. The voice spoke of a post that could have been and a future that could be. The wonder was that the voice sounded so much like her own.

The sketch was behind her — she thrust the thought away. The sketch was behind her. The sketch was behind her, behind her, behind her.

In her natural position she would have been facing the drawing. But she was twisted awkward-

ly. It was painful for her to hold that position; it would have been much easier for her to simply relax — a move which would have righted her and had her facing Guy's sketch. But she would not let herself go. She held the same position. Stiffly she sat on the floor, with her legs beneath her, turned away from Guy's drawing of her.

The sketch was behind her.

Out of the corner of her eye she saw it. She shuddered and tore her eyes away.

"No!"

Her voice splitting the silence startled her with its shrillness, surprising her with its sharp tank of frustration.

She would not look at it.

She saw it again and again out of the corner of her eye. She felt herself relaxing while the sketch whispered to her. It called softly: *look, look*. It sang; it crooned. More loudly it spoke to her; more insistently it called. She found herself turning.

She would not look; she would not look; she would not look. . . .

She found herself turning and looking.

Slowly, she gathered her strength. By excruciating degrees, she relaxed. She let herself go and swung around. Gradually, her natural position took hold and turned her around. The tension, quivering through her body, drained, and for a moment she slumped, though she was at that instant more alert, more aware, more alive than she had been for a long, long time. Her strength, she discovered, was not gone; rather, it was as if she had found a strength she had not known she possessed. The relaxation sifted through her body like a current, renewing her. She rose to her knees; and with the motion, she turned to confront the sketch Guy had drawn of her. She looked at herself.

It was as she had expected — no more, no less. Yet that alone was saying more than she had any right to say. She looked at it steadily; she did not turn away. She did not deny it. She looked at it.

Pain throbbed deep within her, almost a palpable entity. Still, she did not turn away from the sketch. She gripped the sight of the sketch to her. With each deepening probe of pain she felt a certain joy, as if only by knowing the pain could she learn to overcome it, as when a concert pianist, when fumbling through a difficult passage, will smile at the thought that eventually he will overcome it, conquer it, and the difficulty will become a reward. So Glenn thrust the pain deeper and deeper.

With each probe, with every throb, the pain lessened. The deeper she went, the more oblivious she became to it. Finally she sensed it leaving her altogether, leaving her.

Glenn rose to her feet and stood facing the sketch. The pain, she realized, was completely

gone and had disappeared without her being aware of the precise moment it had happened. She stood before the sketch for a long time, simply enjoying being able to look at it. Then she went over to it. She picked it up and studied it.

In her mind's eye she visualized the sketch filling out. She saw it gain substance, colour, realness through pigments. In her mind's eye Glenn could see it as a completed portrait.

* * * * *

"Guy said you would be coming," the gallery owner said when he saw her standing in the atrium, gazing about the room.

"He did? Where is he?"

He nodded towards the rear of the gallery. "In back. Waiting. Should I get him?"

"Would you please?"

As Mr. Leibowitz disappeared into the back, Glenn turned, once more, to the gallery, now seeming strangely new and unfamiliar, though it had been only two days since she had been there. Light streamed down the pathways of the windows, but the paintings had an inner illumination that made them glow in shade.

She felt him come up beside her. She lifted the paper in her hand, followed it with her eyes.

"I brought your sketch back," she said, continuing to look down at it.

"I see."

Her fingertip trailed along the edge of the paper. "I brought your sketch back," she repeated.

"Why?" he gently prodded.

"I have no more need of it."

"No?"

"At least not as therapy," she said with a rush and thrust it at him.

Guy gently pushed it back towards her. "I can see that," he replied. "But I didn't give it to you because you needed it — for 'therapy' as you put it. I meant it for you to keep."

"You did?"

He nodded.

"But I thought it should be displayed or something," she said weakly.

Guy took it out of her hand and lifted it to look at it closely, letting the sunlight play across its surface. "No, not a sketch," he said, shaking his head. "Not of you, especially not of you."

He let it fall to his side and looked at her. "I've already told you what I want to do."

"What?"

"A full portrait. Only a portrait would do you justice."

Justice . . . the unfamiliar word struck a chord within her. Cold she ask for anything more?

Glenn touched Guy's hand and the sketch held there between his fingers. "Then let's begin," she said.

THE CASE FOR A LIBERTARIAN POLITICAL PARTY

DAVID F. NOLAN

Four years ago, at the YAF convention in Pittsburgh, there was born a unique coalition – the coalition that is known today as “the libertarian movement”. There, for the first time, Randists, Misesists, and elements of the old “radical right” from all over the country got together and established an embryonic network of organization and communication – laying the groundwork for future cooperation and building the foundations for a mechanism whereby previously isolated individuals could begin to act as a cohesive force in American society.

Since that time, “the movement” has come a long way.

Today, there are an estimated ten to twenty thousand individuals who can be loosely classed as “libertarian activists”, with perhaps a thousand of these being “hard core” or “self-starting” activists.

Where, in 1967, we had no organizational home save the semi-hostile Young Americans for Free-

dom, today we have the Society for Individual Liberty. And where, in 1967, there were no libertarian publications of national scope, save a few esoteric journals, today we have several (*Reason*, *Protos*, *The Individualist*, etc.)

Press coverage of libertarian views and activities has mushroomed from an occasional local item or back-page squib to major proportions (*Newsweek*, *The New York Times*, *The National Observer*, etc.) and the libertarian philosophy is now beginning to find some acceptance among the intellectual community.

“The movement”, in short, has come of age. Yet, despite this new-found acceptance, we have not yet been able to make any major impact on the course of events. Day by day, America moves ever closer to becoming an everly statist country. And in the few areas where strides have been made towards libertarianism, it has been almost entirely irrespective of the existence of “the movement”.

The question, then, is “What can we do about

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it?" And the answers that have been given, to date, have fallen (roughly speaking) into one of four categories, whose advocates can be described as follows. . .

1) *The Educators*, whose answer is, in a nutshell, "go forth and spread the Good Word, and, in time, people will Come To See The Light – and the millenium will have arrived."

2) *The Infiltrators*, whose strategy is to get libertarians into the seats of power (the academy, the media, think tanks, existing political organizations) in the hope that by a sort of reverse Fabianism, we can undo past mistakes and "turn things around."

3) *The Snipers*, who have devoted their efforts to sharp-shooting at the more obvious and repugnant examples of statism, in the hope of either bringing statist programs to a halt, or arousing the public to the dangers such programs pose; activities such as picketing draft boards, blocking urban-renewal bulldozers, and refusing to pay one's taxes fall into this category.

4) *The Retreaters*, whose approach is one of liberating oneself, ignoring the state as much as possible, and encouraging others to do likewise – on the perfectly valid grounds that if everyone did so, all would be well with the world. Variants of this philosophy are the Waldenesque "build a cabin in the woods, and eat berries" approach, and the "start our own country, on the seas or in some remote location" idea.

There is, of course, an overlap in these four approaches – and all are both philosophically sound, and, to some extent, efficacious. The fact nonetheless remains that all of them (except the "infiltrative" strategy) also largely ignore a central reality we face in today's America – namely, the fact that one of the major determinants (if not the major determinant) of the course of events in this country is the *political* process.

Now, one may argue that politics is an "immoral" game, that political approaches are inherently coercive, that one cannot achieve pure ends by impure means, and so forth. But the fact nonetheless remains that we live in a society whose shape is largely determined by political processes, and that unless we take part in those processes, our chances of achieving our goals are not great.

Many libertarians have recognized this fact, of course – and have expended hundreds of thousands (perhaps millions) of man-hours in political activities. But, to date, we have reaped only a miniscule reward for our efforts.

And the reason for this lack of success, I believe, is simply that the present two-party system is fundamentally "rigged against us."

The Myth of the Two-Party System

This statement may seem a little strong, at first reading – especially as most of us have been

raised from childhood to believe that the two-party system is The Best Of All Possible Arrangements.

We are told, for instance, that it is the hallmark of a free society – with the Soviet one-party system held up as its antithesis. Conversely, we are told that a multi-party system produces "chaos", which in turn means loss of freedom for those persons so unfortunate as to live under such a system.

The fact of the matter, however, is that, logically speaking, if a one-party system is tyrannical, a two-party system is only one step removed from tyranny. And empirical evidence shows that citizens of a country which has a multi-party system can be just as free as we are here in the United States; such countries as Germany, France, and Australia, while hardly libertarian nirvanas, are not significantly more repressive than our own country – and Switzerland, which has a four-party system, is probably the least despotic of any of the world's major nations.

The second popular argument against a multi-party system – that it produces "chaos" – is, from a libertarian viewpoint, actually an argument in its *favour*. The prospect of a coalition government, where any of a number of small parties can veto legislation, is far from horrifying to anyone who is inclined toward a limited-government (or no-government) philosophy.

A third argument, often brought to bear against anyone who advocates the establishment of a third party here in the United States, is that (historically speaking), third-party candidates "can't win". This argument has two basic flaws in it, however.

First, third-party candidates *can* win – especially in local or non-partisan elections. Even at the national-government level, it happens occasionally. Third-party candidates have been elected to Congress more than one hundred times in this century, and there are two "third-party" Senators (Buckley and Byrd) in office at this very moment.

And second, "winning" (in the sense of electing someone to office) is not the only reason for having a political party – especially in the short-term sense.

In fact, this very mania for "winning now" is one of the factors that makes both of our present major political parties unlikely vehicles for libertarianism. Both the Democrats and Republicans are so concerned with "winning" that they are almost rabidly hostile to the idea of candidates who would "rather be right than President". A third party, in contrast, can take a long-range approach – running candidates with no intention of immediate victory, for the purpose of building up support and organization for future elections.

Thus, upon analysis, we can see that the major consequences of our present two-party system are as follows. . .

1) It drastically limits the range of choices open to the voter, and the range of viewpoints which can be expressed in the political arena.

2) It assures that there will be a cohesive majority in the government at all times.

3) It eliminates from contention those poten-

The Present Situation

As might be suspected from the foregoing analysis, the two major parties in America today offer little hope as potential vehicles for the promotion of libertarian ideas. The GOP, at the moment is nothing more than a step-n-fetchit organization for Richard M. Nixon — who, even at his most promising, was nothing to rave about, and who is now virtually indistinguishable from his 1968 opponent Hubert Humphrey. The Democrats, by virtue of assiduous efforts, have managed to make themselves even less appetizing. And the present outlook is that neither party is likely to take any stance in opposition to the prevailing semi-statist ethic in the foreseeable future; after all, they both want to win.*

Such third-party efforts as already exist are also less than promising. Wallace, although probably not significantly worse than Nixon or Kennedy, is "anti-liberal", and most of his opposition to the "liberal" *zeitgeist* is on points where libertarians would tend to agree with the liberals (e.g., social issues) rather than where we would tend to disagree (e.g., economic issues).

Such third-party efforts as may materialize on the "left" are also unlikely to offer much. At best they will be hyped-up versions of the Democratic Party (e.g., a Lindsay-Gardner ticket); at worst, they will be voices for totalitarian nihilism.

All of which leads this writer inexorably to the conclusion that the time has come for us to form our own party. We have the numbers to mount a meaningful effort, nationwide. We have both a desire and a need to achieve visible results. And, despite the fact that we certainly aren't going to elect "one of ours" as President of the United States — at least not in 1972 — there are a number of advantages to be gained by such action.

First, and perhaps most important, we will be able to get a great deal more news coverage for ourselves and our ideas than we have ever gotten before. Public interest in political issues and philosophies is always at an all-time high during Presidential election years, and the media people are actively seeking news in this area.

As a direct consequence of this fact, we will probably reach (and hopefully convert) far more people than we usually do; hopefully, some of these

*There is substantial documentation to support those who choose to interpret this lack of significant difference between the GOP and the Democrats in a more sinister light. Scholars on both the "left" and "right" have demonstrated quite convincingly that regardless of which party is nominally in power, the United States is actually governed by a group of people variously described as "The Invisible Government", "The Power Elite", "The Higher Circles", "The Usurpers", "The Insiders", etc.

people will turn out to support our candidates, and will thus enable us to locate hitherto-unlocatable libertarians (or at least sympathizers).

Third, we will be able to get some idea of how much support we really do have (at least in potential form) around the country; if we can get 100,000 votes the first time out, we know there're at least 100,000 libertarians out there — and whatever number we get, we can figure that it represents only a small fraction of the total, as not all of our potential supporters will even hear about our efforts, and many of those who do will be in States where we can't get on the ballot.

Fourth, a libertarian political party would provide a continuing "focal point" for libertarian activity — something that "one-shot" projects do not provide.

Fifth, we will be able to hasten the already-emerging coalition between the libertarian "left" and libertarian "right". At the moment, the former group is supporting people like Eugene McCarthy, while the latter is supporting people like Barry Goldwater. A truly libertarian party could draw support both from such "leftist" groups as the Institute for the Study of Non-Violence and the American Civil Liberties Union, and from "rightist" groups like the John Birch Society and the Liberty Amendment Committee, however. This would increase the political impact of the libertarian "movement", as "leftist" and "rightist" libertarians now usually wind up voting so as to cancel each other (when they vote at all). Furthermore, libertarian votes now get lumped in with "liberal" and "conservative" votes, whereas the votes received by a libertarian party would not be hidden in this manner.

A sixth point in favour of establishing a libertarian party is that by its mere existence, it would put some pressure on the other parties to take a more libertarian stand.

And finally, there is always the possibility that we might actually get some libertarians elected!

* * *

For a libertarian party to become a reality, it will need the support of at least a substantial portion of the people in the "libertarian movement". If you are in favour of this idea, please write *today* — while it's fresh in your mind — to the address below. We'll send you more material on this subject, along with a questionnaire soliciting your suggestions. You will also receive a monthly newsletter describing what progress we're having. So in order to help defray the cost of this operation, please enclose \$2. And get as many libertarians as you can to send their names and addresses (along with \$2) to us, also.

