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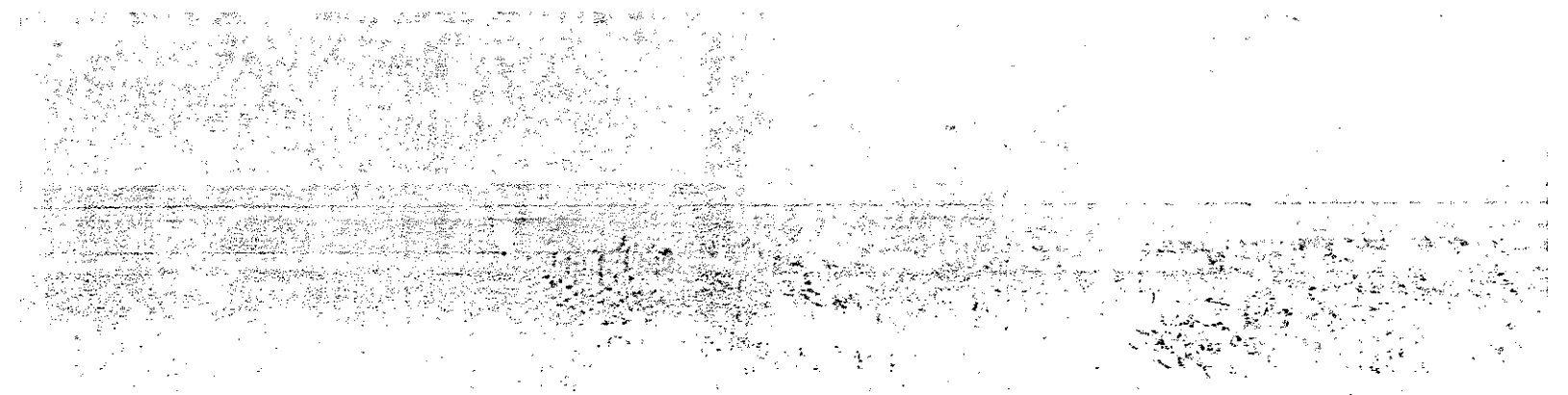
TOWARD A STRATEGY FOR LIBERTARIAN SOCIAL CHANGE

by Murray N. Rothbard

April, 1977



STRATEGY FOR LIBERTARIAN SOCIAL CHANGE

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by Murray N. Rothbard

Libertarians have given considerable thought to refining their basic principles and their vision of a libertarian society. But they have given virtually no thought to a vitally important question, that of strategy: now that we know the nature of our social goal, how in the world do we get there? 1*

1* "Strategy represents an essential, even though neglected dimension of political activity. While the analogy should not be carried too far, a strategic framework may be viewed as performing a function similar to the function of the price mechanism within the economic system: the allocation of scarce resources among competing goals. In other words, strategy enables a political movement to undertake a systematic and explicit ordering of priorities which in turn enables the movement to allocate its scarce human and financial resources in the most efficient manner possible". "White Paper on the Massachusetts Libertarian Movement" (unpublished MS., Boston: Center for the Study of Social Systems, Spring/Summer 1976), p. 20.

To the extent that libertarians have thought at all about strategy, it has simply been to adopt what I have called "educationism": namely that actions rest upon ideas, and therefore that libertarians must try to convert people to their ideas by issuing books, pamphlets, articles, lectures, etc. Now it is certainly true that actions depend upon ideas, and that education in libertarian ideas is an important and necessary part in converting people to liberty and in effecting social change. But such an insight is only the <u>beginning</u> of arriving at a libertarian strategy; there is a great deal more that needs to be said.

1. The Necessity of a Movement

In the first place, ideas do not spread and advance by themselves, in a social vacuum; they must be adopted and spread by people, people who must be convinced of and committed to the progress of liberty. But this means that liberty can only advance by means of a developing libertarian movement. We must therefore be concerned not only with the ideology but also with developing the people to carry the principles forward. Webster's defines "movement" in a way clearly relevant to our concerns: "A connected and long continued series of acts and events tending toward some more or less definite end; an agitation in favor of some principle, policy, etc., as, the Tractarian movement; the prohibition movement."

Some libertarians have criticized the very concept of "movement" as "collectivist", as somehow violating the principles of individualism. But it should be clear that there is nothing in the least collectivist in individuals voluntarily joining together for the advancement of common goals. A libertarian movement is no more "collectivist" than a corporation, a bridge club, or any other organization; it is curious that some libertarians, while conceding the merits of all other such "collective" organizations, balk only at one that would advance the cause of liberty itself. Neither does joining a movement mean that the joiner must in some way submerge his individual sovereignty to the movement or the organization, any more than the bridge club member must submerge his individuality in order

to advance the playing of bridge. The individual libertarian, who places the triumph of liberty high on his value scale, decides to join a movement which is requisite to the achievement of his goal, just as does the member of a bridge club or the investor in a steel manufacturing corporation.

2. Victory as the Goal

If the advancement of liberty requires a movement as well as a body of ideas, it is our contention that the overriding goal of a libertarian movement must be the victory of liberty in the real world, the bringing of the ideal into actuality. This may seem a truism, but unfortunately many libertarians have failed to see the importance of victory as the ultimate and overriding goal. In a sense, the fact that so little thought has been given to strategy in the libertarian movement is itself a symptom of the widespread lack of serious intent or dedication to victory in the real world, to the transformation of reality to bring about the libertarian ideal.

Until now, we have been inclined to designate as "libertarians" all people who believe that total individual liberty is the best social system. But, such definition leaves out a necessary ingredient to being a complete libertarian: a dedicated commitment to victory in the real world. Why should libertarians not adopt what might seem to be a self-evident goal? One reason for not making such a commitment is that a person may prefer the libertarian ideal as an intellectual game, something to be merely contemplated without relevance to the real world; another reason for weakening a person's desire to pursue the goal of victory

may be a profound pessimism that he may feel about any future prospects for victory. In any case, holding the victory of liberty as one's primary goal is only likely in those persons whose libertarianism is motivated and moulded by a passion for justice: by a realization that statism is unjust, and by a desire to eliminate such glaring injustice as swiftly as possible.

Hence, the utilitarian, who is concerned not for justice and moral principle but only for increased productivity or efficiency, may believe in liberty as an ideal, but is not likely to place passionate commitment into achieving it. The utilitarian, by his nature, is far more likely to remain content with partial success than to press on to complete victory. As we shall see further below, such a weakening of the will toward victory was partly responsible for the decline of classical liberalism in the nineteenth century.

In addition, some libertarians are primarily motivated by a need for self-expression, by a desire for personal psychological therapy, by intellectual game-playing, or by other goals. However worthy, none of these is sufficient for a commitment to victory; in fact, if dominant, they militate against such a commitment. In recent years, many libertarians have adopted as their major goal not victory, but a Quaker-like desire to bear moral witness to their own libertarian purity, and hence to trumpet their own moral purity over the "impure" others. (This theme has been dominant in Robert Nozick and the "purity faction" of the Massachusetts and New York Libertarian Parties). The

result of such overriding concern for purity has been a total absence of strategic perspective or concern. But this must be a futile and time-wasting dead end. There is no libertarianism if it is not directed toward the goal of changing the real world to conform with the libertarian ideal; as Marx put it in his Theses on Feuerbach: "The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point, however, is to change it."

3. Abolitionism as the Goal

It necessarily follows, from our primary goal of victory, that we want victory as quickly as possible. As Mises showed in demonstrating that time preference is a categorical fact of human action, people must necessarily prefer the attainment of any given end as quickly as possible. And if victory is indeed our given end, an end given to us by the requirements of justice, then we must strive to achieve that end as rapidly as we can.

But this means that libertarians must not adopt gradualism as part of their goal; they must wish to achieve liberty as early and as rapidly as possible. Otherwise, they would be ratifying the continuation of injustice. This means that they must be "abolitionists", i.e., that if a magic button existed which could bring about the instantaneous victory of liberty, that we must be eager to push that button. A passion for justice, a true commitment to the goal of liberty, then, requires a radical abolitionism, a willingness to "push the button", if it existed, for the victory of liberty. As Leonard Read once wrote, in advocating the instantaneous abolition of all price and wage controls: "If there were

a button on this rostrum, the pressing of which would release all wage and price controls instantaneously, I would put my finger on it and push!" 2*

2* Leonard E. Read, I'd Push the Button (New York: Joseph D. McGuire, 1946), p. 3. For more on this topic, see Murray N. Rothbard, "Why Be Libertarian?" in Egalitarianism as a Revolt Against Nature, and Other Essays (Washington, D.C.: Libertarian Review Press, 1974), pp. 147-51.

On the other hand, if libertarians themselves were to incorporate gradualism as part of their theory, they would then be conceding that some things are more important, of greater value than, justice and liberty itself. And that would be the death of the libertarian ideal. As the great abolitionist and libertarian William Lloyd Garrison affirmed, "gradualism in theory is perpetuity in practice."

It is often objected that abolitionism is "unrealistic", that liberty (or any other radical social goal) can only be achieved gradually. Whether or not this is true (and the existence of radical upheavals demonstrates that such is not always the case), this common charge gravely confuses the realm of principle with the realm of strategy. As I have written elsewhere:

> ... by making such a charge they are hopelessly confusing the desired goal with a strategic estimate of the probable outcome. In framing principle, it is of the utmost importance not to mix in strategic estimates with the forging of desired goals. First, one must formulate one's goals, which ... would be the instant abolition of slavery or whatever other statist oppression we are considering. And we must first frame these goals without considering the probability of attaining them. The libertarian goals are "realistic" in the sense that they could be achieved if enough people agreed on their desirability ... The "realism" of the goal can only be challenged by a critique of the goal itself, not in the problem of how to attain it. Then, after we have decided on the goal, we face the entirely separate strategic question of how to attain that goal

as rapidly as possible, how to build a movement to attain it, etc. Thus, William Lloyd Garrison was not being "unrealistic" when, in the 1830's, he raised the glorious standard of immediate emancipation of the slaves. His goal was the proper one, and his strategic realism came in the fact that he did not expect his goal to be quickly reached. Or, as Garrison himself distinguished: "Urge immediate abolition as earnestly as we may, it will, alas! be gradual abolition in the end. We have never said that slavery would be overthrown by a single blow; that it ought to be, we shall always contend.) 3*

3* Rothbard, Egalitarianism, p. 150. At the conclusion of a philosophical critique of the charge of "unrealism" and its confusion of good and the currently probable, Professor Philbrook declared: "Only one type of serious defense of a policy is open to an economist or anyone else; he must maintain that the policy is good. True 'realism' is the same thing men have always meant by wisdom: to decide the immediate in the light of the ultimate." Clarence Philbrook, "'Realism' in Policy Espousal", American Economic Review (December, 1953), p.859.

From a strictly strategic point of view, it is also true that if the adherents of the "pure" goal do not state that goal and hold it aloft, no one will do so, and the goal will therefore never be attained. Furthermore, since most people, and most politicians, will hold to the "middle" of whatever "road" may be offered them, the "extremist", by constantly raising the ante, and by holding the pure or "extreme" goal aloft, will move the extremes further over, and will therefore pull the "middle" further over in his extreme direction. Hence, raising the ante by pulling the middle further in his direction will, in the ordinary pulling and hauling of the political process, accomplish more for that goal, even in the day-by-day short run, than any opportunistic surrender of the ultimate principle.