Committee to Organize a Libertarian Party
7748 Lowell Boulevard
Westminster, Colorado 80030

HERBERT HOOVER

RECENT HISTORIANS' APPRAISALS OF HERBERT HOOVER'S DOMESTIC POLICIES

FRANK MINTZ

(The author stresses that, except where indicated, the opinions expressed in this article are those of the historians cited — who, in many cases, are on the Left.)

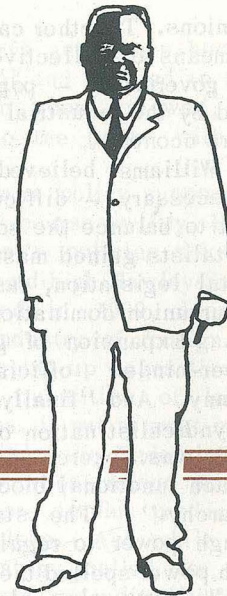
IV

Perhaps Paul Glad's article on "Progressives and the Business Culture of the 1920's" (1966) (1) served as the best introduction to the studies of the third group of historians. At any rate, Glad claimed that, far from withering in the 1920's, Progressivist ideas lived on — especially in some of the pronouncements and policies of business leaders. Indeed, prominent businessmen supported many of the signal legislative enactments of Progressivism in the years preceding World War I.

Herbert Hoover emerged after the war as the leading commercial appropriator of Progressive doctrine; and hence, for no less a Progressive than William Allen White, "Hoover symbolized the ultimate triumph of the progressive cause." White saw no inconsistency in this view because he believed Hoover's philosophy of business prosperity would achieve the elevation of the common man that Progressivism claimed to champion.

Twelve years before Glad's paper, R. L. Watson compared Hoover and Theodore Roosevelt, the progressive candidate for President in 1912. (2) He found Hoover and Roosevelt "were not far apart in their middle of the road position in the (Republican) party and in many of their basic ideas." Like Roosevelt, Hoover considered that his strongest support came from the party mainstream, and the two men also agreed on the need for tariffs, collective bargaining, conservation measures, and limited regulation of business.

Watson regarded President Hoover's important legislation, e.g. the Agricultural Marketing Act (1929), the creation of the National Institution of Health (1930), and the R.F.C. (1932), as continuing



Roosevelt's "cautious Progressivism." He believed, however, that Hoover and Roosevelt differed in the rigidity with which they held their views on policy. Roosevelt appeared amenable to change and compromise, while Hoover betrayed a very dogmatic attitude.

New Left historian William A. Williams's *The Contours of American History* (1961) contained an unusual section, "The Central Role of Herbert Hoover in the Maturation of an Industrial Gentry," which firmly linked Hoover with an influential strand of Progressivism. Basing his analysis on on private correspondence, Williams depicted Hoover as the leader of a sophisticated group of corporate Progressives and the epitome of the "liberal" businessman — "the keystone in the arch that leads from Mark Hanna and Herbert Croly to such later figures as Nelson Rockefeller and Adolph Berle." (3) Hence, it came as no surprise that one of the co-founders of *The New Republic* was — Herbert Hoover.

According to Williams, these Progressive businessmen had several fundamental aims, including the promulgation of a new social philosophy which could defend private property in an age of social unrest and the maintenance of a common front against "narrow-minded" capitalists who resisted all forms of government regulation. Hoover contributed to these goals by analyzing the structure of the American economy and offering suggestions to help the "system" function more effectively. Williams explained how Hoover saw the economy as a composite of "three basic functional and syndicalist elements: capital...labor, and the public at large, represented institutionally by government."

The economy moved forward when the units cooperated. Within industry, for instance, businessmen and farmer-entrepreneurs formed trade associations; similarly, labourers banded together

Frank Mintz was the editor of *The Rational Individualist* and holds a B.A. in history from the University of Maryland.

in unions. Together capital and labour collaborated by means of collective bargaining; and ultimately the government – popularly elected but administered by the industrial “gentry” – coordinated the entire economy.

Williams believed that Hoover grasped the – necessary – difficulties of employing government to balance the social order. If, for example, capitalists gained mastery over the drift of governmental legislation, fascism resulted; in contrast, labour union domination of the State led to socialism. Expansion of government at the hands of career-minded officials heralded bureaucratic tyranny. And “finally...Hoover saw the danger of a ‘syndicalist nation on a gigantic scale’ in which power was...exercised by a relatively few leaders of each functional bloc formed and operating as an oligarchy.” The state, in short, needed just enough power to regulate and coordinate; but too much power spelled the end of liberty.

Williams also placed emphasis on Hoover’s interest in reducing America’s domestic economic “surplus” through the penetration of foreign markets by peaceful, rather than by militaristic, means. Both Williams and another scholar Joseph Brandes (*Herbert Hoover and Economic Diplomacy*, 1962), believed Hoover’s policies as Commerce Secretary, e.g. the sponsoring of the American export trade and assistance for foreign loans, fully reflected this enlightened mercantilism.

As a fighter against the Great Depression, President Hoover utilized all the rudiments of the New Deal; but Williams testified that Hoover drew back from using the government to create a national syndicalism – only Franklin Roosevelt could perform that task. Instead Hoover employed every anti-depression tool “the Progressives ever owned,” from moral suasion and “wheedling” to direct Federal intervention. (4)

In the Summer, 1963, issue of *Yale Review* Carl Degler joined the group of historians who found Hoover’s principles “distinctly and publicly progressive.” (5) Degler noted Hoover’s early advocacy of collective bargaining for the railroads, his firm repudiation of laissez-faire in *American Individualism*, and his sponsorship of the cyclical public works plan (1920) as examples of Progressive thinking. In addition, he found Hoover to have had a sophisticated plan for curing the Depression. This program involved bolstering public confidence and inaugurating public works.

But Degler depicted Hoover as an activist within a “rigid” ideological mould. This ideology restricted Federal intervention in certain key respects: first, as much as possible, the Federal government had to avoid giving direct relief to the unemployed; then, it needed to maintain balanced budgets; finally, the central government could not directly own productive facilities which would compete with private enterprise (though it might develop

them initially). The latter consideration prompted Hoover to veto proposals for a Federal power plant at Muscle Shoals.

Did this ideology, as Schlesinger and Hofstadter charged, cause Hoover to contradict the popular will? Degler claimed that, “surprising as it may seem today the country was with Hoover” in agreeing that relief be a private or local matter. Further, most Americans regardless of political philosophy believed in balanced budgets. Thus, Nance Garner, Democratic Speaker of the House, made an impassioned plea for higher taxes to balance the budget in 1932. Not ideology but poor politics – failure to communicate with the public, inability to compromise – made Hoover unpopular.

Degler concluded that Hoover had much in common with Franklin Roosevelt, an effective politician whose New Deal was actually no more successful than Hoover’s program in combatting economic distress. Both men admired Woodrow Wilson, participated in the government planning of the Great War, and later advocated controls over big business. Even their Depression strategies made common cause of fighting demoralization: Hoover, just as much as Roosevelt, could have said: “‘All we have to fear is fear itself.’”

Perhaps the most radically revisionist interpretation of Herbert Hoover’s ideas and policies came from Murray N. Rothbard, a libertarian economic historian who wrote about Hoover in the early and mid sixties. In his article “Herbert Clark Hoover: A Reconsideration” (1966), Rothbard complained: “Rightwingers have been honored to refer to Hoover as ‘the Chief.’ It is high time to redress the balance.” (6)

Rothbard found Hoover’s proclivities “statist” from very early on. Speaking in Transvaal in 1904, the young Hoover argued that high wages lead to lower costs: “thus Hoover had adopted the egregious fallacy that wage rates are determined by the good or ill-will of the employer rather than by the competitive market” (which makes higher wages the effect of high productivity and lower costs). Later, Hoover’s *Principles of Mining* (1909) denounced laissez-faire, praised unionism and, in “neo-Marxist” fashion, repudiated the free-market tenet that labour services are a commodity. One quickly gathered from Rothbard that Hoover’s endorsement of Theodore Roosevelt sprang from deep commitment, not passing fancy.

By no means did Rothbard try to make a leftist of Hoover. The latter, like the leading corporate Progressives of the era, endorsed something akin to State monopoly capitalism or “neo-mercantilism”. This creed envisioned a “reign of co-operating monopolies, each raising prices and restricting production under the aegis of the central government.” (7) And Hoover’s career seemed like nothing less than a determined effort to inaugurate the new kingdom.

Rothbard charged Hoover's war-time Food Administration with imposing the strictest control of any of the World War agencies. He argued that its policies of fixing *minimum* prices on agricultural goods promoted cartelization since they forbade smaller producers from increasing their total sales by lowering prices. Hoover also pushed for standardized parts, and this policy eliminated many small specialty businesses.

What of Hoover's achievements in the Commerce Department? Unlike the vast majority of historians, whether conservative or liberal, Rothbard remained highly critical of Hoover's role there. He complained that, by fostering trade associations and "rules of standardized practice," the Commerce Secretary continued his war policy of frustrating smaller firms and encouraging cartels. And, surprisingly, Hoover's interest in public works amounted to presumably nothing less than an effort to subsidize contractors.

Rothbard saw all of Hoover's other activities in a similar light. Hence the Hoover-sponsored Radio Act of 1927 "imposed socialism" on the radio industry by nationalizing the airwaves and licensing stations. His support of Prohibition as "noble in motive" "(glorified) the State and its sacrosanct laws over the freedom of the individual." (8) Finally, Hoover pushed for another cartel — organized labour: he assiduously cultivated close ties with the A.F. of L. leadership, successfully pressed for the eight-hour day in the steel industry, and brought compulsory unionism to the railways by approving the Railway Labour Act of 1926.

So, the man who became President in 1928 had a modern liberal record, his voluntarism being "a ragged cloak of traditional rhetoric covering his willingness to greatly expand. . . the Federal government." In addition Hoover had accepted the New Economics of the twenties, which proposed "high wages" as the antidote for recessions. What remained? Hoover only needed to apply his philosophy to the economic downturn of 1929.

Employing "Austrian" laissez-faire economics, (9) Rothbard explored the roots of the Great Depression and discussed the effects of Hoover's anti-recession policy in *America's Great Depression* (1963). Rothbard found the source of the Depression in the monetary program of the Coolidge administration. Rather than pursue a "hard money" laissez-faire course in the twenties, the Federal Reserve System — the United States Central Bank — allowed credit to expand dangerously. The newly-created money percolated into the capital goods industries and allowed them to expand. The voluntary preferences of consumers dictated otherwise: in reality they did not wish to supply savings for such intensive capital expansion but, rather, had actually decided to patronize firms catering more to their desire for immediate consumption. (10)

By 1929, the Federal Reserve authorities became alarmed at their own conduct and decided to contract credit. A recession soon followed, and President Hoover rushed to the scene with his purported remedies.

While a strict laissez-faire policy supposedly allowed recession to run its course swiftly, Rothbard held that the President's policies severely hampered recovery. The record-high Hawley-Smoot tariff, which Hoover signed in 1929, deprived American agriculture and industry of foreign exchange. The practice of keeping up wages through voluntary agreements left quantities of labour unsold; or, in laymen's terms, it put a great many people out of work. Meanwhile, the Federal Farm Board's purchase of surplus wheat raised prices, and this encouraged still more surplus production which ultimately sold at a loss. And while true laissez-faire depression-strategy called for balanced budgets through *reduced expenditures*, Hoover increased government activities and tried to balance the budget with the highest peace-time taxes in American history.

Rothbard found only small differences between Hoover and the New Dealers, and concluded that Hoover "used every modern economic 'tool', every device of 'progressive' and 'enlightened' economics, every facet of government planning to combat the depression." (11) And the result? Hoover transformed a recession into the Great Depression, the worst economic crisis America had ever experienced.

V

Biographies of Herbert Hoover usually added little to the interpretations furnished by the three basic schools discussed above. Most biographies issued during the thirties scarcely concealed their purely partisan hatred of the thirty-first President. On the other hand, recent biographers — mostly journalists or close personal friends of Hoover — offered something closer to hagiography. (1)

Almost fifteen years ago, however, Harold Wolfe gave a little-known account, *Herbert Hoover: Public Servant and Leader of the Loyal Opposition* (1956), which was remarkably free from the partisanship that has continued to plague Hoover's political career. Nonetheless, his observations were still of interest: in writing of Hoover's World War I Food Administration, for instance, he described the policy of fixing minimum prices as a device to stimulate production, not (as Rothbard claimed) a conspiratorial scheme to conceal monopolistic practices. Of Hoover and the Commerce Department, he stated: "(Hoover) favored far more governmental leadership in planning for the future than did most economic leaders of the 1920's." Wolfe also sought restraint in both praise and blame when interpreting Hoover's response to the Great Depression. He thought Hoover ahead of his time

in seeking some governmental intervention to stem financial panics, but voiced subdued criticism of Hoover's approach to relief.

Wolfe described Hoover's role after his defeat in 1932 as an attempt to keep the Republican Party anti-New Deal in its philosophy, lest it become a pale reflection of Roosevelt's program. During the late thirties Hoover also turned into a critic of the Administration's interventionist foreign policy; apparently, he believed that meddling in foreign affairs strengthened the powers of the central government at home. After World War II, Hoover presided over several commissions seeking economy in government, and these posts brought him into close contact with what had come to be termed the "conservative" wing of the Republican Party.

Wolfe closed his biography with the hope that Hoover might regain the prestige lost during the Depression years: he could do this by becoming more non-partisan. And Wolfe already saw the former President moving in that direction.

If Wolfe seemed like a neutralist, Eugene Lyons exemplified the stand taken by the pro-Hoover camp of journalists and admirers. Lyons wrote prodigiously on his mentor, completing his most recent study, *Herbert Hoover: A Biography*, in 1964. (3) In this volume, Hoover emerged as an "old-style" liberal — neither a New Dealer nor a classical liberal, but something approaching a moderate Progressive. According to Lyons, Hoover acknowledged a widening role for government, but "where his path diverged more and more from those official liberals who in time obtained a monopoly of the designation was in his abhorrence of excessive government, distrust of bureaucratic agencies, distrust of bureaucratic agencies, and insistence on decentralizing political authority." (4)

Lyons invariably judged Hoover's domestic policies to be superlatively suited to America's needs, for their skillful mixture of voluntarism and government action maintained American traditions of individual initiative as they coped with the challenges of an industrial era. Lyons praised Hoover's activities in the Food Administration and Commerce Department, and he further defended Hoover's Depression-strategy at some length and argued that the Democrats — by undermining the President's legislation and destroying confidence — prolonged the economic tragedy. If Hoover had one flaw, it was the inability to be a politician, i.e., to play interest groups off against each other; but in Lyons's eyes this fault became a virtue.

The biography went on to characterize Hoover's subsequent criticisms of Roosevelt's New Deal as a defense of individual liberty in an era of rising totalitarianism. Hoover did not mean to attack all New Deal programs. Primarily his concern sprang from the fear that temporary, emergency measures might become permanent, bureaucratic fixtures.

Finally, while not strictly biographical, an article by Donald J. Lisio (*Wisconsin Magazine of History*, Autumn, 1967) (5) threw some light on an incident that clouded Hoover's stay at the White House and which certainly contributed to his unpopularity: the expulsion of the "Bonus Marchers" from Washington. Though the rout of the "Bonus Expeditionary Force" — unemployed veterans seeking immediate payment of a pension — won Hoover initial praise in some editorials, it earned him merciless hostility in other quarters.

After studying Hoover's later memoirs, Lisio absolved him from guilt in the Bonus episode. Lisio claimed that Hoover's instructions to the Army provided only for the evacuation of the marchers to quarters away from the business district. Lisio put most of the blame on General Douglas MacArthur for subverting these orders and, instead, driving the B.E.F. out of Washington altogether.

When Hoover learned what had happened, he first considered taking some steps to publicly disavow responsibility for the expulsion. But, after consultations, MacArthur and War Secretary Patrick Hurley convinced Hoover that the Bonus Marchers were dangerous insurrectionists who had to be driven from Washington, and that the President would get favourable publicity if he were linked to the affair. Hoover then made a *volte face* and publicly defended the expulsion as a necessary move. Commenting on this, Lisio observed: "by listening to Hurley and MacArthur... by accepting the Red Plot thesis... Hoover revealed a distressing lack of political sensitivity." He considered the subsequent slander Hoover was to endure to be part of a personal tragedy.

VI

It seemed clear that the moderate and more advanced groups of Hoover revisionists accumulated enough solid evidence to establish a fundamental truth about the man: he never advocated laissez-faire at any time during his political career. The efforts of Hofstadter and others to make Hoover into a classical liberal seemed fraught with contradictions. How, after all, did the sincere laissez-faire program of free trade and strict non-intervention suddenly become compatible with Hoover's continuous advocacy of tariffs, subsidized industries, nationalized airwaves, or a "Federal Farm Board"? Obviously the first group of historians failed to make their case.

Disagreement over the extent to which Hoover pushed for a "mixed" economy created the gulf between the second and third schools treated here. In large measure, such disagreement stemmed from the divergent economic theories employed by these scholars. To illustrate, Albert Romasco depicted Hoover's 1929 attempt to prop up wages and production as an important departure in the right direction, but he considered it doomed to failure because of

the "quasi-voluntaryist" implementation. Meanwhile, Murray Rothbard, the libertarian economist, held the same policy to be a crucial interference into the free-market process. And he saw it creating a serious logjam in the economy, rendering millions unemployed.

Some gaps still remained in the discussion of Herbert Hoover's approach to domestic policy. For example, although many historians illustrated Hoover's ties with Progressivism, they did not show how he *consciously* related himself to that movement. Thus William Appleman Williams found Hoover to be a bright leader of corporate Progressives, but he did not disclose how Hoover described himself.

Finally, the crucial question of motivation remained unsolved. What really induced Hoover to favour more increased governmental involvement in the economy? Williams and Rothbard offered two plausible answers. Williams viewed Hoover as a man who sincerely sought to maintain the capitalist corporate economy by proposing certain suggestions for "reform". Rothbard, in contrast, attempted a sort of muckraking expose of Hoover's activities and saw Hoover and his corporate and union associates explicitly using the government to enrich themselves at the expense of the public. Herbert Hoover — "well-intentioned" collectivist or an overt statist conspirator: future historians must decide.

FOOTNOTES

Section IV

- (1) See Paul W. Gladd, "Progressives and the Business Culture of the 1920's", *The Journal of American History*, 53 (June, 1966), 75-89; quote: 87.
- (2) See Richard L. Watson Jr., "Theodore Roosevelt and Herbert Hoover", *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, 53 (January, 1954), 109-129; quote: 109-110.
- (3) William A. Williams, *The Contours of American History* (first edition, New York, 1961), (Chicago, 1966), 426. Additional quotes: 427, 428, 438.
- (4) *Ibid.*, see also 425, 427-429, 429-430, 438. (Unfortunately, Williams did not specify just where Hoover made these comments on the American economy.)
- (5) Carl Degler, "The Ordeal of Herbert Hoover", *Yale Review*, 52 (Summer, 1963), 564. (Degler thus reversed his earlier views on Hoover, expressed in *Out of the Past*, 1959). Additional quotes: 570, 583. Also see: 571, 583.

- (6) Murray N. Rothbard, "Herbert Clark Hoover: A Reconsideration", *The New Individualist Review*, 4 (Winter, 1966), 3; other quote: 5.
- (7) Rothbard, "The Hoover Myth", *Studies on the Left*, 6 (July/August, 1966), 74. Additional quote, 72, — see p. 17 just before discussion of *America's Great Depression*.
- (8) Rothbard, "H.C.H.: A Recon.", 9. See also 7, 7-8, and *Studies on Left* art., 74-75.
- (9) Two Austrian economists Ludwig von Mises and his pupil F. A. Hayek developed this theory in the first three decades of the twentieth century. For more particulars on Austrian economics, which pinpoints the origins of the business cycle in fractional and central reserve banking, see von Mises's *Human Action* (1949), especially chapters 18-20.
- (10) Austrian economics identifies interest as ultimately a demand for time, i.e., a demand for present consumption. If interest rates are artificially lowered, capitalists mistakenly assume that consumers have a lower time preference rate than they really do — that they will allocate more savings for future over present goods, when in fact they have made no cumulative decisions to do so. Therefore, entrepreneurs will undertake capital intensive projects which eventually prove untenable.
- (11) Rothbard, *America's Great Depression* (Princeton, 1963), 295.

Section V

- (1) See David Hinshaw, *Herbert Hoover* (New York, 1949); Dorothy H. McGee, *Herbert Hoover* (New York, 1963); Carol Green Wilson, *Herbert Hoover: Challenge for Today* (New York, 1968).
- (2) Harold Wolfe, *Herbert Hoover: Public Servant and Leader of the Loyal Opposition*, (New York, 1956), 7. Additional quote: 91.
- (3) See also, Eugent Lyons, *Herbert Hoover: Our Unknown Ex-President* (1948); *The Herbert Hoover Story* (Washington, 1959).
- (4) Lyons, *Herbert Hoover: A Biography* (New York, 1964), 158. See also, chaps. 14, 15, 17-26, 28.
- (5) See Donald J. Lisio, "A Blunder becomes Catastrophe: Hoover, the Legion, and the Bonus Army", *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 51 (Autumn, 1967), 37-50; quote: 50.

to catch a thief

Roger Bissell

Judging from its title, this essay might appear to be a contribution to libertarian or anarchist theory in the form of a method for the apprehension of those who unrightfully take the material property of others. Far from it. This is rather an investigation into the nature of a much more insidious type of thief: the concept-stealer. More specifically, this is a critical analysis of the article by Ronn Neff entitled "The Liar Is A Thief" (*The INDIVIDUALIST*, May 1971, pp. 10-13).

In this article, Neff first develops the "fallacy of the stolen concept". In his own words, this is the violation of the principle that "if a concept is to be meaningful, its presuppositions must be accepted while that concept is being used."

(Historically, the original recognition of this fallacy was by Aristotle in his *Metaphysica*, 1006a, line 16. To my knowledge, the first modern mention of this fallacy was made by Ayn Rand in her novel *Atlas Shrugged*; while Nathaniel Branden gave a formal treatment of it in his article "The Stolen Concept", *The Objectivist Newsletter*, Volume 2, Number 1.)

Neff then introduces the Cretan Liar Paradox ("All Cretans always lie") which admittedly is not actually a paradox until reformulated, viz., "This sentence is false". Neff mentions several attempted solutions of the paradox as reformulated – including, notably, Bertrand Russell's theory of types – before attempting his own solution.

(As Neff describes it, Russell's theory of types "asserts that a sentence must not be a part of the subject-matter of itself, i.e., that a sentence must refer to a collection of things in which it is not included." He contends that Russell's 'solution' is invalid because it commits the fallacy of self-exclusion, a contention which we shall examine in more detail later.)

Neff's own 'solution' of the Cretan Liar Paradox entails the application of the fallacy of the

stolen concept argument to the sentence: "This sentence is false." He alleges that such a sentence is actually *false*, because "to use a concept (in this case, to use sentences) one must accept the presuppositions of the concept (in this case, that to assert a sentence is to attribute truth to it.)"

Thus, I take it, the sentence "This sentence is false" is false. Which further implies, one feels compelled to add, the sentence "This sentence is not-false" is not-false; and the sentence "This sentence is true" is true. All this appears to follow, after all, not only from the alleged falsity of the original sentence ("This sentence is false"), but also from Neff's claim that "to assert a sentence is to attribute truth to it."

But are either of these premises true? Are any of the reformulations or conversions of the Liar-sentence really meaningful? Indeed, does Neff's 'solution' actually do what it purports to do – namely, to *solve* the Cretan Liar Paradox? In a word: no. The whole discussion which Neff carries on regarding the truth or falsity of the Liar-sentence is futile, because *neither truth nor falsity can be attributed to a meaningless sentence.*

The Liar-sentence, as reformulated, is meaningless. And since the concepts of 'truth' and 'falsity' are genetically dependent upon the concept of 'meaningful', they are thus inapplicable to the Liar-sentence. To establish these claims as true, it is necessary to make a cursory study of that area of epistemology which deals with meaning – i.e., the *intentionality* of consciousness.

Intentionality and Meaning

In her monograph *Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology*, Ayn Rand identifies the two fundamental attributes of every state of awareness: the *content* (object) of awareness and the *action* (processing) of consciousness in regard to that content. Implicit in these two attributes is a third attribute of consciousness: the *directedness* of the action of consciousness toward the object.

That is, every state of consciousness is characterized by the fact that it is directed toward some

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object. Conscious organisms *select* certain aspects of reality for mental processing; their consciousness is said to tend toward, to refer to, represent, to signify, to *mean*, to *intend* some object which is its referent. Every state of consciousness is characterized by its meaning, its *intentionality*.

In particular, let us consider the process of *cognition*, the attempt to identify the facts of reality. A cognitive idea (cognitive content of consciousness) is a claim to have identified the facts of reality, it is a claim to knowledge of reality. When one's cognitive idea does in fact constitute recognition (correct, non-contradictory identification) of a fact of reality, one's idea constitutes *knowledge* and is *true*.

Knowledge is the product of a non-contradictory identification of the facts of reality; and truth is the attribute of that product, designating the character of the relation of that certain type of idea – namely, knowledge – to reality. Thus, the two concepts of 'truth' and 'knowledge' designate the same phenomenon – a non-contradictory identification of the facts of reality – from two complementary perspectives. In a very significant sense, then, *knowledge is truth*.

On the other hand, when one's cognitive idea (claim to knowledge) is an incorrect recognition of a fact of reality, one possesses ignorance and one's idea is false. Falsity is ignorance. But in either case – knowledge/truth or ignorance/falsity – one's cognitive idea is cognitively intentional, cognitively meaningful; it is a claim to knowledge of reality. Were it not such a claim, were it cognitively unmeaningful or non-intentional, it could not possibly be true or false.

Cognitive ideas, true or false, take the form of concepts, propositions and arguments. When concretized into linguistic forms, they are, respectively, words or phrases, sentences or clauses, and paragraphs.

These latter, material, linguistic tools of cognition are, *qua* tools of cognition and cognitive meaning and intention, clearly derivative from the former. Thus, if a given linguistic form is to be cognitively meaningful at all, it must be symbolic of intend, mean, refer to, stand for) a corresponding cognitive idea (mental form). Without such correspondence, a linguistic form possesses no cognitive intentionality or meaning, and hence cannot be either true or false.

Specifically, if a sentence corresponds, not to a proposition, but to a non-propositional aggregation of concepts, then it is meaningless and hence cannot be either true or false. Thus, as I stated above, neither truth nor falsity can be attributed to a (cognitively) meaningless sentence. To attempt to do so is to steal the concepts 'truth' or 'falsity' – to use them in contexts where they do not apply – to use them, while ignoring or contradicting the concept upon which they logically and genetically depend: the concept of 'meaningful'.

(Please note, however, that even though they do not correspond to any proposition, meaningless sentence are still sentences. Though linguistic forms (e.g., sentences) are derived from mental forms (e.g., propositions), they can be filled with all kinds of meaningless stuff or manipulated in all sorts of meaningless ways. Because a sentence is a *material*, concretized form of thought, it must take on some particular material form, some particular arrangement of words (whether spoken, written, printed, or whatever). And it is easy for someone who desires to, to focus on manipulating the material forms, ignoring their original connection to and source in mental forms of thought. A meaningless sentence, then, is a sentence which corresponds to no proposition, but merely a propositionally meaningless aggregation of concepts, which does conform to the proper material arrangement of its constituent words, that arrangement, however, not representing any propositional arrangement of concepts.)

What about the Liar-sentence then? (I am referring, of course, to the reformulation "This sentence is false".) Is it or is it not a proposition? Is it or is it not meaningful, as intended? To answer these questions, we must consider the nature of propositions (regretably, in brief fashion).