In her brilliant study of the strategy and tactics of the Garrison wing of the abolitionist movement, Aileen Kraditor writes:

> It follows, from the abolitionist's conception of his role in society, that the goal for which he agitated was not likely to be immediately realizable. Its realization must follow conversion of an enormous number of people, and the struggle must take place in the face of the hostility that inevitably met the agitator for an unpopular cause ... The abolitionists knew as well as their later scholarly critics that immediate and unconditional emancipation could not occur for a long time. But unlike those critics they were sure it would never come unless it were agitated for during the long period in which it was impracticable...
>
> To have dropped the demand for immediate emancipation because it was unrealizable at the time would have been to alter the nature of the change for which the abolitionists were agitating. That is, even those who would have gladly accepted gradual and conditional emancipation had to agitate for immediate and unconditional abolition of slavery because that demand was required by their goal of demonstrating to white Americans that Negroes were their brothers. Once the nation had been converted on that point, conditions and plans might have been made ...
>
> Their refusal to water down their "visionary" slogan was, in their eyes, eminently practical, much more so than the course of the antislavery senators and congressmen who often wrote letters to abolitionist leaders justifying their adaptation of antislavery demands to what was attainable. The abolitionist, while criticizing such compromises, would insist that his own intransigence made favorable compromises possible. He might have stated his position thus: If politics is the art of the possible, agitation is the art of the desirable. The practice of each must be judged by criteria appropriate to its goal. Agitation by the reformer or radical helps define one possible policy as more desirable than another, and if skillful and uncompromising, the agitation may help make the desirable possible. To criticize the agitator for not trimming his demands to the immediately realizable -- that is, for not acting as a politician, is to miss the point. The demand for a change that is not politically possible does not stamp the agitator as unrealistic. For one thing, it can be useful to the political bargainer; the more extreme demand of the agitator makes the politician's demand seem acceptable and perhaps desirable in the sense that the adversary may prefer to give up half a loaf rather than the whole. Also, the agitator helps define the value, the principle, for which the politician bargains. The ethical values placed on various possible political courses are put there partly by agitators working on the public opinion that creates political possibilities. 4*

4* Aileen S. Kraditor, Means and Ends in American Abolitionism: Garrison and His Critics on Strategy and Tactics, 1834-1850 (New York: Pantheon Books, 1969), pp. 26-28.

Finally, the raising of a goal such as immediate abolition -- either of slavery or of the State -- has been criticized for being "Utopian". But it is important to distinguish between a truly "Utopian" goal which is not subject to immediate human will, and a goal which is. Typical of a former goal, which would be impossibly Utopian, are such projects as "the immediate abolition of poverty", the creation of "the New Socialist Man", etc. As I have written elsewhere, distinguishing between the two types of "extreme" goals:

> Other traditional radical goals (than full liberty) -- such as the "abolition of poverty" -- are, in contrast to this one, truly utopian; for man, simply by exerting his will, cannot abolish poverty. Poverty can only be abolished through the operation of certain economic factors ... which can only operate by transforming nature over a long period of time. In short, man's will is here severely limited by the working of -- to use an old-fashioned but still valid term -- natural law. But injustices are deeds that are inflicted by one set of men on another; they are precisely the actions of men, and, hence, they and their elimination are subject to man's instantaneous will ...
>
> In the field of justice, man's will is all; men can move mountains, if only men so decide. A passion for instantaneous justice -- in short, a radical passion -- is therefore not utopian, as would be a desire for the instant elimination of poverty or the instant transformation of everyone into a concert pianist. For instant justice could be achieved if enough people so willed. 5*

5* Rothbard, "Why be Libertarian?" in Egalitarianism, pp. 148-149.

That the Garrisonian abolitionists saw this distinction is clear from the historian Anne Loveland's account:

> Historians have usually misconstrued the immediatist slogan, interpreting it as a temporal rather than a moral and religious requirement ... When abolitionists demanded immediate emancipation, they were ... arguing that abolition was fully within man's power and completely dependent upon his initiative, (and) since action was the test of belief, true repentance virtually entailed the abolition of slavery. 6*

6* Anne C. Loveland, "Evangelicalism and 'Immediate Emancipation' in American Antislavery Thought", Journal of Southern History (May 1966), pp. 173, 184-185; cited in Kraditor, Means and Ends, pp. 264-265.

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4. Ends and Means

If the primary and overriding goal of the libertarian movement must be the victory of liberty as rapidly as possible, then the primary task of that movement must be to employ the most efficacious means to arrive at that goal. If a critic should charge that this is adopting the immoral philosophy that "the ends justify the means", the proper reply is that of Ludwig von Mises: what else but an end could ever justify a means? The whole point of a means, by definition, is to reach an end; a means is not a goal in itself. Those critics, for example, who attack Communists for being willing to kill capitalists in order to reach the goal of a proletarian dictatorship as "believing that the end justifies the means" are incorrect; the problem with the Communists is not that they believe that the purpose of means is to achieve ends, but that their ends (e.g. dictatorship of the proletariat) are incorrect. For the libertarian, the desired end is a world of liberty, a world where no force is used against non-criminals, against non-invaders of person and property; the

libertarian critique of Communist actions, therefore, is that the absence of murder is not an integral part of Communist ends. In short, the libertarian criticism is against Communist goals and principles, and not against their insight into the relationship between means and ends.

To be efficacious, to achieve the goal of liberty as quickly as possible, it should be clear that the means must not contradict the ends. For if they do, the ends are being obstructed instead of pursued as efficiently as possible. For the libertarian, this means two things: (1) that he must never deny or fail to uphold the ultimate goal of libertarian victory; and (2) that he must never use or advocate the use of un-libertarian means: of aggression against the persons or just property of others. Thus, the libertarian must never, for the sake of alleged expediency, deny or conceal his ultimate objective of complete liberty; and he must never aggress against others in the search for a world of non-aggression. For example, the Bolsheviks, before the revolution, financed themselves partially by armed robbery in the name of "expropriating" capitalists; clearly, any use of aggression against private property in order to finance the libertarian movement, in addition to being immoral by libertarian principles, would cut against those principles themselves and their ultimate attainment.

5. The Role of Transition Demands

At this point, any radical movement for social change, including the libertarian movement, has to face an important, realistic problem: in the real world, the goal—for the libertarian

the disappearance of the State and its aggressive coercion--will unfortunately not be achieved overnight. Since that is the case, what should be the position of the libertarian toward "transition demands", i.e. toward demands that would move toward liberty without yet reaching the ultimate goal? Wouldn't such demands undercut the ultimate goal of total liberty itself?

In our view, the proper solution to this problem is the "centrist" or "movement building" solution that Lenin adopted in the Marxist movement: namely, that it is legitimate and proper to advocate transition demands as way-stations along the path to victory, provided that the ultimate goal of victory is always kept in mind and held aloft. In this way, the ultimate goal is clear and not lost sight of, and the pressure is kept on so that transitional or partial victories will feed on themselves rather than appease or weaken the ultimate drive of the movement. Thus, suppose that the libertarian movement adopts, as a transitional demand, an across-the-board 50% cut in taxation. This must be done in such a way as not to imply that a 51% cut would somehow be immoral or improper. In that way, the 50% cut would simply be an initial demand rather than become an ultimate goal in itself and thereby undercut the libertarian goal of total abolition of taxation.

Similarly, if libertarians should ever call for reducing or abolishing taxes in some particular area, that call must never be accompanied by advocating the increase of taxation in some other area. Thus, we might well conclude that the most tyrannical and destructive tax in the modern world is the income tax, and therefore that first priority should be given to abolishing that form

of tax; but the call for drastic reduction or abolition of the income tax must never be coupled with advocating a higher tax in some other area, e.g. a sales tax, for that indeed would be employing a means contradictory to the ultimate goal of tax-abolition.

Similarly, libertarians must never fall into the trap of advocating some planned program of transition, such as some sort of Four-Year Plan of what libertarians would do if they achieved political power. For any such program would imply that going further, that rolling back the State by more than the "Plan", would be improper, and this would cut against the radical abolitionist stance that a devotion to libertarianism requires. On the contrary, libertarians must hack away at the State wherever and whenever they can, rolling back or eliminating State activity in whatever area possible. In short, the State must be treated as an enemy to be hacked away at, rather than as some sort of useful planning tool to be used for its own gradual self-elimination.

As an example, during every recession, Keynesian liberals generally advocate an income tax cut to stimulate consumer demand. Conservatives, on the other hand, generally oppose such a tax cut as leading to higher government deficits. The libertarian, in contrast, should always and everywhere support a tax cut as a reduction in State robbery. Then, when the budget is discussed, the libertarian should also support a reduction in government expenditures to eliminate a deficit. The point is that the State must be opposed and whittled down in every respect

and at every point: e.g. in cutting taxes, or in cutting government expenditures. To advocate raising taxes or to oppose cutting them in order to balance the budget is to oppose and undercut the libertarian goal.

But while the ultimate goal of total liberty must always be upheld, and the State must be whittled down at every point, it is still proper, legitimate, and necessary for a libertarian movement to adopt priorities, to agitate against the State most particularly in those areas which are most important at any given time. Thus, while the libertarian opposes both income and sales taxes, it is both morally proper and strategically important to select, say, the income tax as the more destructive of the two and to agitate more against that particular tax. In short, the libertarian movement, like everyone else, faces a scarcity of its own time, energy, and funds, and it must allocate these scarce resources to their most important uses at any given time.

William F. Buckley, Jr. once attacked the libertarian movement for lacking strategic intelligence, for being more interested in the cause of "denationalizing lighthouses" than in foreign policy. He had a point. While libertarians should indeed favor denationalizing lighthouses, such a goal should clearly have a much lower priority than opposing conscription or war. In short, what particular issues should receive priority depends on the specific conditions of time and place; if, for example, the United States were a small fog-bound island dependent on sailing, shipping, denationalization of lighthouses might well have a high priority.

6. The Two Main Strategic Deviations

Of all the movements for radical social change in modern history, the most self-conscious and the one that has devoted the most thought to the problems of strategy has been the Marxist-Leninist movement. One of the lessons that we can learn from the thinking and experience of that movement is that there are bound to develop, within any radical ideological movement for social change, two broad and important "deviations" from the correct centrist, movement-building line we have been discussing. At one pole is the deviation of "left-sectarianism" and at the other the deviation of "right-opportunism." Each, in its own way, abandons the hope of victory for the radical goal. The left sectarian, in brief, considers any transition demands, any use of strategic intelligence to determine priorities for agitation, any appeal to one's audience without sacrificing ultimate principles, in themselves a "sellout" or betrayal of radical principles. In the above example, a left sectarian, for example, would consider the transition call for repeal of the income tax as per se a betrayal of the principle of the abolition of taxation, even though that transition demand were clearly coupled with the ultimate goal of a tax-free society. To take a deliberately ludicrous example, the left sectarian might consider not raising the problem of denationalizing lighthouses in our current society a betrayal of the principle of privatizing lighthouses.

In the Marxist movement, the most notorious example of left sectarianism has been the Socialist Labor Party, which, for nearly a century, has confined itself to saying that socialism is the answer to all world and national problems, refusing to go beyond

that to discussing any of the specific facts or problems themselves. Thus, the SLP issues a standard pamphlet, simply calling for the establishment of its brand of socialism, its only negligible concession to currently relevant issues being to change the headline of this same pamphlet from year to year: eg., "Are You Worried About ... Unemployment; or Vietnam; or Pollution, etc.?", the pamphlet simply reiterating that all current problems would be solved by socialism. This refusal to learn about or grapple with the facts of reality, with the real-world problems that are currently worrying people, this ritualistic reiteration of the ultimate goal, period, is characteristic of all brands of sectarianism. In the libertarian movement, sectarians will simply reiterate such formulas as the non-aggression axiom, or A is A, or the need for self-esteem, without grappling with detailed issues. The centrist position, in contrast, is to <u>begin</u> agitation around currently important issues, examine them, show the public that the cause of these problems is statism and that the solution is liberty, and <u>then</u> try to widen the consciousness of one's listeners to show that all other current and even remote problems have the same political cause and solution.

Typical of left-sectarianism in the libertarian movement was the frenzied opposition to Roger MacBride's rejection of Vice-Presidential candidates for the Libertarian Party in 1975 who were open homosexuals or open tax evaders. MacBride's reasoning was that, while he favored the libertarian principles of gay rights and of tax resistance, that it would be tactically

disastrous to alienate the neophyte public by putting forward candidates who were actual practitioners. The important point here is not whether or not MacBride was tactically correct in his judgment (probably he was), but the argument of the left-sectarian opposition that MacBride's position was immoral and a betrayal of libertarian principles. It should be clear that MacBride's decision was tactical and irrelevant to libertarian moral principle, since there is no principled requirement to dramatize the defense of, say, the rights of heroin-takers by nominating a candidate who is himself a heroin addict.

One form that left-sectarianism sometimes takes is that of "ultra-left adventurism", that is the advocacy of immediate armed revolution against the existing State without sufficient mass support to be able to succeed. In the modern libertarian movement, this deviation was pervasive during its early stage, at the time of the New Left "revolution" in the late 1960's and 1970. The collapse of the latter "revolution" as soon as the State began its armed counter-action at Kent State is testimony to one of the most important lessons of history: that no armed revolution has ever succeeded in a country with free elections. All the successful revolutions, from the American and the French in the eighteenth century, to the Russian, Chinese, and Cuban in the twentieth, occurred in a land where free elections were either non-existent or severely restricted. Until or unless the U.S. changes from free elections to dictatorship, then, the question of armed revolution is, at the very least, totally irrelevant to the American scene.

In contrast to left-sectarianism, which spurns immediate gains toward the ultimate goal, right-wing opportunism openly believes in hiding or working against the ultimate goal in order to achieve short-run gains. An opportunist LP candidate for the state university board in Illinois, for example, never mentioned the ultimate aim of abolishing the public school system, and instead came out for a measured reduction in taxes for schools. Right-wing opportunism is self-defeating for ultimate goals in several ways. The major reason for putting forth transition demands is as a <u>way-station</u> to ultimate victory; but, by studiously avoiding the raising of ultimate goals or principles, the opportunist, at best, short-circuits the ultimate goal, and betrays it by failing to raise the consciousness of the public in the <u>explicit</u> direction of the final goal. The ultimate goal will not be reached automatically, by itself; it can only be reached if a large group of adherents continues to hold high the banner of that ultimate, radical objective. But, if libertarians, for example, refuse to examine and put forward their ultimate goals, <u>who will</u>? The answer is, no one, and therefore that objective will never be obtained. Indeed, if libertarians fail to keep their ultimate objective in view, they will themselves lose sight of the objective, and descend into another gradualist, <u>non-libertarian</u> reform movement, and the main purpose of having a movement in the first place will be lost. Secondly, opportunists often undercut the ultimate objective, and libertarian principle as well, by openly advocating measures that undercut that principle,

e.g. by advocating a higher sales tax to replace an income tax (as did the Mid-Hudson chapter of the Free Libertarian Party in early 1976), or in advocating a gradualist Four-Year Plan to advertise their moderation and alleged reasonableness. This latter advocacy, as I have indicated above, also fails to treat the State as an enemy to be whittled down wherever possible, and treats it instead as a worthy gradualist instrument of its own reduction. A Four-Year-Plan also unfortunately implies that any more radical time-table for reducing the State would be improper. And finally, even in the short run, opportunism is self-destructive, for any new ideological movement or party must, in order to acquire support — as in the case of new products or firms on the market — differentiate its product from its established competitors. A Libertarian Party, for example, which sounds almost indistinguishable from right-wing Republicanism (as did the Tuccille campaign for New York governor in 1974), will fail if only because the voter presented with no clear alternative, will quite rationally remain with right-wing Republicans.

One remote but interesting strategic problem for the Libertarian Party is the question of what a Libertarian President would do in office. Roger MacBride, in his interview in Reason (October, 1976), unfortunately states that not all interventionism should be immediately removed (whether it could politically is another question), thus abandoning the vital principle of theoretical abolitionism. MacBride states that such immediate

repeal would "create chaos ... the markets would be in chaos" and that therefore, taxation must continue for a time because "The choice is do you cause one kind of human suffering by abolishing taxation and letting the chips fall where they may or do you cause another kind of human suffering by continuing taxation even though on a reduced scale". (p. 29). There are two grave problems with this approach. One is that freedom and free-markets are never "chaos", on the contrary they rapidly bring order out of State-imposed chaos, and in a remarkably brief amount of time. And second, the purpose of libertarianism is not to abolish all suffering -- an impossible Utopian dream which no political goal can accomplish, but to abolish all crime, specifically the legalized crime of taxation and government coercion. To state openly that taxation, even if reduced, is preferable to its immediate abolition is to sanction a continuation of crime and aggression, and to cut sharply against the libertarian principle itself.

In sum, both strategic deviations are fatal to the proper goal of the victory of liberty as soon as it can be achieved; left-sectarianism because it in effect abandons victory, and right-opportunism because it in effect abandons liberty. Both sides of this "equation" must be continually upheld.

One curious propensity is that of a certain number of individuals, in the libertarian and other radical movements, to shift rapidly from one diametrically opposed deviation to the other, without ever passing through the correct, centrist position. Apart from psychological instability among these individuals, there is a certain logic to these seemingly bizarre leaps. Take, for example, the left-sectarian, who for years confines his acti-

vities to stating pure principle, without ever doing anything in the real world to change the real situation for the better, without trying to transform reality. After several years, discouragement at the lack of progress may set in, after which, desperate for some gains in the real world, the person leaps into right-opportunism — and accomplishes little there as well. (The case of Dana Rohrabacher's leap from LeFevrianism to Reaganism in 1976, without supporting the Libertarian Party in either instance, is a case in point). On the other hand, someone mired in short-run opportunism for years, disgusted with the compromises and immorality of that form of politics, can readily express his disgust and his yearning for pure principle by leaping straight into sectarianism. In neither manifestation, however, is the individual willing to engage in a protracted, lifelong commitment for victory in the real world for principle and as quickly as the goal can be achieved.

7. Lenin's Strategy and Tactics

One way of expressing the centrist strategic insight is to call for "purity of principle, combined with flexibility of tactics". Probably the most successful historical instance of a continuing, protracted adherence to this centrist line, in opposition to both sectarianism and opportunism, is V. I. Lenin. 7*

7* Fortunately, we now have available an excellent, two-volume biography of Lenin, written from an independent (non-Communist Party) Marxist-Leninist perspective, focusing on how Lenin's strategy and tactics developed and how they led to ultimate success. See Tony Cliff, Lenin: Volume I: Building the Party (London: Pluto Press, 1975); and Lenin: Volume II: All Power to the Soviets (London: Pluto Press, 1976).

As early as 1902, in What Is To Be Done?, Lenin attacked the contem-

porary Marxian focus on mere "economism" -- bread and butter issues for the workers -- and called for the necessity of educating workers in theoretical socialist consciousness (the ultimate goal). On the other hand, one of the reasons for the 1903 split in the Russian Social Democratic Party between the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks was Lenin's insistence on the importance of work, of activity in the real world, rather than mere discussion of principles. When, during the Revolution of 1905, the Soviets appeared, as organized groups of workers, Lenin was unique among the Bolsheviks in seeing its potential significance, in seeing that the Soviets had the potential of being the ultimate revolution in embryo. And so Lenin called for the Bolsheviks to join the Soviets and to try to infuse them with radical socialist theory.

a. Entrepreneurial Flexibility of Tactics

Throughout his career, Lenin, above all other Bolsheviks, understood the importance of adapting the tactics of his movement to the historical stages or conditions in which they found themselves. A tactic that might be effective in one historical context or period might be disastrous in another; and Lenin also realized that, particularly during revolutionary crisis periods, such existing conditions can and do change overnight. Furthermore, Lenin constantly fought against the tendency of other Bolsheviks to keep their tactics mired in a previous and obsolete historical context. (During all these periods and changes, of course, Lenin continued to uphold the ultimate banner of proletarian socialism.) Roy Childs has insightfully termed this task of strategic leader-

ship -- to learn about and gauge the historical context at all times -- the task of "ideological entrepreneurship", for it is the task of the entrepreneur, of course, to be able to understand current conditions and to project the proper tactics for the near future.

There is another important point to be made here. For, just as entrepreneurship is ultimately an art and not a science that can be learned by rote, so ideological tactics, the findings of the right path at the right time, is an entrepreneurial art at which some people will be better than others -- even when all agree on the basic strategic principles. Mises' insight that timing is the essence of entrepreneurship, and that some people are more able at such timing and insight than others, applies to ideological as well as economic entrepreneurship. Sectarians, however, who can only repeat rote formulas without understanding the importance of entrepreneurial applications or tactical flexibility will automatically call all such entrepreneurial actions "unprincipled" or "inconsistent", just as many Marxists and others have so accused Lenin.

There is another corollary to ideological entrepreneurship as art rather than a precise science. While it is easy to spot clear-cut, or polar, examples of incorrect sectarian or opportunist deviations, it is far more difficult to distinguish them from the correct line in marginal or fuzzy areas. It is precisely in those areas, especially when the movement and its leadership must act rapidly to adjust to changing situations, that the role of the entrepreneurial leader is most important. In a sense, the

situation is similar to ideal types in the Aristotelian theory of the "golden mean". For example, Aristotle identifies correct action as the prudent mean between unwise rashness on the one hand, and cowardice on the other. While these types can be clearly distinguished in theory, in practice it is often difficult to make such distinctions. Yet, both in the case of Aristotelian applied ethics and in strategy and tactics for radical social change, distinctions must in practice be made.

b. Retreat After the Revolution of 1905

Thus, while radical tactics were proper during the Revolution of 1905, the later years of revolutionary collapse and reaction were times for caution and retreat. Lenin then had to battle against the ultra-leftism of Bogdanov and others within the Bolshevik movement, who called for a futile armed uprising. As Tony Cliff writes, of this period:

> The terrible period of reaction caused many revolutionaries, especially those in exile, whose opportunities for concrete action were very few, to turn to abstract propaganda. Devoid of practical revolutionary responsibility, this revolutionism was limited to self-glorification, and verbal intransigence became a façade for passive complacency.
> When revolutionaries are isolated from any real support ... the conditions are ripe for ultra-leftism ... Since practically nobody is listening, why not use extreme revolutionary phrases? In a void, the pressure to adjust to a new situation is minimal. 8*

8* Cliff, Lenin, I., p. 283.