Propositions and Meaning

When concepts are arranged in a certain manner, they mean not only the natures and essences and the individual existents which they signify *qua* concepts. They also come to mean or *designate* certain things as being or existing. The kind of arrangement of concepts in which a designation of existence (or attribution) is made is a *proposition*.

An *existence proposition* (e.g., 'Existence exists', 'There are heroes') starts with the nature of its subject-concept assumed, and explicitly asserts the existence of its subject-concept's referents. A *subject/predicate proposition* (e.g., 'The Liar Is Thief', 'All cows eat grass'), by predicating certain attributes of the subject-concept's referents, implicitly asserts the existence of the subject-concept's referents.

The latter, subject/predicate propositions, mean that something exists by means of an asserted relation of identity between subject and predicate. This relation is designated by means of (some form of) the copula 'is', whether explicit or implicit. Examples of the former include: 'The Liar Is A Thief', 'In the long run, we are all dead', 'Aristotle was a student of Plato.' Examples of the latter include: 'All cows eat grass' (which implies that all cows *were* eating, *are* eating, or *will be* eating grass), 'Aristotle taught philosophy' (which implies that Aristotle *was* teaching philosophy,) and 'I will die some day' (which implies that I *will be* ceasing to live some day).

In general, for propositional truth to be possible, the subject term(s) must designate something

actually existing, at the same time (the tense of the verb-copula must agree with the time-of-existence of the existent designated by the subject-term(s)), and *in the same respect* (if the sense of the verb-copula is taken to be that pertaining to a physical object rather than a creation of the imagination, then the subject must designate something actually existing in the same manner) as the verb-copula indicates. (F.g., the sentences: 'The king of France is bald', and 'Unicorns exist,' are definitely meaningful, but are as clearly false; they thus represent false propositions.)

But for *propositional meaning* to be possible, the subject term(s) must designate something actually existing at *some time* and in *some respect*. Only then — in the case of a subject/predicate proposition such as the Liar-sentence purports to be — can the subject-term(s) be asserted (rightly or wrongly) to be related by identity to a given predicate. Without such a referent for the subject-term(s), a propositional identity-relationship (i.e., a proposition) cannot even be asserted. If its subject term(s) does not designate, an alleged proposition does not designate and is therefore non-intentional or meaningless, and is furthermore not a proposition.

Consider then the Liar-sentence (as reformulated): 'This sentence is false.' This sentence is *not* false, but meaningless, because the alleged proposition which it represents, 'This sentence is false', — or perhaps, 'This proposition is false' — is meaningless. (The following proof will deal with the former alternative, but will apply equally well to the second.) The alleged proposition is meaningless, because its subject-term "This sentence" designates *nothing at all* — nothing past, present, or future; nothing mental or physical; nothing period.

If it were said: 'This sentence: "I like rice," is false,' there would be propositional meaning, because there is designation by the terms "This sentence" of the sentence "I like rice." But without a specific sentence as designatum (object of designation) of the subject-term "This sentence," the alleged proposition 'This sentence is false' is meaningless (i.e., is not a proposition). And since the sentence 'This sentence is false' intends or represents a non-propositional (meaningless, non-intentional) group of concepts, the sentence, too, is meaningless.

It might be claimed that there actually is a sentence designated by "This sentence," and that the sentence so designated is everything within the single-quotation marks: 'This sentence is false.' But if this be the case, then we should be able to express it in a standard form: 'This sentence: "A is B" is false.' Substituting into this formula, we obtain: 'This sentence: "This sentence is false" is false.' Now observe that the outer sentence's subject designates another, inner sentence, all right, but that the inner sentence's subject designates nothing!

Thus, this ploy has not escaped the predicament at all, that being the meaninglessness of the Liar-sentence. If the same process be repeated, no matter how many times, the result is essentially the same:

'This sentence: "This sentence: "This sentence: "This sentence: . . . is false"" is false"', is false", is false.", is false.'

That is, the subject cannot be expressed; indeed, the Liar-sentence has no definite, finite subject at all. To repeat: "This sentence" designates nothing, no actually existing thing (infinity does not actually exist). The Liar-sentence: 'This sentence is false,' is therefore meaningless.

The same analysis applies to the other form of the Paradox cited by Neff:

G: Sentence H is false.

H: Sentence G is true.

Neither of the sentences G or H represents an actual proposition. The subject of sentence G, "Sentence H", designates sentence G, whose subject designates sentence H, etc., etc. And vice versa. For neither sentence is there an actual existent proposition, for there is no definite, finite subject. E.g.

G: Sentence H: Sentence G: Sentence H: . . . ?
 . . . Sentence G: Sentence H: . . . is false, is true, is false, . . . ? . . ., is false, is true, is false.

From this, it is but a short step to stating our conclusions here. I would be remiss, however, if I were to neglect to comment on the issue surrounding Russell's theory of types and the fallacy of self-exclusion — an issue treated in a most cavalier fashion by Neff in his article.

Logic, Intentionality, and Self-Exclusion

Throughout the history of philosophy, there have been basically two approaches as to the nature of logic: (1) the intentional view, which is the basis behind the Aristotelian Realist school (e.g. the mediaeval Scholastics, Henry Veatch, and the Randian Objectivists); and (2) the non-intentional view, which supports various Conventionalist theories of logic, most notably modern mathematical logic and the propositional calculus (e.g., Bertrand Russell and Alfred North Whitehead, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Rudolph Carnap, Kurt Goedel, Alfred Tarski, W. V. Quine, etc.)

As Professor Henry B. Veatch pointed out in his book *Intentional Logic* (upon which I rely greatly with respect to approach, if not terminology, during this section), the basic difference between the two positions is that the former recognize that the subject matter of logic includes both linguistic tools (e.g., words, sentences, etc.) as well as the mental tools (e.g. concepts, propositions, etc.) which the linguistic tools must intend or refer to if they are to be meaningful. The Conventionalists, on the other hand, focus strictly upon the nature of the linguistic

tools and operations. Let us observe how this basic difference manifests itself when each position tries to deal with the Cretan Liar Paradox in the face of the fallacy of self-exclusion.

(1) The Conventionalists (including Russell) have failed to understand that a mental tool *can*, in a very special manner, hold itself as its object – that we can have a concept of all concepts which is itself a concept, or a proposition of all propositions which is itself a proposition. Failing to understand this fact about intentionality and cognitive tools, they have denied the existence of self-membered classes, i.e., of concepts or propositions which include themselves among their referents. This has led them either to theories about meta-languages and metalogics or, in Russell's case, to a theory of a hierarchy of types.

In the latter case, an arbitrary rule was formulated which excludes *a priori* and by fiat all self-membered classes: "All sentences must refer to collections of which they are not members, i.e., in which they are not included." Or, "No sentence may be included in a collection to which it refers." Or, "*No sentence may be included in its own subject.*"

This formulation obviously does commit the fallacy of self-exclusion, as Neff so rightly pointed out. Its subject, the concept 'sentence', does include within itself the very sentence of which it is the subject (that sentence being a unit of the concept 'sentence'). I.e., the rule is included in its own subject, contradicting what it asserts. Its very existence and content make it a false assertion. (Please note, though, that it *is* a meaningful assertion, as I will demonstrate shortly, and thus is capable of being true or false, i.e., of being self-consistent or self-contradictory.)

Thus, the Conventionalist position taken by Russell is not a solution of the Cretan Liar Paradox, but rather an embarrassingly arbitrary and self-contradictory *evasion* of the problem. (The same applies with regard to other variants of the Conventionalist position, as Professor Veatch proves in his book.)

(2) The more consistent of the Aristotelian Realists, on the other hand, affirm the existence of self-membered classes. Because cognitive tools can themselves become the object of cognition, they too can be referents of the concepts 'concept' and 'proposition' and 'argument', and of propositions about all concepts, propositions, and arguments, etc.

More specifically, all propositions are referents of the concept 'proposition', *including propositions about all proposition*. That is, a proposition about all propositions: e.g., 'All propositions are composed of concepts' has the concept 'proposition' as its subject-term. And such a proposition, insofar as it *is* a proposition, is included within its subject-term, the concept 'proposition.' Thus can the Aristotelian affirm what the Conventionalists choose to deny,

namely, '*Some propositions may be included in their own subject.*'

At the same time, they also realize that it is impossible for a proposition to be its own subject, that any attempt to formulate such a proposition leads unavoidably to an infinite regress (as we saw above). To designate a particular, presently existing proposition, one uses the phrase "This proposition" or "This particular here-and-now existent proposition" or some other equivalent. But in the context of any group of concepts in the form 'This proposition is X', there is no particular here-and-now existent proposition for the subject-term "This proposition" to designate. It is in this manner that an Aristotelian Realist deals with the Cretan Liar Paradox (as reformulated), by applying the rule: '*No proposition may be its own subject.*'

Now let us briefly note the difference between the Conventionalist rule and the intentional rules of Aristotelian-Realism. The Conventionalist claims that no proposition is *included* in its own subject. But the Aristotelian-Realist holds that while some propositions are included in their own subjects, no proposition *is* its own subject.

The difference between a proposition's *being included* in its subject and a proposition's *being* its subject amounts to the difference between a proposition's being able to satisfy a non-specific, indefinite *conceptual* reference to itself and a proposition's able to satisfy a specific, definite *concrete* reference to itself. Whereas the former is possible, the latter is simply not.

The concept of 'proposition' refers to all propositions, past and present (already existing, or *actual*) and future (not-yet-existing, or *potential*). The qualifiers "All" and "Some" and "No" thus set up indefinite references to a number or propositions, *some of which are already actually existing*. Yet they also allow indefinite future reference to a number of propositions which do not yet exist, including most importantly here, the propositions in which they are used (which are in the process of being actualized).

On the other hand, the qualifier "This" sets up a reference to a definite, specific proposition – a here-and-now particular existent proposition – which cannot refer to the proposition in which it is used, since that proposition does not exist here-and-now, but (since it is still in the process of being actualized) only in the *future*.

Thus, when a group of concepts with "All propositions" or "Some propositions" or "No propositions" as its subject includes itself in its own subject, it does not result in an infinite regress since there *are* other presently existent propositions fitting the designation and which can relieve it of the burden of serving as the presently existing designatum of the subject. The group of concepts can later, once completely organized, be seen to be a specific referent of themselves – and thus to have

been one of their non-specific referents, while they were in the process of being organized. This allows one to complete the organization of such concepts into a proposition, without having had to chase one's tail in search of a specific referent.

But there is no such relief for any group of concepts with "This proposition" as subject-term. When one attempts to pursue the will-o'-the-wisp of making that group be its own specific, presently existing referent, one merely stunts (indeed, halts) the propositional growth of the mental process employing those concepts — one never gets 'closer' to the end of an infinite regress!

(This, then, reveals more clearly the special way in which tools of cognition can hold themselves *among others*, in an indefinite reference, which is made definite only in retrospect, by a separate, later act of focus. And for the same reason, it is impossible for a tool of cognition to cognize only itself. The very reason that "a consciousness conscious of nothing but itself is a contradiction in terms" (Ayn Rand, *Atlas Shrugged*, p. 694 pb), is that an infinite regress makes it impossible for a given conscious process to achieve cognition of itself as its sole definite, *finite* object.)

To conclude this section, let us make the following observations:

(1) The Conventionalist rule, 'No proposition (sentence) may include itself within its own subject', *is* meaningful and *is* a proposition, for it does not try to *be* its own subject. It is, however, included in its own subject, and is incompatible with its own content. It is therefore self-contradictory and *false*, by the fallacy of self-exclusion.

(2) The Aristotelian-Realist rule, 'No proposition may be its own subject', *is* meaningful and *is* a proposition, for it does not try to *be* its own subject. And although it is *included in* its own subject, it is compatible with its own content. It is therefore self-consistent and *true*, since its content is in accord with the impossibility of making a proposition be its own subject (due to an infinite regress, as we saw above).

(3) The Cretan Liar Paradox, in its reformulation ('This sentence is false.') is meaningless, and thus is *not* a proposition, and also *cannot* be true or false. This is because it purports to be its own subject.

(4) The Cretan Liar Paradox, *as originally formulated* ('All Cretans always lie', or 'All propositions by Cretans are false.') is meaningful and *is* a proposition. While it *does* include itself within its own subject and is incompatible with its own content, it does not purport to be its own subject. Although it is meaningful, however, it is self-contradictory and *false*, by the fallacy of self-exclusion.

Conclusion

I have adequately, I hope, substantiated my earlier claim that the series of words 'This sentence is false', is cognitively meaningless, and therefore

cannot be either true or false. The sentence purports to *be* its own subject, in flagrant violation of the requirements of the intentionality of cognition. The subject "This sentence" implores us to tend to, to look at (to make into an object of our cognitive awareness) some actual existent sentence, a sentence which just does not exist. Hence, the Liar-sentence (as reformulated) is a cognitively meaningless expression, one to which truth or falsity cannot be attributed.

This is what we originally set out to do, to refute the Cretan Liar Paradox. But in the process of doing so, it has become crystal clear that Mr. Neff has committed some grave errors, errors which must not go unidentified. Specifically, not only has he falsely accused the Liar of the epistemological crime of concept-stealing; but he has engaged in that very crime himself!

First of all, the Liar (original-formulation of the Paradox) was not a concept-stealer. He perfectly recognized the antecedents of all the concepts he used, and arranged them in a perfectly meaningful manner: 'All propositions by Cretans are false.' And in fact, only by making a meaningful utterance could the Cretan actually be said to "*lie*" and to be a "Liar". (A lie is a knowingly false statement, a knowingly self-contradictory statement, which requires that it first be a knowingly meaningful statement.)

Secondly, the *reformulation* of the Paradox, 'This sentence is false', is properly attributed by Neff not to the Cretan Liar, but to *later philosophers*. It is these shadowy figures who comprise the Epistemological Syndicate — perhaps we should call them Epistemological Crime Incorporated! — which are the ones who are engaged in concept-stealing. They have stolen not the concept 'sentence', however, but rather the concept '*false*', using it to apply to a meaningless utterance, a non-existent proposition, a non-propositional sentence. And they most certainly are *not* liars.