Lenin properly criticized the ultra-leftists and sectarians as being overly impatient with "petty work" in their search for quick results, of failing to understand the importance of what Mao was to call a "protracted struggle" for the ultimate goal.

Here is how Lenin himself characterized the necessary

difference in tactics between the period of the Revolution of 1905, and of the post-revolutionary retreat:

> During the Revolution we learned to "speak French", i.e. to ... raise the energy of the direct struggle of the masses and extend its scope. Now, in this time of stagnation, reaction and disintegration, we must learn to "speak German", i.e. to work slowly (there is nothing else for it) until things revive, systematically, steadily, advancing step by step, winning inch by inch. Whoever finds this work tedious, whoever does not understand the need for preserving and developing the revolutionary principles of Social Democratic tactics in this phase too ... is taking the name of Marxist in vain ... It was necessary to take patiently in hand and re-educate those who had been attracted to Social Democracy by the days of liberty ... who were attracted chiefly by the vehemence, revolutionary spirit and "vividness" of our slogans, but, who, though militant enough to fight on revolutionary holidays, lacked the stamina for work-a-day struggle under the reign of our counter-revolution ... (Many) could only repeat old phrases and were unable to adapt the old principles of revolutionary Social Democratic tactics to the changed conditions. 9*

9* Lenin, "The Liquidation of Liquidationism", July 11, 1909, quoted in Cliff, Lenin, I., pp.284-85.

Cliff also points out the natural tendency for the leaders of any organization, including Lenin's own Bolshevik Party, to be unduly "conservative", to become mired in the tactics and outlook of a now-obsolete historical context:

> Why was there this quick turnover among the (Bolshevik) leadership? The very process of selecting people to lead the party has dangers inherent in it. The people coming to the top are naturally inclined to shape their methods of work, their thinking and their behavior to fit the specific, immediate needs of the time. The Russian revolutionary movement underwent many changes in course, as a result of changes in the class struggle. A leader who adapted himself to the immediate needs at one stage found himself out of step at the next turn ... Hence the higher his place in the party, the more the leader was likely to adapt to immediate circumstances, and the more conservative he became. To repeat Herbert Spencer's

> observation; every organism is conservative in direct proportion to its perfection. This applies equally to political organizations. Thus nature turns virtue into vice. Lenin was unique among party leaders in his capacity to adapt, while relentlessly continuing to pursue the same aim -- workers' power. 10*

10* Cliff, Lenin, I., pp. 357-58

c. The April Theses

Lenin's most formidable strategic and tactical achievement took place in 1917. While he always retained the ultimate goal of the seizure of power by the "working class" headed by the Bolshevik party as its alleged "vanguard", his own basic strategy, as well as that of the other Bolsheviks, had always been a variant of the classic Marxist position: that first there must be a "bourgeois democratic (or 'capitalist') revolution" -- in the Bolshevik strategic variant, to be headed by the workers and peasants --- and that this revolution must be completed before any Bolshevik seizure of power on behalf of proletarian socialism. By April, 1917, however, when Lenin returned to Russia from exile, Lenin, alone of all the Bolsheviks (to say nothing of the other Marxist or socialist parties), realized that conditions had totally changed since the advent of "dual power" after the first, successful February 1917 revolution which had overthrown the Tsar. The Soviets, headed by Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries, and including a minority of Bolsheviks, operated as a non-governmental "dual power" alongside the more conservative official Russian government. In this new and completely unexpected situation, Lenin alone saw that the proper strategic objective for the Bolsheviks should now be the seizure of power as soon as possible,

without tailing behind the Mensheviks and waiting for the completion of the "bourgeois revolution". It took a month of continual argumentation for Lenin to convert the Bolsheviks to this perspective.

In defending his new strategic view, Lenin wrote, in his Letters on Tactics (April 8-13, 1917):

> Marxism requires of us a strictly exact and objectively verifiable analysis of the relations of classes and of the concrete features peculiar to each historical situation ..."Our theory is not a dogma, but a guide to action", Marx and Engels always said, rightly ridiculing the mere memorizing and repetition of "formulas", that at best are capable only of marking out general tasks, which are necessarily modifiable by the concrete economic and political conditions of each particular period of the historical process ...
> But at this point we hear a clamour of protest from people who readily call themselves "old Bolsheviks" ... My answer is: The Bolshevik slogans and ideas on the whole have been confirmed by history: but concretely things have worked out differently; they are more original, more peculiar, more variegated than anyone could have expected.
> To ignore or overlook this fact would mean taking after those "old Bolsheviks" who more than once already have played so regrettable a role in the history of our party by reiterating formulas senselessly learned by rote instead of studying the specific features of the new and living reality. 11*

11* In Cliff, Lenin, II, pp. 125-26.

And Cliff comments: "Lenin had repeatedly to learn from experience, to overcome his own ideas of yesterday, he had to learn from the masses. But, as has happened many times before when history made sharp turns, the old Bolsheviks were not able to make the quick adjustment needed ... Lenin had to repeat again and again: 'We must abandon old Bolshevism.' " 12*

12* Cliff, Lenin, II, p. 128. For the startled reaction of Bolsheviks and other Marxists at hearing Lenin's new revolu-

tionary perspective in his speech on his return to Russia at the Finland Station in Petersburg, see N. N. Sukhanov, The Russian Revolution 1917. A Personal Record (London, 1955), pp. 272-89.

Having converted the Bolsheviks to his new revolutionary strategic perspective, however, Lenin now had to combat the opposite error: to cool down the desire of some of the Bolshevik militants, especially in Kronstadt and Vyborg, for an immediate attempt at armed seizure of power. Cliff entitles one of his chapters "Lenin Lowers the Temperature", in which Lenin had to emphasize that the Bolshevik vanguard must not get too far ahead of the masses, that they must, before attempting to seize power, patiently explain their strategic perspective to the masses of workers. For one of Lenin's insights is also a strategic insight of libertarianism: namely, that the development of ideas, the acceptance of ideology, does not take place all at once among the public, but is necessarily uneven, from one individual and group to another. (See below for more on the process of the spread of ideas.) This unevenness — in Lenin's case, of socialist consciousness — takes place both between groups and even within the Bolshevik (or any other ideological) party. Hence, the importance of raising consciousness of the ideology sufficiently, before attempting radical action.

d. The Line on Kornilov

A particularly interesting example of Lenin's remarkable ability to find quickly the correct tactical line within his fixed overall goal, in response to very rapidly changing conditions, was his response to the attempted military coup by General Kornilov in late August 1917. Here were Lenin and the Bolsheviks

committed to the strategic perspective of revolutionary overthrow of the middle-of-the road Kerensky government as rapidly as possible. But then, in late August, General Kornilov, head of the Russian General Staff, attempted a coup from the Right to establish a military dictatorship. In this new situation, the Left Bolsheviks were tempted to continue their previous tactics of all-out opposition to the Kerensky regime and to stand aloof from the battle -- but this would probably have meant victory for Kornilov and the probable end of the chances for revolution. In contrast, the right Bolsheviks were tempted to fight unconditionally alongside Kerensky in order to crush the immediately greater Kornilov threat -- but that unprincipled action might well have demoralized the Bolshevik militants, and undercut the larger strategic goal of a Bolshevik revolution. Lenin found the correct tactic in between these possibly fatal extremes: namely, to fight with Kerensky in order to crush the Kornilov threat, but <u>at the same time</u> to continue to denounce Kerensky, and not only call for his eventual overthrow, but to raise radical demands upon Kerensky, accusing the latter of weakness and vacillation in the common fight against Kornilov.

In his letter "To The Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.", (August 30, 1917) Lenin set forth his subtle but effective line on the new Kornilov situation:

> The Kornilov revolt is a most unexpected ... and downright unbelievably sharp turn in events.
> Like every sharp turn, it calls for a revision and change of tactics. And as with every revision, we must be extra-cautious not to become unprincipled ...
> <u>Even now</u> we must not support Kerensky's government. This is unprincipled. We may be asked: aren't we going to fight against Kornilov? Of course we must! But this is not the same thing; there is a dividing line here, which

is being stepped over by some Bolsheviks who fall into compromise and allow themselves to be carried away by the course of events.
We shall fight, we are fighting against Kornilov, just as Kerensky's troops do, but we do not support Kerensky. On the contrary, we expose his weakness. There is the difference. It is rather a subtle difference, but it is highly essential and must not be forgotten.
What, then, constitutes our change of tactics after the Kornilov revolt?
We are changing the form of our struggle against Kerensky. Without in the least relaxing our hostility towards him, without taking back a single word said against him, without renouncing the task of overthrowing him, we say that we must take into account the present situation. We shall not overthrow Kerensky right now. We shall approach the task of fighting against him in a different way, namely, we shall point out to the people (who are fighting against Kornilov) Kerensky's weakness and vacillation.

Lenin goes on to write a various radical "partial demands" that must be presented to Kerensky by the Bolsheviks, including arming the workers, bringing radical troops to the fore, and legalizing peasant takeovers of landed estates (see below). Lenin adds:

> We must present these demands not only to Kerensky, and not so much to Kerensky, as to the workers, soldiers and peasants who have been carried away by the course of the struggle against Kornilov. We must keep up their enthusiasm, encourage them to deal with (i.e. fight against) the generals and officers who have declared for Kornilov, urge them to demand the immediate transfer of land to the peasants.

Lenin concludes:

> It would be wrong to think that we moved farther away from the task of the proletariat winning power. No. We have come very close to it, not directly, but from the side. At the moment we must campaign not so much directly against Kerensky, as indirectly against him, namely, by demanding a more and more active, truly revolutionary war against Kornilov ... Now is the time for action: the war against Kornilov must be conducted in a revolutionary way, by drawing the masses in, by arousing them, by inflaming them (Korensky is afraid of the masses, afraid of the people). 13*

13* V. I. Lenin, Collected Works, Volume 25, June-September 1917 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1964), pp. 285-89.

e. Peace and Land

Perhaps the most important reason for the Bolshevik triumph in 1917 was the party's hewing consistently to the principled radical line hammered out by Lenin on the two most vital problems of the day: immediate unconditional ending of the war, and legalizing the massive illegal takeovers of land by the peasants from their feudal landlords throughout Russia during 1917. On the most vital question, ending the war, Lenin had braved massive unpopularity by being virtually alone, from the beginning of World War I in 1914, in calling for "revolutionary defeatism". Lenin's principled view was that the Marxists of each warring country had the responsibility for calling, not only for an immediate end to the war, but also for the defeat of their own government, and for turning the "imperialist war" into a civil war, i.e. using the war to seize power. Naturally, this view was hardly popular at first in a Russia, or in any other country, where the masses succumbed to the usual patriotic myths and bogeyman fears about (in the case of Russia) conquest by the dreaded Germans. But Lenin clung patiently to this perspective, and, in 1917, the masses became totally weary of the staggering losses at the front, with the soldiers (largely peasants) mutinying and deserting the front in droves. Yet, particularly after the overthrow of the Tsar in February 1917, every other left-wing party but Lenin and the Bolsheviks leant their support to the "patriotic war" and to the alleged "defense" of the February revolution against German attacks (known as "revolutionary defensism". It was largely the fact that the Bolsheviks,

alone of all the parties, called for an unconditional end to the war that won them the support of the Russian people. But Lenin was careful in explaining to the Bolsheviks that, in spreading their line on the war and against defensism, they must patiently explain to and not antagonize those masses who still suffered from pro-war illusions:

> The slogan "Down with the War!" is, of course, correct. But it fails to take into account the specific nature of the tasks of the present moment and the necessity of approaching the broad mass of the people in a different way. It reminds me of the slogan "Down with the Tsar!" with which the inexperienced agitator of the "good old days" went simply and directly to the countryside -- and got a beating for his pains. The mass believers in revolutionary defensism are honest ... i.e. they belong to classes (workers and the peasant poor) which in actual fact have nothing to gain from annexations and the subjugation of other peoples ...
> The rank-and-file believer in defensism regards the matter in the simple way of the men in the street: "I don't want annexations, but the Germans are 'going for' me, therefore I'm defending a just cause and not any kind of imperialist interests at all." To a man like this it must be explained again and again that it is not a question of his personal wishes, but of mass class, political relations and conditions, of the connection between the interests of capital and the international network of banks, and so forth. 14*

14* "The Tasks of the Proletariat in the Revolution", April 1917, in Cliff, Lenin, II, pp. 141-42.