And thirdly, Neff, who attacks the Paradox as reformulated, claims that the reformulators are attributing truth to their utterance. "To assert is to attribute truth," he asserts. Through a series of linguistic contortions, he finally concluded that the utterance is actually false after all, since it is (he claims) self-contradictory.

Thus, Neff himself steals the concept '*false*', becoming the Epistemological Syndicate's unwitting partner in (epistemological) crime. Furthermore, in his claim that "To assert is to attribute truth", he also steals the concept 'truth'. To wrench some of Neff's own words out of their original context: "This sort of thing (concept-stealing) is more common than many philosophy students realize!!" Truer words were never spoken.

Mr. Neff has attacked not a Liar, then, but a Pack of Thieves. And by his method of attack, he has further deceived himself into believing that he has 'licked em', when in reality he has merely 'joined em'.

So it appears that even though the concept-stealing is, in Mr. Neff's case, apparently unintended (no pun intended!), some cognitive rehabilitation is definitely prescribed. And since anyone else who accepted his argument as valid is equally an accessory to the (epistemological) crime of stealing the concepts of 'truth' and 'falsity', the same applies to them as well.

For this purpose, I recommend two excellent books: *Logic As A Human Instrument* by Francis Parker and Henry B. Veatch, and *Intentional Logic* by Veatch. Despite some apparent errors in their treatment of the relationship of signs and symbols to intentionality, their works nevertheless comprise a valuable adjunct to Rand's *Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology* and Leonard Peikoff's lecture course on *The Objectivist Theory of Knowledge*, if read critically and in close conjunction with the latter.

Finally, to be a successful epistemologist, one must have much more than good intentions ('intention₁': to refute the Cretan Liar Paradox; 'intention₂': to possess the rationally valuable tool which is the recognition of the fallacy of the stolen concept). One must also consistently concretize that good intention — i.e. one must (1) give an authentic and valid refutation of the Cretan Liar Paradox, not one which commits the same error; and one must (2) properly use the logical tool which is the recognition of the stolen concept fallacy.

Only then can one avoid the epistemological injustice of concept-stealing. Only then can one avoid being "notoriously inept" in the epistemological branch of dikeology (the study or philosophy of justice), as Mortimer Adler is in the political branch. (See his statist-oriented books *The Time of Our Lives* and *The Common Sense of Politics*. And only then can one be a successful (epistemological) crime-fighter, with no hidden conflict of interests to reduce one's effectiveness.

Postscript Comments

Neff claims correctly that "to assert is to assert as a fact," and that "to assert is to attribute truth." Recognize further, however, that to assert is to mean something, to intend to convey something cognitively meaningful; and to assert as fact is to mean that something is a fact. If a given utterance is meaningless, then, it cannot be considered to be an *assertion*, in the proper sense of the word; it is a meaningless utterance. Thus, it is *not* an assertion, and does *not* attribute truth.

But Neff claims that "*all* sentences are assertions" and are thus meaningful, clearly an invalid

claim from our examination of intentionality. He then infers that to "assert a sentence is to attribute truth to it." Here the ambiguity of the verb 'assert' (to 'say' something, irrespective of its meaning vs. to 'meaningfully say' something) comes into play to obscure his invalid inference. It is definitely *not* the case that to 'assert' (say) any old sentence, irrespective of whether or not it is meaningful, is to attribute truth to it. If what one 'asserts' (says) is meaningless, one is *not* 'asserting' (meaning) anything, and one is thus *not* attributing truth or falsity to it — not validly anyway. And when one attempts to do so — as both reformulators of the Paradox and Mr. Neff have done — it is precisely the concepts of 'truth' and 'falsity' which one is stealing.

This ambiguity of the verb 'assert' is but one example of the conceptual sloppiness pervading Neff's paper. It is true that to (meaningfully) assert a sentence is the prerequisite of communication; but it is *not* necessarily true that to assert (say) a sentence will make communication possible, for the sentence may well be meaningless. And whereas it is true that to (meaningfully) assert a sentence is to attribute truth to it, because one has first attributed meaning to it, it is not true at all that to assert (say) a sentence is to attribute truth to it, for one is not necessarily attributing meaning to it at all.

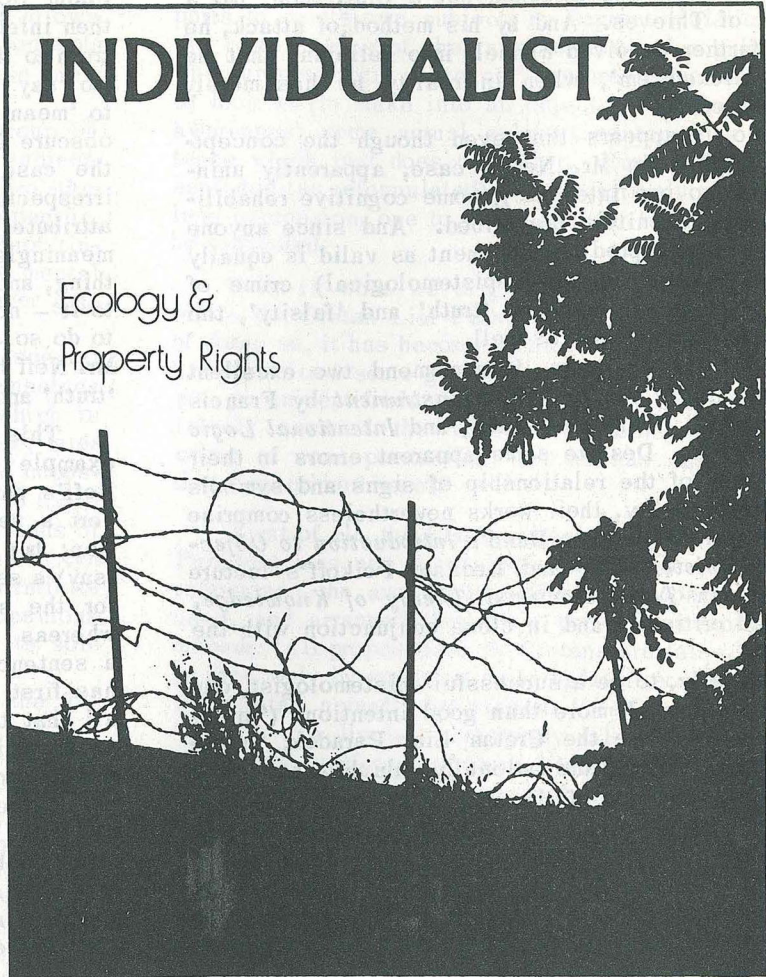
There are two final aspects of Neff's article on which I will comment. The first is Neff's assertion that his 'refutation' of the Cretan Liar is similar to that published in the late 1400's by Jean Buridan in *Sophismata*. We now can see that they are not the same 'solution' at all. Buridan is speaking of *propositions* (and thus, meaningful sentences only), whereas Neff makes his claims about all sentences. Furthermore, Buridan deals with the meaningful but false original form of the Paradox, whereas Neff deals with meaningless formulations. (Buridan cites, as his example, Socrates's proposition: 'No proposition is true.') Thus, although Buridan escapes the charge of concept-stealing, he has not refuted the reformulation of the Paradox either.

The second aspect which needs to be clarified is Neff's reference to the Principle of Bivalence. Properly formulated, it should read: 'Every cognitively meaningful sentence is either true or false.' Thus, some sentences are neither true nor false — specifically, cognitively meaningless sentences such as questions, commands, and utterances such as 'This sentence is false'. So denying that this principle applies to the Cretan Liar Paradox — far from being a 'solution' whose "error... is too obvious and mean to warrant discussion" — is indeed a sound step toward the proper refutation of the Cretan Liar Paradox! If this be a far less "respectable" solution than that of Diodorus Cronus (who hanged himself after failing to solve the Paradox), as Neff claims it is, I nevertheless invite him to join me and make the most of it!

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MR. NEFF REPLIES



To the Editor:

In this letter I should like to reply only to three of Mr. Bissell's claims about my paper *The Liar Is A Thief*. Other than this I most probably shall not be publishing a detailed reply to his essay. I certainly shall not attempt to do so in a brief letter and risk incurring another charge of being cavalier. I shall, however, take into consideration his discussion in my speech "Self-Referential Paradoxes" listed in the SIL Speaker's Bureau booklet (see page 21). I shall only state here that I consider Mr. Bissell's solution to these paradoxes to be largely *ad hoc* and that it is possible to construct a large number of Liar paradoxes without the use of particular quantifiers such as "this". Many of these other formulations are, furthermore, completely consistent with everything true Mr. Bissell has written about intentionality, and meet all requirements for possessing meaning. I employed as examples only the simpler of the Liar-propagating sentences, i.e., those which were most readily perceptible as generating contradictions.

Of the three points I want to take up here, the first involves Mr. Bissell's claim that his is the position I deemed too mean to warrant further consideration, and less respectable than Diodorus Cronus's alleged suicide. It is not. I was fully aware of the Veatch solution to the Liar paradox

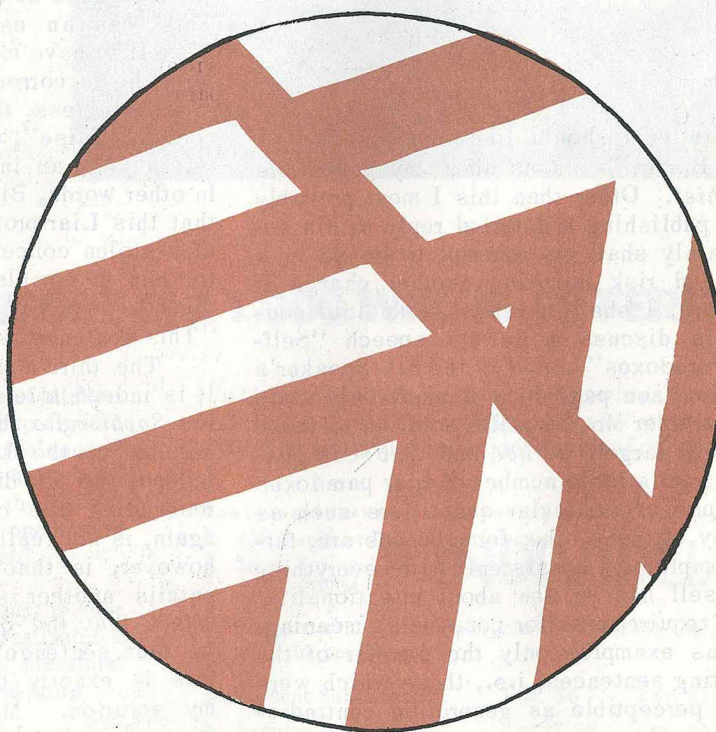
and rejected it as basically *ad hoc* when I wrote the paper. I did not discuss it in the body of the paper, because it would have involved much tedious discussion of intentionality and the nature of propositions, and made the essay entirely too long for publication in a libertarian, non-epistemological journal. The position I referred to in that manner was the position that there are some sentences which are neither true nor false, but which rather have the status of commands, wishes, prayers, questions, and the like. This is manifestly *not* Mr. Bissell's position. His claim is that there are some sentences which are neither true nor false, but are, rather, meaningless. (I agree with him here. I just don't agree that Liar-propagating sentences are among these.) He does not hold that commands, wishes, questions, or prayers are meaningless, and therefore does not hold that Liar-sentences have the same status as they.

The second concerns his claim that I have "unjustly" accused the Liar paradox of concept-stealing, supporting this with a discussion of the original Cretan version of this paradox and showing that it is indeed not guilty of concept-stealing. Which has nothing to do with any of my arguments. I was not talking about the original Cretan paradox, and, in fact, explained at the outset that it is not a paradox at all, but merely a false statement. This was an especially peculiar claim for Mr. Bissell to have made, in light of his own position; for if he is correct that "This sentence is false" is meaningless, then because it makes use of the concept "false", which presupposes meaning, there is, in fact, an instance of concept-stealing here. In other words, Bissell's own position would entail that this Liar-propagating sentence is an example of a stolen concept. It therefore makes no sense for him to complain that I have falsely maligned the Liar paradox, unless he wishes to contest that "This sentence is false" is a Liar paradox.

The third concerns the work of M. Bouridan. It is indeed true that in the passage I quoted from his *Sophismata*, he is not talking about the same version of the Liar paradox which I discussed. Indeed, he is discussing something much more resembling the original Cretan Paradox, which, again, is not really a paradox. His basic position, however, is that every sentence (or proposition) entails another sentence (or proposition) to the effect that the original sentence (usually named by that sentence's own quotation) is true. And this is exactly the principle that I employed in my solution. Mr. Bissell may cry that I have misused it, but I have, nonetheless, used it; and I fail to see what is accomplished by insisting otherwise. The matter was brought up only in the interest of giving the solution some historical perspective.

--Ronn Neff

A DISCUSSION OF 'TRUTH'



DR. H. RAYMOND STRONG

The purpose of this paper is to discuss an essential part of the Objectivist approach to the analysis of concepts. The technique with which we are concerned was introduced by Ayn Rand in *Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology*. (1) It consists of asking what facts "gave rise" to the concept in question (and of not permitting use of a "concept" for which an answer cannot be found). It is based on the recognition that valid concepts classify things (in reality). I will demonstrate that this technique is new and significant to epistemology by considering a well-known "paradox" and comparing various past approaches to its resolution with an objective approach. Note that I am presenting my own interpretation of Miss Rand's work so that this work is not a part of the Objectivist Epistemology (where "Objectivist" is viewed as a trademark of the work of Ayn Rand and her associates). When I refer to an "objective approach", I am referring to my own interpretation of Objectivism.

The paradox in question is an argument is in which a contradiction is derived from "plausible" premises concerning the concepts "proposition" and "true". It assumes a familiarity with elementary logic. The premises are:

(1) At any given time, any *proposition* is either *true* or *not true* (but not both).

(2) Let P be a *proposition*, let Q be a *proposition* stating that P is *true*, and let R be a *proposition* stating that P is *not true*. Then P is *true* if, and only if, Q is *true*; and P is *true* if, and only if, R is *not true*.