Second only to the desire for peace in the hearts of the Russian people was the desire of the peasants -- the great bulk of the population -- for reclaiming what they considered as their own land from their feudal landlords. Emboldened by the overthrow of the Tsar, the peasants began, from April 1917 on, spontaneous and illegal seizures of their land throughout Russia. A major reason for the Bolshevik success is that they were the only party, under the aegis of Lenin, to laud the peasant seizure of their land and to call for ratification of those actions. All the other

left parties, including the peasants' own party the Social Revolutionaries, opposed the peasant actions as illegal, and urged them to wait until an all-Russian parliament (a "constituent assembly") were elected, and to let that assembly pass agrarian reforms. Only such a future assembly, these parties all declared, should be able to "grant" the land to the peasants. Until Lenin's radical pro-peasant stand favoring the seizures, the Bolsheviks had virtually no support among the peasantry. Now that was all to change. Lenin's stand, from April on, was clear-cut:

> To us, the thing that matters is revolutionary initiative, and the law must be the result of it. If you wait until the law is written, and yourselves do not develop revolutionary initiative, you will have neither the law nor the land.

Lenin mocked the arguments of the pro-war, anti-land seizure Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries:

> As to the land, wait until the constituent assembly. As to the constituent assembly, wait until the end of the war. As to the end of the war, wait until complete victory. That is what it comes to. The capitalists and landowners, having a majority in the government, are plainly mocking at the peasants.

Lenin concluded:

> To counteract the bourgeois-liberal or purely bureaucratic sermons preached by many Socialist Revolutionaries and Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, who advise the peasants not to start the agrarian reform pending the convocation of the constituent assembly, the party of the proletariat must urge the peasants to carry out the agrarian reform at once on their own, and to confiscate the landed estates immediately, upon the decisions of the peasants' deputies in the localities. 15*

15* Cliff, Lenin, II, p. 217. The Menshevik Sukhanov was to complain that Lenin had adopted anarchist tactics combined with the pro-peasant principles of the Social Revolutionaries: "Lenin, by 'giving the peasants the land at once' and preaching seizure, was in fact subscribing to anarchist tactics and an SR programme. Both one and the other were pleasing and under-

standable to the peasant, who was far from being a fanatical upholder of Marxism". Sukhanov, The Russian Revolution, p. 553.

Surveying Lenin's strategy and tactics from April to October 1917, Cliff sums them up justly:

> While adapting himself to the immediate situation, Lenin relentlessly subordinated everything to the final aim — the seizure of power by the proletariat. The combination of principled intransigence with tactical adaptation achieved its finest form.
> Throughout all the zigzags in tactics, Lenin's leitmotif was constant: to raise the level of consciousness and organization of the working class, to explain to the masses their own interests ... He knew how to express the programme of the revolution in a few clear and simple slogans which fitted the dynamic of the struggle, and meshed in with the experience and needs of the masses. 16*

16* Cliff, Lenin, II, p. 169.

Hitler, as well as Lenin, had an outstanding ability to keep his ultimate goal firmly in mind in the midst of all zigzags on tactics. In the midst of the German nationalist movement after World War I, one of the reasons that Hitler and his Nazi party were successful is because, unlike the other parties, Hitler offered a positive programme as well as the short-run task of overthrowing the Weimar Republic. As Harold Gordon writes:

> In essence, his (Hitler's) basic-programme and plans were threefold. First, he would destroy the "November criminals" who had emasculated Germany and the evil Jew and Marxists who were the masters of these traitors. He would then build a new, national Germany. Finally this new, national Germany would reconquer its proper place in the world. He had thus a great advantage over the other right radical foes of the Weimar Republic. Men like Gerhard Rossbach, Hermann Ehrhardt and Erich Ludendorff had purely negative programmes. They wanted to destroy the Republic, but they had no positive programme for the future once the Republic was gone. Hitler, on the other hand, had a programme for a "brave new world" that would replace the corrupt "system" of the old men whose weakness and veniality had destroyed Germany's power.

> Without a positive programme, rebels are merely dissidents; with one, they have the possibility of becoming serious revolutionaries. 17*

17* Harold J. Gordon, Jr., Hitler and the Beer Hall Putsch (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1972), pp. 51-52.

And this goal Hitler followed always on his rise to power: "This was the situation as Hitler saw it throughout his political career, and, seen in this light, many otherwise inexplicable moves become natural and logical. Few men follow a single goal unswervingly throughout an entire political lifetime ... Hitler was such a man, and the NSDAP was his tool for accomplishing his ends. 18*

18* Gordon, Hitler, p. 54.

8. Good Guys and Bad Guys

The fundamental aim of Marxian propaganda and agitation is "to explain to the masses their own interests", or, in Marxian terms, to transform or "raise" the "false consciousness" of the exploited and oppressed classes into a correct consciousness of their plight. In short, the Marxists, as do libertarians, identify certain majority classes of society who are being oppressed by other minority classes. Thus they implicitly adopt the Humean view of the State that its continued rule rests on majority support. The Marxists, like the libertarians, aim to demonstrate to the oppressed majority the true nature of their exploitation, thus removing the legitimacy of the existing State in the minds of the oppressed, thereby depriving the State of its necessary support. In the words of the New Left: both groups wish to "desanctify" the State. There are, of course, differences, in accordance with their different theories: Marxists wish to desanctify and eliminate the existing feudal or "capitalist" State and replace it by the "dictatorship

of the proletariat"; libertarians wish to desanctify and eliminate the State itself. This difference stems from different views on who is being exploited and who is doing the exploiting. Both groups have a theory about who the "good guys" and who the "bad guys" are, and both groups wish to explain to the deluded good guys the nature of the bad guys and of their continuing oppression of the former group. The difference is contrasting perceptions about who the good guys and the bad guys happen to be.

a. The Nazis and Nationalism

No "revolutionary" movement -- that is, no movement for radical social change -- can be successful unless it has a clear picture in its own mind of who the good guys and the bad guys may be. For Hitler and the National Socialist movement, the good guys were the Germans, the bad guys "non-Germans", the aim, victory of German nationalism with themselves in the vanguard. Here the Nazis reflected and articulated the rise of nationalism in Germany and in the rest of Europe after World War I. As Harold Gordon writes:

> Even before the war, there was developing a tendency throughout Europe for nationalism to replace class as an overriding consideration for men of all classes everywhere. The war naturally intensified this tendency. Nationalism became a primary, positive good ... And, war being a breeder of hate as well as patriotism, this nationalism was strongly mixed with hatred of the enemy powers ...
> Basically, the war had also done something ... to a great many of the front officers and soldiers, to a great number of the school children, and even to a great number of ordinary older Germans: it had changed them from a class orientation to a national orientation. German was good; non-German was bad ... Most Germans were affected to some extent by this philosophy, as were most nationals of the warring countries ...
> Just as a Marxist would and did feel that no one who did not represent the proletariat had a right to leadership in a Marxist society, so the patriot felt that only a

nationalist should hold such posts. Class consciousness was replaced by national consciousness as a criterion of virtue. 19*

19* Gordon, Hitler, pp. 9-10, 12.
On the importance of a "we"/"they" orientation for a radical social movement by a critic of radicalism, see Dietrich Orlow, The History of the Nazi Party, 1919-1933 (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1969), p. 4.

The Marxists, who can only interpret social movements with the tools of economic class analysis, have always interpreted the Nazi phenomenon as an economic movement in the interests of the lower-middle class (the "petty bourgeoisie"). But, as Gordon points out, this analysis was incorrect on several levels. First, "neither the (nationalist) movement nor the (Nazi) party was essentially lower-middle-class in make-up according to the best available evidence. This sub-class formed an element in the party, but an element apparently no larger than its share in the population -- if as large." But, moreover, "the entire Patriotic Movement and the NSDAP in particular were organized for the specific purpose of destroying the class concept and the class stratification of Germany in the interest of unifying the people both to protect them against the exterior foe and to carry out the manifest destiny of Germany. Therefore, class, which destroys internal cooperation, was no basis for such a movement. It was anathema to the movement and to its members." 20*

20* Gordon, Hitler, p. 7.
Also see ibid., p. 68, and Geoffrey Pridham, Hitler's Rise to Power: The Nazi Movement in Bavaria, 1923-1933 (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), pp. 184ff.; Orlow, History of the Nazi Party, p. 171.
An allied myth of the Marxists, always anxious to reduce an ideological movement to a particular economic class, was that the Nazis were simply creatures of big business, and thus consisted of "capitalism" turning to dictatorship to maintain "its" rule.

It seems clear, however, that big business support for the Nazis came very late in their rise toward power, and was simply by way of seeking to influence a possible victor. Apart from that, and even if the big business thesis were correct, the big businessmen would have had to find mass supporters from some other class -- hence, enter the "petty bourgeoisie."

b. The Inner Contradictions of Marxism

But if Hitler and the Nazis had a clear two-group, "good guy vs. bad guy" dichotomy, the Marxists have never enjoyed such clarity. This basic, inherent Marxian confusion is symbolized by their failure to grasp the nature of the Nazi phenomenon and to which "class" it supposedly belonged. This systemic Marxian confusion stems from Marx's failure to clarify or define his own crucial concept of "class". The Marxian concept of class contains within itself a grave inner contradiction: Between the exploiting class as the rulers of the State (as in feudalism and Oriental despotism), and Marx's view that the capitalists, in their market relations, "exploit" the hired workers. From the latter view, and from Marx's concept that history proceeds ineluctably from feudalism (or from Oriental despotism to feudalism) to capitalism, comes Marx's goal, during the current "stage" of capitalist society, of the conquest of State power from the capitalists by the industrial working class (the "proletariat"), and the establishment of the dictatorship of the latter class. This "two-class" concept is the basic Marxian social analysis of the capitalist stage of history. But there is a grave problem with this schema for Marxians who, after all, wish to analyze the real world so as to be able to change it. What does one do with a myriad of other social classes that can't be fit into this neat two-class schema? What does one do if a country is still partially or even largely "feudalist",

with factories existing side by side with feudal landlords and peasants? What does one do with the landlords, the peasants, small and large, the agricultural workers, the self-employed artisans and shopkeepers and other small businessmen, the service workers, government bureaucrats, and the unemployed, criminals, and the urban "dregs of society" (the lumpen-proletariat)? If one takes these myriad classes into consideration, each with its possibly harmonious or conflicting class interests, how does one handle them? Who, then, are the good guys and the bad guys? And what has become of the Marxian theory of class? Thus, the Marxian dilemma: if they stick to the Marxian theory of two classes -- capitalists vs. proletariat, they are then incapable of dealing with the numerous economic classes in the real world; but if they take these classes into consideration, they implicitly abandon Marx's two-class analysis, and are left at sea without a theory to guide them. 21*

21* Cf. Stanley Moore, Three Tactics: The Background in Marx (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1963).

Marxists have never been able to cope adequately with this dilemma. In practice, they have generally stuck to their basic aim of the dictatorship of the proletariat (although this now seems to have been abandoned by such West European Communist parties as those of Italy, France, and Spain), while trying somehow to deal with the other classes. But confusion and schisms between Marxian factions have been the inevitable result. In early twentieth century Russia, a basically agricultural country of feudal landlords and peasants with a small but growing number of factories and industrial workers, the orthodox Marxists --

the Mensheviks — clung to the Marxian theory of stages by advocating two revolutions: first, the "capitalist" revolution, to be led by a coalition of workers and capitalists (the "good guys" for that stage), to be followed, after the "completion" of the capitalist and industrial revolutions, by a second revolution of the proletariat against the capitalists. But Lenin displayed his strategic brilliance early by realizing that the largest and most oppressed class in Russia was the peasantry, and therefore early advocated that the first revolution be a coalition of workers and peasants as against the landlords and bourgeoisie. Whereas Marx, true to his schema that peasants are "reactionary" denizens of the feudal, "pre-capitalist" stage, had no use for the peasantry, Lenin was the first Marxist to realize their revolutionary potential; in that way, he implicitly altered classical Marxism very radically. And, in 1917, as we have seen, Lenin alone saw that the new and unexpected conditions of dual power enabled the workers with their allies the peasants to "skip a stage" by seizing power right away, without waiting for the completion of the capitalist stage. Later in the century, the Maoists in China, a country virtually devoid of industry, centered their revolution almost completely in the wishes of the oppressed peasantry for what they considered to be their own land. As a result, Mao's armed revolution was centered almost completely in the peasant countryside, with urban victory coming only at the end, a procedure followed by Castro and Guevara in Cuba. In contrast, the Trotskyite Communists, scorning the peasantry in the older Marxian fashion, have tried to center their movement on the industrial workers alone. When we consider that

all the successful revolutions of modern times, from the French Revolution to the Bolshevik Revolution to the Chinese, the Cuban, and the Vietnamese, have been basically peasant rather than proletarian, and rooted in the peasant desire for their land as against feudal landlords, it is no wonder that the Trotskyites have so manifestly failed across the globe.

Indeed, looking at the Marxian movement on a global scale, the grave error of Marx's original concept becomes manifest. For, in accordance with his basic theory of historical stages, Marx believed that socialist revolutions would occur first in the most advanced industrial capitalist countries, where the proletariat are the most numerous. That is why Lenin and the Bolsheviks, for some years after the Russian Revolution, expected that their revolution would be rapidly followed by Marxian revolutions in industrialized Western Europe -- and deeply believed that the Soviet Union would collapse quickly unless that Marxian culmination rapidly occurred. Instead, each and every one of the successful Marxian revolutions in the twentieth century have taken place in the least industrialized and therefore the most peasant-oriented countries.

The success of the Marxists in peasant countries and their failure in industrialized nations should, of course, have led to a fundamental rethinking by the Marxists of their entire class theory. For perhaps this means that the industrial workers are not exploited at all, and that the peasants are exploited by feudal landlords who seized peasant property centuries ago and have been ruling it ever since? In short, may not the libertarians

be right that the only truly revolutionary movement is one on behalf of private property by people who are trying to regain their property from those who have stolen it? But, of course, if the Marxists realized this, they would no longer be Marxists in any sense and would be well on the way to becoming libertarians. Instead, the Maoists have tried to square the strategic circle by an ingenious though tortured global analogy with China and Cuba, which sees the undeveloped peasant nations as the "world countryside" where the revolution begins, later to spread and engulf the "world cities" of the industrialized nations.

c. The Problem of the Peasantry

Of course, none of this is to imply that the Marxists have any long-run sympathy with the peasants' desire for what they conceive to be their private property. After they take power, Marxist parties later try to expropriate the peasants, with the peasants and their land then to be run by the dictatorial proletarian State, or rather by the State run by Communist parties as the "vanguard representatives" of the workers. In Russia, this expropriation of the peasants, advocated by Trotsky and carried through by Stalin, was carried out against the wishes of the dying Lenin and of his favorite theoretician Bukharin, who advocated a lengthy, indefinite period of a roughly free market for both peasants and urban industry until the "socialist" stage of expropriation could be put through. In China, the peasants were also expropriated. In Yugoslavia and Poland, however, the Communist governments have abandoned their desire to collectivize the peasantry for the indefinite future if not forever -- undoubtedly

feeling correctly that the peasants would successfully revolt at any such attempt.

A particular tragedy of the free-market, classical liberal, and of conservative movements, has been their total failure to understand the impetus of the great revolutionary peasant movement of the twentieth century. Either the classical liberals ignore the land question in the undeveloped countries altogether, or else they chastise the peasant movement for being "egalitarian", "socialist", and destructive of the rights of private property. But the peasant movements are almost invariably deeply oriented toward reclaiming the private property of the peasants previously stolen by state conquest and granted to their feudal landlords. A classical liberalism that is now almost totally grounded in utilitarianism rather than justice and natural rights is almost incapable of recognizing that private property rights cannot be recognized except under some criterion of justice -- and the criterion compatible with liberty comprehends the crucial distinction between land title by conquest and by occupation and use. Finding no sympathy whatever in the ranks of the professed champions of free-market capitalism, is it any wonder that the peasants have been forced to turn to the Communists as the only group proclaiming their right to the land?

d. Libertarian Class Analysis and "Conspiracy Theory"

If the Nazis had a clear-cut two-group good guys vs. bad guys theory, and the Marxists do not, the libertarians also possess a clear-cut two-group theory. Hence, libertarians are able to give a far more cogent picture of enemies and potential friends than

the Marxists can ever muster. In brief, to libertarians, the State is always the enemy, the bad guys, while the oppressed public (all groups and occupations except State officials and clients) are the actual or potential good guys. In short, the libertarians believe that the State has been able to mobilize a propaganda machine throughout its history with the aid of allied intellectuals to induce "false consciousness", support, and legitimacy among the vast majority which constitutes the oppressed but deluded non-State public. Since libertarians are not wedded to a particular economic class (such as the proletariat), our potential constituency is all people exploited by the State, all "net taxpayers" -- to employ John C. Calhoun's happy distinction between "net taxpayers" and the "net tax-consumers" who constitute the State and its privileged and subsidized allies. In particular, our "bad guy" focus must be on the "ruling class" or "power elites" -- the leaders of the "tax-eating" coalition -- as well as secondarily on the operating State bureaucracy. In different times and places, who constitutes the ruling elite will vary from group to group: ranging from Chinese emperors to Rockefeller and Morgan to Communist parties. Who the ruling class may be at any given time depends on an empirical analysis of the concrete conditions of the real world.

Contemporary libertarians and classical liberals have been battling the ruling class under a severe self-imposed handicap: a stubborn refusal to identify the specific members of the ruling class -- in contemporary America, a coalition led by certain big-business groups allied to technocratic intellectuals and labor

union leaders. The problem is that many libertarians and laissez-faire liberals believe that statism has grown purely as the result of intellectual error, of imbibing erroneous ideas about what set of governmental policies will further the general welfare. Big businessmen, such as the Rockefellers, are leading statists only because they have been naively brainwashed by socialistic ideas; and even statist intellectuals, on whom is placed almost all of the blame, are conceived to be only victims of pervasive intellectual error. There is, in fact, a close tie-in between libertarian "educationists" who scorn the development of a movement and who wish to confine themselves to abstract ideas without ever confronting the particular enemy, and those who commit the fallacy that statism is purely the result of massive intellectual blunders. For statism is not at all irrational from the point of view of those who rule and benefit from the State. Statism is not just a tyranny in the service of abstract ideas; it is a massive system of economic exploitation of the productive many by the parasitic ruling few. Statism is in the rational self-interest of the exploiters. In contemporary America, it is in the self-interest of the business groups and labor unions who gain privileges, cartels, and subsidies galore from the State, and of the intellectuals and technicians who form the State controlling bureaucracy and receive subventions from its coffers. It is this general truth, and the particular concrete facts that constitute it, that must continually be exposed to the exploited public. There is no better way to raise false consciousness to the truth than to show the mass of the public that they are being conned and exploited by their

rulers. There is no better way to show them that "the Emperor has no clothes", to expose the mendacity of State apologists and propagandists.

By failing to hammer away at these facts, libertarians are omitting a crucially important set of truths about the real world in which they live. But also such a policy of continual "State muckraking" has an immense strategic importance. It is common among logicians to decry the "argument from authority" and to maintain that people should only be guided by their own independent rational and empirical investigations into any given problem. But this critique of the argument from authority, while formally correct, misses the main point of why the authority argument is always a powerful one. That reason is the universal fact of the division of labor. Most people have neither the time, interest, or ability to be experts in every area important to their lives and concerns; they therefore have to rely on expert authorities to form their judgments in these areas -- from politics to morals to economics to medicine. But since, in most of these areas, the authorities are in the well-paid service of the State, it becomes vital for libertarians to desanctify, to delegitimate these alleged authorities in the eyes of the deluded public. And since the public is not equipped to engage in technical investigations of each of these fields, the major weapon must be to desanctify these people as paid hirelings and propagandists of the exploiting State. Once seeing this light -- and it requires little or no technical expertise to see this broad truth -- the public will then have to turn to those experts and authorities who have remained free of the blandishments of the State.

This sort of analysis, of course, is commonly countered -- particularly by Establishment, liberals and conservatives -- with the charge that it is merely an exercise in "the conspiracy theory of history", "paranoia", "economic determinism", and even "Marxism". This approach has nothing to do with Marxism, although of course Marxists often use it to identify ruling classes who are their opponents. The same approach was trenchantly used by the older classical liberals -- by Adam Smith, Ricardo, James Mill, Cobden and Bright -- 22*

22* See Ralph Raico, comments on Leonard Liggio, "Origins of Nineteenth-Century French Liberalism", Journal of Libertarian Studies (forthcoming).

It is only modern laissez-faire liberals who refuse to identify their enemy and who join the Establishment in hurling the above epithets. For identifying the ruling classes is neither paranoia nor Marxism but simply common sense. If Congress passes a quota on steel imports, only a moron would deny that the domestic steel industry (or dominant forces within it) was the major lobbyist pushing for its passage. This is simply common sense. Why not then try to extend this sensible analysis still further to more complex measures (such as foreign aid, the establishment of the CAB, the Federal Reserve, or even entry into a war) or even to the basic, integrated features of the political-economic system itself?