(3) The following entities named (A) and (B) are *propositions*:

(A): Proposition (B) is true.

(B): Proposition (A) is not true.

It is not hard to conclude from the above premises that (A) is true if, and only if, (A) is not true; but (A) is either true or not true — a contradiction.

I will consider five typical approaches to a resolution of this paradox. The first two reject (or modify) premise (3). The rest reject the usual meaning of "not".

I. The Type Theory Approach

Bertrand Russell's type theory handles such paradoxes by imposing a hierarchical structure of

types on concepts like "proposition". (Eliminating the complexities of the theory of types which are not relevant to our problem) we could say that "proposition", unmodified, is taken to mean "type 1 proposition". A proposition about type 1 propositions is a "type 2 proposition". A proposition concerning type 2 propositions is type 3, etc. The idea of "all propositions" is taken to be meaningless, at least as subject-matter for some proposition. (A major criticism of type theory is that its subject-matter includes all propositions: What is the type of the propositions of type theory?) For our paradox, type theory translates (A) and (B) to type 2 propositions:

(A): The type 1 proposition (B) is true.

(B): The type 1 proposition (A) is not true.

Thus it finds that neither (A) nor (B) is true.

II. The "Meaningless" Approach

The most widely accepted approach handles the paradox by claiming that (A) and (B) are not meaningful and that only meaningful propositions satisfy premise (1). Meaningful propositions are not allowed the kind of circularity (similar to "self-reference") exhibited by (A) and (B). Of course, the argument begins when we ask which propositions are meaningful. I call this approach "most widely accepted" because those who ignore the paradox implicitly accept something like it.

III. The "Both" Approach

Some "resolutions" of the paradox are effected by "correcting" premise (1) to say that a proposition may be both true and not true.

IV. The "Neither" Approach

The "neither" approach "corrects" premise (1) to say that a proposition may be neither true nor not true. This approach is more appealing when the paradox is presented in terms of "true" and "false" with "false" substituted for "not true" throughout. One discusses "three-valued logics" with values such as "true", "false", and "maybe", or "true", "false", and "unknown". This approach is sometimes indistinguishable from the "meaningless" approach. The "both" approach also sounds slightly better when "false" is substituted for "not true".

V. The "So What" Approach

Related to the "both" approach and the "meaningless" approach, the "so what" approach concludes: "Contradictions exist — so what?"

The purpose of discussing these approaches has not been to set up straw men. Doubtless, there are other approaches which could not be rejected in a few words. The purpose has been to exhibit

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the epistemological chaos caused by treating the concepts "proposition" and "true" as out-of-context abbreviations for (verbally stated) properties called "definitions" or as "ideal" existents which are "intuitively" seen to satisfy the premises. Almost uniformly, no matter what the result, the philosophers' approach to the paradox has been an approach to a game with a fault in its design. The "language game" has produced a nasty paradox; so we must simply change the "rules". Contrast this attitude toward concepts with the view that they are classifications of things for which definitions may be sought.

By the method of analysis of concepts introduced by Ayn Rand, we could isolate valid concepts "proposition" and "true". But we would *not* be "explicating intuitive concepts"; we would be classifying things. Many such classifications are possible. There is nothing magic about the word "true" that requires that it be used for a certain classification. If there had never been *valid* concepts concretized by the words "true" and "proposition", it would make no sense to "search for their meanings". However, it is not enough to find an historically valid definition for a concept. Justification must be supplied on two levels: (1) the concept defined must be a valid and *useful* classification, and (2) the definition must be given in terms of essentials in the context of *present* knowledge. (2)

The "meaningless" approach is probably the most historically accurate: when the concept "true" was first being isolated, propositions like (A) and (B) were not considered (nor, at that time, was it necessary to consider them). Most people are astonished by the paradox because it seems to challenge their certainty that they have grasped a valid concept ("true"). It requires a great deal of "psycho-epistemological" confidence to put aside the paradox with the unshaken (and usually correct) belief that one has grasped a valid concept "true" which is an adequate classification for one's own purposes.

The fact is that the historically valid concept "true" is not an adequate classification of propositions in the context of a general theory of logic. It is incomplete and was never intended to classify propositions in isolation or propositions with the kind of subject-matter of (A) and (B). It was certainly never intended to classify arbitrary strings of symbols, although, in some systems of "symbolic logic", the word "true" is now used for a valid classification of strings of symbols which is almost completely independent of of any meanings for the symbols.

When we ask what facts gave rise to the concepts "true" and "proposition", we will find that, for purposes of epistemology, the old (valid) concepts are inadequate. The above paradox is a fact leading to this conclusion. Such facts together with those originally discovered now give rise to more careful distinctions. For a long time logicians have recognized the need to distinguish propositions "in thought" from strings of verbal or written symbols. (When this distinction is

made, the latter are often called "sentences".) Moreover, even Aristotle recognized that the concept "true" which he had grasped was inadequate for a treatment or predictions in propositional form: when the concept which apparently satisfied premise (1) was extended to predictions, it imposed a paradoxical determinism on reality. (3)

Facts which gave rise to the concepts "true" and "proposition" follow:

1. Man operates at the conceptual level and holds and communicates knowledge in conceptual form
2. There is a specific form in which man learns to concretize concepts for examination or communication as concepts: this form is the *word* (written, spoken, or thought).
3. There is a specific form in which man learns to concretize his conceptual knowledge: this form is the *proposition* (written, spoken, or thought).
4. Man is neither infallible nor omniscient.
5. Only some of the propositions which man examines *should* be added to knowledge. propositions concretize knowledge of facts of reality, while others have only the *form* of the concretization of knowledge of a fact.

These facts were known in Aristotle's time and a proposition was classed as *true* when it represented knowledge of a fact. But the relation of the true propositions to knowledge and to fact was left ambiguous: a proposition which did not at one time represent a *known* fact could at some later time be discovered to be, *and to have been*, a true proposition. Many examples of true propositions were known. The concept was certainly valid. But it was not validly extended to the domain of hypotheses and arbitrary assertions. For this extension we must elaborate further facts:

6. Those propositions should be added to knowledge are products of reason: facts are observed (perceived); knowledge of facts is obtained directly by perception or inferred.
7. The "correspondence" between a proposition in knowledge and a fact involves the method of inference of the proposition. This correspondence cannot be treated as a property intrinsic to the proposition and independent of the method (for proof see the above paradox).

The concept "truth" which can now be isolated by an objective approach identifies the product of a process of inference. a proposition is *true* if it is a conceptual-level statement of the directly observed or has been obtained from this base by proper rules of inference. The property "true" applies to the proposition *together with its method of inference*. If a proposition is true, it is

true by virtue of its method of inference. The case of hypotheses can be handled as a part of the general case of answering the question, "Is it true that X?" where X is some proposition. If it had been the case that the property "true" were possessed by certain propositions independent of any method of inference, then this question could have been answered "yes", "no", or "unknown", meaning "X is known to be true", "X is known to be not true", or "The truth-value of X is unknown but exists independently of our knowledge" respectively. However, this set of responses is inconsistent with the interpretation of "true" being discussed, even though this is generally the set of responses expected. The questioner who expects these responses is presuming to judge the answer against a standard of omniscience.

In order to answer the question, "Is it true that X?" properly, one must examine it in context. A "yes" answer may indicate that X has been inferred and is known immediately to the answerer or that after some thought the answerer has inferred X or that X is "common knowledge" although the answerer has not followed the details of its derivation, depending on the context in which the question is asked. In this objective approach, anything but a negative answer indicates some evidence for X. Thus the negative answer with the least ambiguity is "There is no evidence for X" rather than "No".

A valid distinction can be made between propositions which are contradicted by present knowledge and those for which there is simply *no* evidence. However, there is little evidence for the cognitive usefulness of such a distinction (in spite of widespread acceptance). The Intuitionist school of mathematics (and philosophy) makes this distinction and classifies propositions as "true", meaning "known to be true", "false", meaning "known to be false", or "unknown" meaning "as yet unproved" with no commitment to an intrinsic truth or falsity. Unfortunately, intuitionists also equal "false" with "not true" so they are forced to reject the "law of the excluded middle" (premise (1) above). The objective approach under discussion does not bother to make the distinction in question.

The objective approach to the paradox discussed at the beginning of this paper would reject premise (2). A particular exception to premise (2) would be taken in the case of arbitrary assertions: if P is an arbitrary assertion, then "P is true" and "P is not true" can be viewed as arbitrary assertions. No arbitrary assertion is true. No proposition is true solely by virtue of its form (including "A is A" when it is viewed as an arbitrary assertion). In the context presented, both proposition (A) and proposition (B) of the paradox are arbitrary assertions. The fact that neither proposition is true *in this context* does not change the truth-

value of proposition (B) *in this context*. Now there are many approaches to this paradox which give roughly the same answer (e.g. type theory or the "meaningless" approach). But remember that we are not "changing or explicating the language in order to remove a paradox." We are simply classifying things (in this case, propositions) in a cognitively useful way.

The dismissal of a paradox is incidental. What is important is that the paradox arose from an invalid extension and misuse of concepts and that there is a correct way of handling concepts from which such paradoxes do not arise.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following is excerpted from a letter from Dr. Strong regarding "The Liar Is A Thief":

I found Ronn Neff's analysis of "This sentence is false" (TSIF) interesting and creative. However, I believe it still accepts too many rules from a game which is stacked against reason. The effect of his analysis of TSIF is a rejection of what I called premise (2) in the above essay, in favour of the proposition that a sentence is logically equivalent to the conjunction of itself with the assertion of its truth. Thus TSIF is logically equivalent to a contradiction and can be judged false, the falsehood of TSIF being logically equivalent to a disjunction which involves no contradiction and therefore no paradox. The analysis implicitly accepts the principle that truth-values are intrinsic to sentences. The difficulty with this principle is most easily seen by attempting to ascertain the truth-value of

TSIT: This sentence is true.

It does not help (or hinder) to assert that TSIT is logically equivalent to (TSIT and (TSIT is true.))

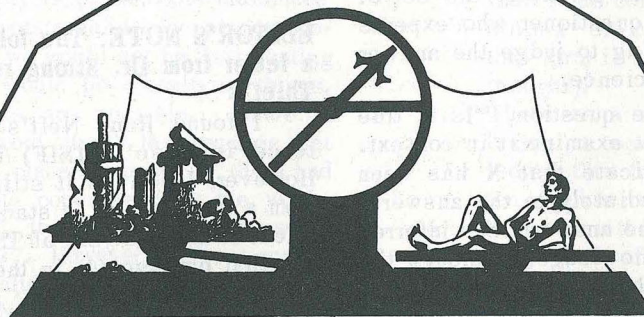
The difficulty may also be seen in the reasoning applied in extending the analysis to the example

G: Sentence H is false.

H: Sentence G is true.

If "...it does not follow from TSIF's being false that TSIF is true," then from "(b) that H is false" it does *not* follow "(c) that G is false." The analysis does work for H, however, so H can be judged false, leaving us in the unfortunate position of concluding G's truth.

I agree that the Liar paradoxes involve the fallacy of the stolen concept. I maintain that concepts are being stolen at a much greater depth than is indicated by the above analysis. We have in English a valid concept "true" (not the modern logicians'). The application of this concept to arbitrary assertions is simply inappropriate since it is not a property intrinsic to assertions. The concept "inference" is epistemologically prior to the concept "true". To assert the truth of a sentence is to assert the existence of some method by which it can be inferred.



ANARCHISM & JUSTICE

PART III

R.A. Childs, Jr.

VIII Conservatism, Tradition and Justice

Conservatism is a general name for a wide variety of positions in social and political philosophy, embracing everything from monarchism to fascism, from traditionalism to *laissez-faire* capitalism. In this section, we shall be concerned mainly with the traditionalist approach, since other variants of conservatism will be treated elsewhere under different headings.

Traditionalism is a doctrine espoused by such thinkers as Edmund Burke and Russell Kirk, and does not attempt an abstract justification for the State *per se*; in fact, it emphatically denies the

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necessity or possibility of such abstract justification. In his introduction to the Gateway edition of John Locke's *Second Treatise of Civil Government*, for example, Russell Kirk refers to the natural rights of Locke's philosophy as "bloodless abstractions", and in many works denigrates what he calls man's "puny private stock of reason" which claims to be able to discover what sort of society and government are right for man and what are not. Thus traditionalism is primarily an *epistemological* position, a position denying the efficacy of man's reason in discovering certain things about reality. Why should man hold to traditions? Basically, the answer is that the individual's reason is "puny" and therefore he should rely on truths and rules of behaviour adopted by the race, by mankind in general, across a period of centuries – the "common wisdom of mankind", as it is often referred to.

Conservatism, however, despite the denials of explicit justifications, *functions* as a justification of the State, and it is the grounds of this function that we shall consider here. What this doctrine maintains is that man's reason is not competent to discover or construct principles of ethics, and that *therefore* man should follow certain traditions, established methods of procedure, of dealing with certain problems, of ordering social life. In essence, these conventions are held to be valid *because* they are established, because they are a part of a grand and integrated system of social traditions which together constitute "Western Civilization". In the conservative literature, those who presume to judge and evaluate such conventions by means of reason and moral principles are often sneered at as "rationalists" or "extreme *a priori*ists". This sort of approach is the heart and soul of Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, to which Thomas Paine responded by publishing *The Rights of Man*. This is the type of social theory whose heart and soul are expressed in the maxim of Burke's that society and the State are "a bond between God and man, and between the dead, the living, and those yet unborn. . . ."

This general position is an important one to consider because a great many conservatives and libertarians hold to it, and thus hold that abstract justifications of the State and other institutions are really neither necessary nor desirable. And, in mixture with other conservative tenets, it is perhaps the single most important doctrine preventing conservatives from becoming true libertarians, *radicals* in defense of liberty and in opposition to the *status quo*. And, for reasons which we shall consider, it is utterly deadly to any attempted defense of liberty.