The "conspiracy theorist", at his best, is simply a person who possesses basic praxeological insight: that men act, that they choose means in order to obtain certain preferred ends. The opponents of the "conspiracy theory of history" explicitly assume that

all events in history are random, that they are never the results of human purpose and choice. Once adopt the praxeological insight, however, and the historian (either of the contemporary scene or of the past) must ask himself: cui bono? Who has benefited from a certain law, policy, or set of policies that constitute a system? On finding out who benefited, the historian then frames a reasonable hypothesis: that the beneficiaries were responsible for the passage of the/or institution of the policy. Where law such conspiracy theorists as the Birchers or the U.S. Labor Party or numerous others have failed is that end there: assuming without further inquiry that those who benefit from a law necessarily pushed for its passage. It is in committing this fallacy of "post hoc ergo propter hoc" that "paranoia" lies. Instead, the historian must test his hypothesis by finding out whether or not the beneficiaries pushed for the original measure; if they did, then the "conspiracy" view is confirmed.

The final fallback position of the "anti-conspiracy" forces is to state that, even though the Rockefellers or the statist intellectuals may have pushed for policies from which they then benefited economically, that they were yet "sincere" in believing that these measures also promoted the "public good". Well, who knows? No one, except possibly close friends or psychoanalysts, are privy to the inner thoughts and feelings of these people. As historians, as social analysts, as libertarians, we can only know the objective record of their actions -- a record of pushing for exploitative measures from which they came to benefit. The rest -- the deep exploration of their psyches -- we must leave to God, to Heavens

or Hell. It is not and cannot be our province. Besides, for us the state of their psyches does not really matter. What is relevant is the objective record of their tyranny and exploitation, sought and attained.

9. Organization: The Cadre and the Division of Labor

Having discussed the need for a movement, for holding high the banner of radical principle while remaining flexible in tactics and adaptable to changing concrete conditions, having treated the need for clarity in defining who the bad guy oppressors are in order to win the exploited good guys to a correct apprehension of their condition, let us now turn to a discussion of the organization of the movement itself. One of Lenin's great achievements was to realize the crucial flaw in the major strategic perspective of the Marxian movement of which he was a leading member. The orthodox Marxists, in a sense like such libertarian "educationists" as Leonard Read and Robert LeFevre in the present-day, believed that all one need do to effect radical social change is to beam education at the public (or the working class), after which this working class would somehow "spontaneously" arise to throw off the shackles of the State. In a fundamental revision of orthodox Marxism, Lenin, in his What Is to Be Done? (1902) and in other writings of that period, realized that reliance on spontaneous uprising by the body of the workers would never do. For one thing, despite his theoretical adherence to egalitarian communism, Lenin realized that such reliance defied the universal truth of the division of labor -- that some people will be brighter, more able, and more dedicated than others, and particularly that

different people will arrive at correct consciousness of Marxism at different paces and in varying degrees. In short, at any given time, there will be some people possessed of the full ideological truth, others, more numerous, partially developed in varying degrees in their grasp of the truth, and others -- even among the potential good guys -- who have not grasped the truth at all. Furthermore, Lenin, again recognizing the importance of the division of labor, pointed out that nothing can be achieved in the world without coherent organization, without an organization to advance and propound the truth in the real world. Hence the importance of an organization of the "cadre" (those in full possession of the libertarian doctrine, to multiply the effectiveness of its members in supporting each other and in advancing the ideas and the activities of the movement to transform the real world. Moreover, Lenin grasped that mere amateurs in any field of endeavor, while important in supporting and advancing the field, will get nowhere by themselves; that vital to the success of any endeavor, is a group of professionals, who are able to devote their full-time careers to advancement of the cause. Such full-time work enormously advances both the depth of understanding and the effectiveness of each cadre member, and accelerates the discovery and creation of new cadre. It is a curious feature of many ideological movements -- including the classical Marxist and the libertarian - that people who recognize the vital importance of organization in every other human endeavor, (from production and marketing of hi-fi sets to the playing of chess), for some reason deny the propriety or effectiveness of organization in the advancement of an ideology.

It is difficult to overestimate the importance of as many cadre as possible becoming full-time "professional" libertarians, of people who devote their full-time careers to advancing the cause of liberty. No discipline, no science, no movement, can succeed when all of its practitioners or advocates are friendly amateurs, as important as those amateurs may be. The science of physics could not have flourished if all physicists remained as gentlemen-amateurs on the 18th century model, promoting physics in their spare time. It is necessary to have people devoting their full energies to advancing both the theory of a discipline or movement as well as spreading its application. The same applies to the Buddhist religion, the Roman Catholic Church, or any other influential movement. As I have written earlier:

> Without a hard core of "professional libertarians", without an extensive cadre of people engaged in full-time libertarian work, we will never attain victory. In the early days of the sciences, there were little or no professional physicists or chemists; the scientific societies were essentially groups of gentlemen-friends of science. There was no possibility for any of the scientific disciplines to flourish, to actually become a discipline, until the all-round gentlemen-amateurs were succeeded by professionals: by people who made full-time careers out of physics, astronomy, or whatever.__Yet everybody in our movement complacently expects victory to arrive while it still consists only of haphazard amateur efforts ...
>
> When a man is a full-time libertarian, a professional, be he scholar, journalist, or organizer, he exerts a force for liberty on a 24-hour basis, thus enormously increasing one man's possible and actual leverage for liberty; and, furthermore, he is likely to influence hundreds or even thousands of other people, thus greatly expanding his social leverage ... Finally, almost everyone in our movement is an amateur so defined; the number of professionals, i.e. those making a full-time living in some form of direct libertarian work, is pitifully small. What is desperately needed as a key to the expansion and success of our movement is the development of a strong cadre of professional libertarians. 23*

23* Rothbard, "Libertarian Strategy -- Part III", Libertarian Connection (1969).

Lenin saw that every ideological movement necessarily begins as a congeries of small, local discussion circles, in which each member is an undifferentiated amateur, and whose actions are "spontaneous" and unplanned, engaged in without thought to fundamental strategy. But at a certain point in the growth of a movement, a coherent national organization, an organization run by a cadre of professionals, becomes necessary. Around 1901, Lenin recognized that the dissolution of the circle phase into a national organization was necessary.

Referring to the circles, Lenin pointed out that they were "without any organization of the various divisions of revolutionary work, without any systematic plan of activity covering any length of time". Lenin included himself in his indictment of the circles:

> I used to work in a study circle that set itself very broad, embracing tasks; and all of us, members of that circle, suffered painfully and acutely from the realization that we were acting as amateurs at a moment in history when we might have been able to say, varying a well-known statement: "Give us an organization of revolutionaries, and we will overturn Russia!"

The task, said Lenin, was "to raise the amateurs to the level of revolutionaries", of "people professionally engaged in revolutionary activity". 24*

24 * Lenin, "What Is To Be Done?", Works, Vol. 5, pp. 441-42, 452, 467, and pp. 349-529 passim. Also noteworthy is this passage: "Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement. This idea cannot be insisted upon too strongly at a time when the fashionable preaching of opportunism goes hand in hand with an infatuation for the narrowest forms of practical activity". Ibid., p. 369.

It was Lenin's perception of the need to transcend the circle mentality that was largely responsible for the Bolshevik-Menshevik split in the Russian Marxist party in 1903. Inveighing against the Mensheviks in his account and analysis of the split, Lenin wrote of "their narrow circle mentality and astonishing immaturity as Party members", their emphasis on personal relations on what we would now call "affinity groups", on the "bell-jar seclusion of an intimate and snug little circle", an emphasis on personal feelings which led to "hysterics" and "squabbles". 25*

25* Lenin, "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back", Works, Vol. 7, pp. 285-86, 314-15. Also see ibid, pp. 206-07, 219, 229, 245, 258, 260, 269, 275, 280-82, 326, 356-57, 392-95, 401, 405-07, and pp. 205-425 passim.

> The old circles, the local committees, Lenin charged, are made up of a regular jumble of persons, each of whom carries on all and every kind of work, without devoting himself to some definite type of revolutinnary work, without assuming responsibility for some special duty, without carrying through a piece of work to the end, once it has been undertaken, thoroughly considered and prepared, wasting an enormous amount of time and energy in radicalist noise-making ... cumbersome, lacking in specialisation, just as little given to acquiring the experience of professional revolutionaries or by benefiting from the experience of others, taken up with endless conferences "about everything" ...

Instead, Lenin wrote, "the local committees must reorganize themselves; they must become specialized and more 'business-like' organizations ... The number of committee members should be cut down; each of them, wherever possible, should be entrusted with a definite, special and important function, for which he will be held to account; a special, very small, directing centre must be set up; a network of executive agents must be developed..." 26*

26* Lenin, "letter to a Comrade on our Organizational Tasks", (September 1902), Works, Vol. 6, pp. 249-50.

What Lenin was basically doing was instituting a vitally important innovation: applying modern organizational theory and practice to a movement for radical social change. His concept of "democratic centralism" has been bitterly attacked by his opponents; but all that it amounted to was the / common sense dictum that, while democratic methods may apply to arriving at a decision, that, once the decision is made, members of an organization should loyally abide by the decision and by the directives of chosen officials so long as they continue to be members. Indeed, Lenin believed in combining centralization of leadership with decentralization of effort in the party:

> While the greatest possible centralisation is necessary with regard to the ideological and practical leadership of the movement ..., the greatest possible decentralisation is necessary with regard to keeping the Party centre (and therefore the Party as a whole) informed about the movement, and with regard to responsibility to the Party. The leadership of the movement should be entrusted to the smallest possible number of the most homogeneous possible groups of professional revolutionaries with great practical experience. Participation in the movement should extend to the greatest possible number of the most diverse and heterogeneous groups ... We must centralise the leadership of the movement. We must also (and for that very reason, since without information centralisation is impossible) as far as possible decentralise responsibility to the Party on the part of its individual members, of every participant in its work ... The decentralisation is nothing but the reverse side of the division of labour which is generally recognised to be one of the most urgent practical needs of our movement. 27*

27* Ibid, pp. 245-249.

(It is clear from Lenin's writings that much of his continuing emphasis on centralization was due to the fact that Marxist

organizations were then, and often throughout the pre-1917 era, illegal, so that agitation and organization had to take place in secret and on the run.) 28*

28* An amusing example of absurdly mechanical imitation of Lenin's tactics is the practice in recent years of members of Trotskyite parties in the U.S. adopting party aliases. What they failed to understand is that Lenin and the Bolsheviks did so only to the extent that they were in a state of illegality, conditions that largely have not applied in the U.S. An example of wholesale adoption of aliases, for similar paranoid reasons, is the Libertarian Connection grouplet in California.

In the course of a brilliant critique of left-sectarianism after the Bolsheviks had seized power, Lenin reaffirmed the necessity of the division of labour and the iron law of oligarchy (without naming it as such. The masses,he pointed out, are generally

> led by political parties; ... political parties, as a general rule, are directed by more or less stable groups composed of the most authoritative, influential and experienced members, who are elected to the most responsible positions and are called leaders. All this is elementary.

Going on to attack the left-sectarian opposition in the Communist movement, an opposition which attacked political parties as well as leaders per se, Lenin first pointed out that the anti-leaders simply put forward new leaders of their own. He then added:

> The attempts ... to proclaim that political parties are generally unnecessary and "bourgeois" are such Herculean pillars of absurdity that one can only shrug one's shoulders. In truth, a small mistake can always be turned into a preposterous one, if it is persisted in, if profound reasons are given for it and if it is carried to its "logical conclusion." What the opposition has come to is the repudiation of the party principle and of party discipline. And this is tentamount to completely disarming the proletariat for the benefit of the bourgeoisie.