In this section we will consider the questions of how traditionalism is a variant of legal positivism, already discussed, the nature of tradition itself as a guide to actions, and why conservatism cannot advocate a truly free market consistently.

Why is traditionalism a variant of legal positivism? Focusing not on accidentals, but on the essential ethical structure which they have in common, the answer is simple. Legal positivism postulates a basic norm, a constitution, legal code, or the State itself, which is assumed to be valid. This is not itself justified by means of anything else, such as rights. Rather further norms and legal rules are justified in terms of this basic legal system. The basic legal system is postulated as valid, and then the entire State system of legal norms is "validated" by reference to and deduction from this basis. Note that the entire *system* of law is assumed to be valid.

The position of traditionalism is almost exactly the same, except that instead of postulating the validity of the basic *legal* norms, it postulates the validity of the basic *social* norms, or traditions and conventions. Actions other than the traditional norms are then justified or criticized by reference to basic traditions. Conventions or traditions then become the means by which one validates rules of action, and they themselves become immune to and exempt from criticism. If a rule or action coheres with the traditions of the society, of "Western Civilization", then it is valid, or binding. The conservative-traditionalist does not uphold the supremacy of the *State per se*, but only of a system of traditions, of which the State is an integral and indispensable part.

If traditionalism is thus a variant of legal positivism, then the problems which proved insuperable in positivism will also apply to it. But there is a great deal more that can be said.

The contention of most traditionalist conservatives is that the State is a part of Western Civilization, a fundamental tradition which cannot be done away with. There are of course *innumerable* patterns of human values, actions and institutions throughout the history of Western Civilization. Was a man being burned at the stake in the 15th century establishing a sacred tradition, or was it an aberration of tradition? Was the wreckage of the Crusades a consequence of tradition, or an aberration? Likewise with all the wars, incarcerations, and so forth, throughout the history of the western world. Are all of these to be considered a part of Western Civilization, and hence of tradition?

Now there are several interrelated questions to be asked. First and foremost, we have seen that the traditionalist assaults reason as being impotent. He also urges us to put our faith in tradition because it is an expression of the wit and wisdom of all mankind. If this is true, then *by what means* are we to identify traditions themselves, if not by using our reason? Secondly, if the reason of the individual is impotent how does it somehow become *potent* by being merged into the "general wisdom (reason) of mankind"? Thirdly, there are innumerable tradi-

tions throughout the history of Western Civilization, even contradictory traditions. How then are we to choose between divergent traditions, if not by reason? (28)

Strangely enough, these questions, in one form or another, have been put to traditionalism by dominant figures in what is perhaps the central philosophical school of Western Civilization: the Aristotelian-Thomistic school (and, in fact, even by the Platonists.) Thus note the following from two respected Thomistic philosophers, Cardinal Desire Mercier, in many ways the crucial figure in the Thomistic revival in philosophy in the 19th and early 20th centuries, and by Peter Coffey. (29) Mercier, in correctly identifying the fact that traditionalism is ultimately an *epistemological* position concerning the nature and scope of human reason, says: "How could a man find out practically what is the general belief of mankind unless he first trusted his own senses and his own individual reason? If the reason of the individual is open to mistrust, surely the general reason, the collection of all individual reasons, is no more trustworthy." Coffey, in turn, writes that "the attainment of truth and certitude is the work of individual human minds; knowledge is an attribute only of individual minds. If, therefore, there is not in human minds taken individually any native power or capacity to attain to a certain knowledge of truth, neither can such power or capacity be forthcoming in the collectivity: if each of them is essentially unreliable, no conceivable collection of them can be reliable, much less infallible. . . . By proclaiming, therefore, the powerlessness of the individual reason, they strike equally at the universal or collective reason. . . . In ultimate analysis it is really an abdication of reason on the part of the individual to assent to any judgement merely because he finds everyone else assenting to it." (my emphasis) Coffey goes on to show that if people assent to something, that assent is either justified, or it is not, i.e. it is either based on evidence, or it is not. If it is, then one should assent to it because of the evidence, and not because of the mob assent; if it is not based on evidence, then it is irrational to assent to it.

It is interesting to note here that both the tradition of Platonism and the gigantic Aristotelian-Thomistic tradition in philosophical thought, which in many ways form the core of Western culture, are both unalterably opposed to traditionalism in principle as an approach to knowledge and ethics and that, therefore, *the doctrine of traditionalism is in violation of fundamental traditions at the core of Western Civilization*. Thus one might almost say that if traditionalism is true, then it is false, for its being true would undercut a fundamental tradition which its alleged purpose is to uphold.

Our question, then, boils down to this: granted that the State is a part of Western Civilization,

why does that somehow *justify* it? Either these traditionalists must claim that "whatever is, is right", or they must have some rational standard *outside* of that tradition with which to judge traditions, to evaluate them, a standard which alone makes it possible to distinguish "good" traditions from "bad". If they adopt the first alternative, then all they can do is to sit back and justify everything which happens after the fact. This would be equally true if anarchists succeeded in supplanting the State with a free and just social order (assuming, for the moment, that this is possible).

This sort of *ex post* ratification and justification of whatever happens in human history places these traditionalists in a totally *amoral* position *before* any specific event happens, for without an outside standard, and without smuggling one in unawares, any time they choose A over B *before* one has happened, they are simply *guessing* or *predicting* which one will happen. For without an outside ethical standard, how do they know that action B, which they oppose, might not itself be a part of a *new* tradition, destined to sweep the the historical scene, so to speak? How can they ever claim that one tradition or set of traditions is *better* than any other? And once they have accepted the necessity of that outside standard, tradition itself becomes irrelevant because by applying such a rational standard to reality one can create *new* traditions in place of older and corrupted ones, i.e. one can use *reason* to guide men's choices and actions, which is precisely the position taken here.

If the traditionalists were to freeze the existing *status quo* of conventions, and proceed to end the process of historical and cultural change, then stagnation would be the result. But if he were to take this path, culturally "outlawing" change and innovation, so to speak, then the initial traditions with which we began have still not been justified themselves. And more: since change is a part of the traditions of the West, one would be contradicting tradition by freezing any specific set of traditions.

Since we have identified what that outside standard which we have mentioned above must be viz. (in the social realm) justice, natural law, or man's rights, then we are no longer tied to *any* specific tradition just because it is a tradition. This is the case with the State. And when we look at the tradition established by *that* institution, the tradition stained by aggressive violence, war, exploitation, robbery, murder, arbitrary commands and the like, when we not only look at its nature but *judge* it with the standard and principle of *justice*, then we clearly can see that it has always existed in virtue of its sought-after monopoly on violence and the initiation of force. We see further that this is the single characteristic which historically explains the greatest number of others,

and makes the greatest number of others possible. This means that the essence of the *historically-based State* is institutionalized *injustice*, that throughout history the State has been nothing but the most successful criminal gang in a given geographical area, seeking, claiming and often exercising a monopoly on crime, on the coercive, political (as opposed to economic) means of gaining wealth in society. Not only, then, is the historically-based State *not* justified, it is quite the opposite of being a need of man in a social context. If someone were to claim that a State could exist without being this *kind* of institution, then our response would be twofold: (a) if it is truly different *in kind*, then why do you, in violation of Occam's and Rand's Razors, integrate it with another, almost contradictory, concept, in utter disregard of cognitive necessity? and (b) in any case, if you advocate such a thing, the burden of proof is on you to make out your case, which must be done by means of more than mere assertions that such an institution is possible in reality.

But, of course, if we do propose this last, namely a State different from historical States, then we are again stepping outside of tradition, and thus tradition itself has ceased to be our ultimate justification for our institution.

There are two further points to bring up. The first concerns the nature and necessity of conventions or traditions, and the attempt by conservatives to build their case for traditionalism out of this objective need for conventions. A *convention*, properly speaking, is a rule or policy of action which is arbitrarily adopted initially, within limits, but which thereafter becomes accepted and treated as an objective norm of human action or behaviour. A convention which has been widely adopted throughout a given culture we call a *social convention*. A social convention which prevails for a number of generations we call a *tradition* in society. Now it is the claim of the conservative that traditions, or conventions, are necessary for man to live and prosper in society, and that without them, social life would be impossible for man. Conservatives point to such wide-ranging traditions as language, a legal system, and a commonly accepted moral code. The conservative points out that it would be literally impossible for men to function if they were to constantly reexamine all the principles and rules that they live by, or for each and every generation to take the liberty of throwing off old traditions in favour of new rules of action. Furthermore, they maintain that it is impossible for the vast bulk of the human race to think out rules of conduct on their own, and that hence it is best for them simply to accept traditions adopted over centuries. Those who, like classical "rationalists", traditional "ideologists", and modern libertarians, hold up an abstract standard to judge existing institutions will, they claim,

in the long run do more harm than good. The question which brings the conservative dilemma into clear focus at this point is simply: *by what standard?*

For it is true that most men have neither the ability nor interest to rigorously establish moral principles on their own, or to examine the basis of existing institutions. It is also true that, within limits, men need certain conventions, such as language, in order to attain to a civilized social order. But observe one thing: the conservative is in effect arguing that these are objective needs of man. The answer to the conservative dilemma lies in the fact that once he has attempted to argue, or suggest, or imply, that conventions or traditions are a need of man, *he has set the standard by means of which traditions and conventions can be evaluated and even constructed by man*. Conventions are arbitrarily adopted *within limits*. This means that within those limits, *it does not make any difference* which of several alternatives are chosen. Take the case of language, which is built up over a long period of many centuries. The basic context of a language, the basic rules defining its structure and content, are derived from a consideration of its purposes: cognition and communication. The means that man uses to concretize concepts is linked to his sense organs, e.g., a *word* is generally an auditory-visual symbol, thus linked to sight and sound. As languages are built up, the word-symbol options for a new word symbolizing a new concept are progressively narrowed, e.g., the rules of grammar come into play. At no step in the development of a language-system *completely* arbitrary, for this would mean that it has no purpose or context, no facts of reality which it must take into account. What is true of language is also true of a legal system and a moral code.

The conservative thus cannot consistently claim, simultaneously, that conventions or traditions are an objective need of man, and yet claim that there are no objective rules which one must observe in constructing conventions, or following old conventions. If they are an objective need of man, then that sets the standard for judging and criticizing them. This gives us the means of determining within what context, what limits, a convention is *in fact* properly arbitrary, and in what contexts or limits it is *not* arbitrary. It also gives the means by which to judge between conflicting or alternative traditions and conventions, and provides us with the base for rationally rejecting conventions or traditions which are in conflict with their supposed ground: man's nature, and his needs as a certain kind of living organism. Once we accept this, which we must unless we are either to claim that conventions are *not* an objective need of man, we have once again placed ourselves outside the realm of traditions and conventions *as standards*, as ultimate ethical criteria, as a fundamental

and unquestionable basis of further discussion. In short, if it is man's nature as a rational being, and the requirements of his proper survival, which make conventions necessary for man, then that is the standard and means by which to criticize, evaluate and construct conventions. The conservative cannot have it both ways: either conventions and traditions are needs of man, in which case they must be judged by reason, or they are not needs of man, in which case there is no argument for respecting them.

In either case, traditions become subordinated to a rational ethic, the social aspects of which we have considered earlier.

One further point remains to be made, not against traditions *per se*, but rather against the conservative approach to social philosophy in general. In many ways, of course, once we accept the traditionalist approach to social philosophy, we are trapped in a web which allows for no fundamental or radical change, for unless we are Hegelians, radical change would necessarily contradict the framework within which we are choosing and acting. But there is one aspect of conservatism which has not been generally subjected to scrutiny or criticism, and that is the American conservative's general adherence to a free-market economy. Indeed, many otherwise radical libertarians have a deep-seated affinity and affection for conservatism because of the conservative pro-free market and pro-private property rhetoric. But here we shall question that rhetoric, and thus the basis for that affinity.

We have seen earlier, in our discussion of Ludwig von Mises, that from a moral framework, the conventional distinction between *private* and *public property* rests on considerations and definitions in terms of non-essentials. The real moral distinction, and the only important one, is between *just* and *unjust* titles to property, which is what is involved in exchanges. It is indeed true that the conservative pays lipservice to the free market and private property, but what does such adherence mean, i.e. what is the actual concrete referent of such a concept, what is its ideological cash value when we get down to the concrete reality which alone exists — that reality of which human concepts are man's unique means of being aware? This is not an easy question.

But we mentioned earlier that there were three approaches possible in our approach to property and ownership: we could uphold a praxeological theory of property titles, a juristic theory, or a moral theory. The conservative theorist, almost invariably, upholds a blending of the first two, of property titles which have "traditionally" (praxeologically) been held by a given individual or family, and of property titles which have been granted to a given individual or group by the State, both without reference to the justice of the traditional or State-

granted property titles. This means that when the conservative talks about the free market, he may or may not be talking about the process of people exchanging their legitimate or just titles to property.

In our discussion of Ludwig von Mises, we considered the fact that positive acts of government intervention cannot be defined or analyzed without reference to a theory of justice in property titles. Now I want to make a corollary point: *given* such a theory, any government which acts to maintain an existing unjust distribution of property by means of force, and which protects the "freedom" of exchange of juristically-defined property titles by force is in fact, in that very act, acting to intervene in the economy, i.e. is interfering with the free market. This is crucially important in analyzing the difference between libertarianism and conservatism, for both of these in fact and in reality uphold different theories of property, i.e. when they talk about "private property" or "the free market", they are not talking about the same thing.

People have been aware for a long time of a basic fact of human communication: when two people use the same word in talking to each other, they may not be talking about the same thing. In short, the word-symbol may refer to different concepts in the minds of each. This means that conflicts or arguments over certain issues in such contexts are not arguments over the same thing at all — in fact, they are not, strictly speaking, *arguments*, for the opponents are talking about different things. Now we are making the point that conservatives and libertarians, when defending the free market and private property, may in fact be talking about different things. The words of the conservatives and libertarians are the same, but the concepts differ. They are not the same in the least.

Let us take the case of *feudalism*, to see what the positions of each might be, and to clarify how they might differ. Feudalism, for the purposes of this essay, can be defined (following Murray Rothbard) as "the seizure of land by conquest and the continuing assertion and enforcement of ownership over that land and the extraction of rent from the peasants continuing to till the soil." (*The Ethics of Liberty*) Now how shall we view feudalism? Shall we abolish it or not? Why or why not? How? The conservative, in this case, generally regards the land owned by the landlord in such cases (which cases still exist in Latin America, Asia, and Africa, incidentally) as a *legitimate possession*, i.e. as a rightful title which should be protected by the State. The conservative might also uphold the "right" of the landlord to control the land in accordance with his own desires, including the selling of the land (though often here the conservative may come out in favour of *entail*, i.e. of forcibly preventing the landlord from selling any

of his land). The libertarian, on the contrary, would view the case of feudalism as a case of *continuing aggression*, as Rothbard has called it, and would advocate returning the land to its original peasant owners or their heirs. The important thing is that because they have different theories of property titles, conservatives and libertarians will differ about what constitutes legitimate private property and what does not; they will also differ about what actions protect the free market and free trade and what do not. In the above case, the conservative would hold that the State's protecting of the property titles of the landlords constitutes protecting "private" property, while the libertarian would, properly, hold that such enforcement constitutes a continuing aggression against the legitimate owner, the possessor of the just title to the property. Likewise, should the State or any other agency defend the landlord in his exchange of the property, the conservative would call *this* a unit of the free market, while the libertarian would call it a unit of protecting theft.

Thus we can see that mere agreement in rhetoric is not enough, and that libertarians who have felt comfortable with conservatives for decades because of their mutual use of the terms "private property" and "the free market" might best re-examine their premises. It is my own suggestion at this point that this be carefully considered, and that in fact the libertarian might do well to completely drop the reference to "private" and "public" property, rather confining himself to the much more fundamental, and much more difficult, task of analyzing justice in property titles.

So far, libertarians have been largely content to have considered the *grounds* for ownership *per se*, i.e. as a system, without examining the equally important and corollary of the nature of just *titles* to property. But *both* are necessary. For once we realize that the public/private-property distinction rests on non-essential distinctions, we must also come to realize that all actual (as opposed to potential) property is owned by someone, i.e. someone makes decisions over it, concerning its use, control and disposal. (30) This means that the only important question left is: *who* shall be that decision-maker over a specific property? And *this* is a question which must properly be answered by a theory of ownership. Two people differing radically in their answers to this question, as the conservatives and libertarians differ, will in fact completely disagree about what constitutes aggression and what constitutes defense, about what constitutes "free trade" and what not, about a whole host of fundamental questions in social philosophy.

To blithely pretend, at this point, that merely because conservatives and libertarians have the same words in their vocabulary when it comes to advocating something, that therefore they funda-

mentally agree, with just a few minor differences, is a particularly dangerous and superficial attitude to take. To advocate an alliance between conservatives and libertarians because of rhetorically "similar" goals is also extremely dangerous before the concretes of their differing concepts of justice are discussed. To sum this approach up, one might rhetorically ask those libertarians who do feel an affinity between themselves and conservatives because of a common rhetoric: do you also feel an affinity between yourself and cannibals who hold that they have a right to eat you simply because both you and they believe in *rights*? If you say: "No, because we mean drastically different things by 'rights'," then my point has been made: conservatives and libertarians have drastically different theories of justice in property titles. This means that the supposed similarity between conservatism and libertarianism should be subjected to the most rigorous scrutiny. Cut off from a conservative view of property titles, libertarians may at long last feel a much-needed independence from conservatism, and may at long last feel that their world view is *theirs* to construct, and stop living as parasites off an ideology that was fundamentally, and validly, found wanting in the 17th century.

Conservatism, in summary, is also a dead end for man. From beginning to end there is no justification for anything in conservatism. Insofar as traditions should be followed, it is because they are consistent with a rational ethic. Insofar as traditions conflict with a rational ethic, they should not be followed. Conservatism can provide for neither a justification of the State, nor of traditions, nor of liberty and the free market. Thus, we must look elsewhere in our examination of attempts to justify the State, and elsewhere in our attempts to establish justice. (31)

(to be continued in the October issue)

FOOTNOTES

28. This last point is made by Murray Rothbard in "Conservatism and Freedom: A Libertarian Comment", *Modern Age*, Spring 1961.

29. See Cardinal Desire Mercier, *et. al.*, *Manual of Modern Scholastic Philosophy*, and Peter Coffey, *The Science of Logic*, both two volumes in many different editions.

30. See Murray N. Rothbard, *Man, Economy and State*, pp. 828-29, and *Power and Market*, pp. 138-40.

31. For a somewhat different approach to and critique of conservatism, see Ayn Rand's essay "Conservatism: An Obituary" in *Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal*.

stage & screen

Carol L. Newman

THX 1138
MCCABE AND MRS. MILLER
TWO-LANE BLACKTOP

THX 1138, starring Robert Duvall in the title role. The story of one man's fight against and eventual escape from a terrifyingly mechanized society.

I will never forget seeing *THE FIXER* and *THE CONFESSION* within two weeks. Both films concerned the struggle of the individual against a stifling social system, and both depicted in great detail the devastating horrors of prison life under totalitarian regimes. They shared that rare artistry which demands a strong emotional commitment from the viewer, leaving him enervated but absolutely aware.

In this tradition is *THX 1138*, George Lucas's shattering portrayal of existence in the United States some years hence. "Existence", not "life", is the proper term, for mere survival is all that is possible in such an utterly dehumanizing society. In Lucas's vision of the future social life has become, by law, completely egalitarian: everyone wears the same uniform, watches the same entertainment a la 1984, and lives with the roommate whom the omniscient computer has assigned. For the most part, the intellect and vitality are dead, having been carefully conditioned and tranquilized out of children.

In such a beyond-Walden-Two world, few men have the strength of purpose to assert their individuality; THX is one who does. Forbidden to live with the woman he loves, he is placed in a bleak and surreal asylum for the intransigent. He is determined to escape and the passionless bureaucracy cannot stop him. His ultimate triumph in eluding his captors is one of the most exciting climaxes in any recent film. When THX emerges from his prison into the brilliant sun and stands awed by the greatness of his achievement, the magnificent ironies of his captivity become clear. We realize for the first time that the entire film has taken place underground. Even natural light, undoubtedly considered subversive, has been denied the slaves of the State.

Lucas's major achievement in this film lies in fitting the method so well to the content. The movie is at times difficult to grasp because quick cuts are so frequently used; but they successfully underscore the impression of disjointedness that is central to appreciation of the film. Prior to his escape, THX's life is a series of quick flashes from one stark, meaningless encounter to another. Nothing is allowed to be whole or satisfying. Lucas reinforces this theme through his skillful union of symbols and plot.

MCCABE AND MRS. MILLER, with Warren Beatty and Julie Christie as the leads. McCabe and Mrs. Miller supervise the construction of an entire town (the main business of which is prostitution), only to have their flourishing concern threatened by coercive robber-barrons.

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THX shows that It Can Happen Here, and in Robert Altman's *MCCABE AND MRS. MILLER* we find more or less the same message, presented through a non-science-fiction medium. *MCCABE* operates primarily with the emotions, while *THX* utilizes both the emotions and the intellect. As the central figure Warren Beatty, in the best performance of his career, confidently projects the image of the quintessential loner and individualist pitted against unscrupulous crooks. He is the sort of wheeler-dealer who can start anew in a strange town size up the market immediately, and provide what is needed.

Once the market has been opened up, however, it is a sure bet that someone is going to try to cash in on it by other than honest means. More than a little naive in business, McCabe cannot cope with the power-politics tactics of the big businessmen who try to force him out, but he puts up a shrewd battle against the gunmen who have been hired to "persuade" him. On this level, then, we are encouraged to applaud the moral victory of the individualist over his collectivist foes.

But it would be unfair to leave you thinking of *MCCABE* as the great libertarian epic — it isn't. McCabe can be seen as a larger-than-life figure, more admirable than not from a libertarian point of view for his near-anarchistic approach to life; or he can be viewed as the prototype of the Little Man, the good soul who is robbed by evil Laissez-Faire Capitalists. The second perspective probably represents the director's intention.

MCCABE can also be approached on a non-ideological level. It is similar in its folk-epic style to *BUTCH CASSIDY AND THE SUNDANCE KID*, though the latter had less to recommend it. Altman's film is technically superb, and the performances are outstanding. Despite its flaws, it is an appealing movie that presents an engrossing picture of the turn-of-the-century Pacific Northwest.

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TWO-LANE BLACKTOP, featuring James Taylor, Warren Oates, Dennis Wilson, and Laurie Bird. Taylor and Wilson ride around the countryside in a high-powered old car, and searching for the meaning of life and incidentally making a living by drag-racing. Laurie Bird joins them for the Big Race with "GTO" Warren Oates. Another "now" movie.

TWO-LANE BLACKTOP is a simpler film to criticize, because there are no might-have-beens about it. To date, it has my endorsement as rip-off movie of the year. Remember the old hot-rod films? Remember *WHERE THE BOYS ARE* and *BEACH BLANKET BINGO*? *BLACKTOP* is their lineal descendant — a tasteless representation of life in one narrow, over-glamourized segment of the youth culture. The pony-tailed girl in the souped-up car may have changed into an aimless fifteen-year-old runaway and the crew-cut driver may have been transformed into James Taylor, but the fact remains that this movie is as bad as anything from the youth cult of the '60's.

Among the three principals there is nothing that can remotely be termed acting. Each character appears to have picked one vacuous facial expression and settled into it for the duration. Warren Oates has more to offer than any of the others, but so little is required of him that even his effort is wasted. For a major film, the script is one of the most forgettable in years. *TWO-LANE BLACKTOP* is one of the turkeys of our anti-life culture, and it should be avoided at all costs.

The FUNDAMENTALS of ENGINEERING SCIENCE

review
by
Robert Hayden

by G. R. A. Titcomb, paperback,
Dover, 800 pp., \$3.50

This is one of my favourite books on the physical sciences. It is easy to learn from, a joy to teach from, and one of the most used books on my shelf at work. It is imported from England by Dover and covers what is called in this country "elementary physics" — at a level somewhere between high school and college. The mathematics required for reading it is rudimentary algebra and and geometry. The last 10% of the book assumes you have the amount of trigonometry typically included in a high-school algebra or geometry course. What is truly amazing is how much physics you can learn from this book without knowing much more than arithmetic to start with. It is *the* best pre-calculus physics book I have seen. It does not make the common mistake of trying to cover material that can be treated adequately only with calculus. Even so, the coverage is very broad. The basic subject-matter is mechanics (eight chapters) and electricity (six chapters), with single chapters devoted to fundamental quantities and units, vectors, mechanics of solids, atomic structure, heat, fluid statics, energy conversion, and properties of materials.

But enough of *what* the book covers — the beauty is in how it covers it. At the outset he gives an explicit and rational method for dealing with units and their conversion, thus removing one of the biggest stumbling blocks for students and engineers alike. His method makes it almost impossible to make a mistake. As a virtuoso illustration, he applies it to the conversion of 2kgf/sq.m. into 0.41lbf/sq.ft. through eight intermediary conversion factors, and comes through the whole mess unscathed! Throughout the text, there are numerous worked examples. These are done in great detail with full explanations and great care to keep track of units. Further, the way in which he organizes and lays out computations is a model of logic and clarity. Real-life engineering problems are usually much more complex than textbook examples and very often orderly work habits make the difference between getting the right answer and getting the wrong one — or none at all.

The writing in this text is simple, straightforward, and down to earth.

When the engineer James Watt was developing the early steam engines, he needed some comparison between his engines and the type of "drive" in common use at the time. He wanted to measure the working capacity of his engines in terms that his prospective customers would readily under-

stand. Horses were frequently used to perform mechanical tasks at that time, and so Watt decided to measure the rate at which a horse could work. He would then be able to claim with some justification that one of his engines could replace a certain number of horses.

He chose a good, strong dray horse, and set it to work pulling various weights up a mineshaft. From his observations, he calculated that the horse could perform 22,000 ft.lbf. of work in a minute, on the average. However, to be on the safe side, in case one of his customers might have a particularly strong horse working for him he added 50% and said that a horse could work at the rate of 33,000 ft.lbf/min.

This value has since become an accepted unit of power known as the HORSE POWER.

Yet simple as it is, there is an implicit understanding of Rand's theory of measurement in this statement, in particular, her dictum that a unit of measurement must have a size consistent with everyday experience. And, an understanding of what happens when this dictum is not followed is implicit in the following:

It has been stated that an atom is extremely small. Any attempt to give an impression of its size ends up in unimaginably large numbers or equally unimaginable small ones. For example, it can be said that there are about a million million million atoms in a grain of fine table salt — which has roughly the same significance as saying that an atom is extremely small!

He goes on to say that "on the atomic scale, 'size' in the normally understood sense has no real meaning", a truth that many philosophers of science have yet to realize. Further philosophic wisdom is shown by:

Until the late nineteenth century, atoms were considered to be complete units which could not be divided; that is, they were considered to be the fundamental particles of which the various elements are built. Atoms are now known to be themselves composed of a number of particles, which IN THE PRESENT STATE OF KNOWLEDGE, are taken to be fundamental particles."

I have emphasized the point at which Titcomb recognizes that knowledge is contextual. It is an error to assume that the simplest particles discovered *so far*, at any point in history, are *the* fundamental particles. This error was made by the nineteenth-century atomists, and is still being made by physicists today with regard to current elementary particles. They could stand to read Titcomb — or Jonathan Swift:

So, naturalists observe, a flea,
Hath smaller fleas that on him prey;
And these have smaller still to bite 'em;
And so proceed AD INFINITEM.

Robert Hayden is a math major at MIT and is currently working as an engineer.

On that ironic note I rest my case. There is little more I can say — go read the book yourself.

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*Charles Shively is the author of "An Option for Freedom in Texas, 1840-1844" (*The Journal of Negro History*, 1965), an analysis of Andrews' abolitionist activities.

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