> It is tantamount to that petty-bourgeois diffuseness, instability, incapacity for sustained effort, unity and organized action, which, if indulged in, must inevitably destroy every proletarian revolutionary movement. 29*

29* V. I. Lenin, "Left-Wing" Communism, an Infantile Disorder (New York: International Publishers, 1940), pp. 26, 28. The essay was written in the spring of 1920.

After noting that there had always been sectarian attacks on the "dictatorship of leaders" and the "oligarchy" in the Bolshevik Party, Lenin -- in passages that are relevant to the anti-Libertarian Party cliques in the libertarian movement today -- heaped scorn on the sectarianism of those Communists who believed in always repudiating parliamentary politics as "bourgeois" and therefore as abandonment of Marxist principle.

> Expressing one's "revolutionariness" solely by hurling abuse at parliamentary opportunism, solely by repudiating participation in parliaments, is very easy; but just because it is too easy, it is not the solution for a difficult, a very difficult, problem ... To attempt to circumvent ... the difficult job of utilising reactionary parliaments for revolutionary purposes is absolutely childish. You want to create a new society, yet you fear the difficulties involved in forming a good parliamentary fraction, consisting of convinced, devoted, heroic Communists, in a reactionary parliament! ... It is just because the backward masses of the workers and, to a still greater degree, of the small peasants are in Western Europe much more imbued with bourgeois-democratic and parliamentary prejudices than they were in Russia that it is only from within such institutions as bourgeois parliaments that Communists can (and must) wage a long and persistent struggle, undaunted by difficulties, to expose, dissipate and overcome prejudices. 30*

30* Lenin, Left-Wing Communism, pp. 47-48.

There is no question about the fact that the successful modern radical movements had a highly centralized leadership. For the Nazis, the Italian Fascists, and for the ultimately unsuccessful but still impressive John Birch Society, this centra-

lization meant rule by one man. In Lenin's Bolshevik party, on the other hand, centralized power was wielded not by one man, but by the joint leadership of the central committee. On many crucial occasions, Lenin saw the correct tactic and strategy earlier than his colleagues, and he had to battle as one man to convince them of the correctness of his new tactical turn. With persuasiveness, will, and with the great respect he commanded as founder of the Bolshevik party, he was able to bring them around, but the result was by no means preordained. The outstanding occasions when Lenin had to struggle in a minority of one to convince the other Bolshevik leaders were: the April 1917 thesis that the Bolshevik party should aim at a rapid seizure of power; the actual call for that seizure in October; and the insistence on including an "appeasement peace" at Brest-Litovsk in early 1918 with the victorious German forces.

10. Qualities of Leadership

In terms of rapidity of success from beginning as a small minority, Lenin and Hitler are surely the two most remarkable ideological revolutionaries in modern history. Both began with small minority movements, both were able to hold firm to their ultimate goals while adjusting tactics flexibly and ably to changing conditions, i.e. both were outstanding ideological entrepreneurs, and both were able to lead their movements through failure and vicissitude to ultimate success in a large, modern country in a remarkably short time: approximately fifteen to twenty years. In a sense, Hitler's was the more remarkable achievement, since he started with only a handful of people,

achieved success more rapidly, and ran the movement far more personally than Lenin. Lenin, however, in addition to being the first, was the more important and fruitful strategic and tactical theorist. They were far different personalities. Hitler, for example, was undoubtedly highly charismatic and a spell-binding orator; Lenin, on the other hand, was scarcely noticed when he entered a room and was often a disappointment to those who met him for the first time. But in addition to perceiving the proper tactics to follow in pursuit of a tenaciously held ultimate goal, both men were marked by a common personal characteristic generally perceived by those around them: indomitable will.

Hitler's personal sway over the Nazi party was such that, early in its career, "it was his ideas and his aims exclusively that shaped the party's actions". Moreover,

> The official party program ... contained elements that were either of no interest to Hitler or in conflict with his own ideas. Characteristically, Hitler handled the program as he did the men who wrote it. He used it where it was tactically advantageous to do so and ignored it otherwise. For the rank and file of the party and for its key leaders, Hitler was already the central factor in the political cosmos ... 31*

31*. Gordon, Hitler, p. 51.

As to Hitler's indomitable will, "he believed fully and passionately in the 'triumph of the will' ... The end justified any and all means that he might use. Here, then, was a policy and a will that, given the proper instrument, could and would shake the world." Further:

> Hitler's aims and his tactics determined his relations with all other elements of the Bavarian political scene. His aims determined his attitude towards them and his

> views on tactics determined his manner of dealing with them ... Neither sympathy with fellow racists nor agreement with vigorous nationalists on the role of Germany in the world moved him one iota from his path. If they stood in his way, they must be brushed aside. If they resisted, they must be smashed. If they compromised, they must be used ruthlessly and discarded whenever they became restive. 32*

32* Gordon, Hitler, pp. 54-55

Hitler's charisma and personal effectiveness are fulsomely attested to by Professor Gordon:

> Hitler .... was an incomparable asset to any political organization. He was a spell-binder who could conquer the emotions and loyalties of masses of men. He was also a cunning plotter of Byzantine skill, and, last but not least, a man who did not know when he was beaten — and historically the fool who doesn't know when he is beaten has more than once crushed the overwhelming powers arrayed against him. Hitler thus united in his physically insignificant person the talents and characteristics of Demosthenes, Ferdinand of Aragon, and Robert the Bruce; and he added to them the ambition and sweeping aims of Alexander or Napoleon. 33*

33* Gordon, Hitler, p. 50

The phrase "the triumph of the will" has often been applied to Hitler. But so too with the uncharismatic Lenin. Tony Cliff writes that "there has probably never been a revolutionary more single-minded, purposeful and persistent than Lenin. It is significant that the most commonly recurring words in his writings are probably 'relentless' and 'irreconcilable'. Above all he had unbending willpower." A. V. Lunacharsky wrote of Lenin that "the dominating trait of his character, ... was his will: an extremely firm, extremely forceful will capable of concentrating itself on the most immediate task but which never yet strayed beyond the radius traced out by his powerful intellect and which

assigned every individual problem its place as a link in a huge, world-wide political chain." A. N. Potresov and P. B. Axelrod, both former close co-workers of Lenin who later became his Menshevik opponents, concurred in this estimate of Lenin. Potresov reminisces that "all of us who were closest to the work ... valued Lenin not only for his knowledge, brains and capacity for work, but also for his exceptional devotion to the cause, his unceasing readiness to give himself completely, to take upon himself the most unpleasant functions, and without fail to discharge them with the utmost conscientiousness". And Axelrod, when asked "how can one man be so effective and so dangerous", replied: "because there is not another man who for twenty-four hours of the day is taken up with the revolution, who has no other thoughts but thoughts of revolution, and who, even in his sleep, dreams of nothing but revolution. Just try and handle such a fellow." 34*

34* All quotes are in Cliff, Lenin, I. pp. 77-78. Lunacharsky's may be found in A. V. Lunacharsky, Revolutionary Silhouettes (London, 1967), p. 39.

One of Lenin's attributes was that, while warm and generous toward friends and colleagues, he had a remarkable ability to step back and assess each person coolly and objectively, in the light of the requirements of the movement. Thus, Lenin's widow, Krupskaya, writes that one of his "characteristic traits was his ability to distinguish disputes on principles from personal disputes and his ability to place the interests of the cause above everything else. When an opponent attacked him, Ilyich (Lenin) was roused, he hit back, pressed his own point of view; but when new tasks arose and it was found possible to cooperate with the

opponent, Ilyich was able to approach the opponent of yesterday as a comrade". Tony Cliff concludes that Lenin's "attitude towards a person tended to change radically, depending on whether at the time he was on his side or against him. There was no fickleness in these attachments. The reason why one often finds in Lenin's writings startling contradictions in his comments on people, is that his basic rule was that the needs of the struggle took priority over everything else". 35*

35* Cliff, Lenin, pp. 116-18; N.S. Krupskaya, Memories of Lenin (London, 1970), p. 217.

While Lenin was scarcely a one-man party, he was definitely the major leader, the primus inter pares, of the Bolshevik party. It seems clear, by the division of labour, that one man will probably assume the leadership of the cadre of any organization, by virtue of superior ability, insight, dedication, and ideological entrepreneurship. Even the necessarily decentralized first successful modern revolution, the American (see below) had outstanding individual radical leaders in each region (Sam Adams in Boston, Patrick Henry in Virginia, Christopher Gadsden in Charleston, etc.). But there seems to be an important difference between total or absolute one-man leadership, on the one hand, and a cadre or committee of leaders on the other. For while decisions are likely to be swifter and seemingly more efficient in the former case, the fate of the movement becomes dependent on the limitations, as well as the genius, of one particular man. Surely that dependence is dangerous for any movement. The failure of the John Birch Society is surely due to its sole dependence on the limitations of one man, Robert Welch, so that his lack of knowledge in many areas and his

paranoid outlook have necessarily been stamped up on the Birch Society, to its grave and permanent detriment. Hitler's personal aberrations in his later years of power are well-known. Lenin's primus inter pares role seems to be far sounder, although of course this means that the movement cannot rely on a cult of personality for its basic ideology. For while leadership by a collegiality of top cadre might slow down decision-making, it is far more likely to insure the soundness of decisions. The necessity to convince a committee or group of top leaders insures checks and balances within the most able group in the movement, and insures a continuing feedback of the ideas of the leaders with other insights into reality. Otherwise, there is too much reliance on the psyche of one man.

11. Reason and Emotion

One interesting question, linked to the relative roles of charisma and of the personality of the leader in the various movements, is the balance between reason and emotion in the ideology and propaganda of the successful radical movements. In the Communist movement, the major emphasis has been on ideology, on "patiently explaining" to the people. For mass agitation, where the listeners cannot be expected to understand the ideology, the Communists append brief slogans to their arguments, and emphasize these slogans. But most Communists of the "cult of personality", and the emphasis on highly simplified mottoes and slogans, have come, not during the rise to power of Communist movements (the period we are interested in here) but in order to continue the hold over masses after State power has been achieved. Thus the

personality cults of Stalin, Mao, and Castro all came after their assumption of power. An example is the promulgation in Communist China of "The Thoughts of Chairman Mao" in the little red book and of communication of slogans through wall-posters. And while such cultural and emotional aspects as parades, songs, mass meetings, etc. have played a role in the Communist movements, they have been secondary and not particularly effective, at least in the stage before the acquisition of power.

Very different is the history of the fascist and Nazi movements. Here, the generation of emotion played a dominant role from the beginnings of the movement, a role more important than the explicit ideology. Partly, perhaps, this was a function of the vagueness and cloudiness of the fascist and Nazi ideology; partly because these movements were, in fact, under the total personal control of their charismatic Leaders. The emotional cult of the Leader was, then, prominent from the start. But so too were other emotional trappings important to whipping up the loyalties and emotions of the masses and of the movement cadre stirring marching songs, mass spectacles, a strong sense of theatre and drama. Leni Reifensthal's stirring documentary film of Hitler's Nuremberg rally, The Triumph of the Will, was one of the first and still one of the ablest political documentary motion pictures. And young Robert Brasillach, a French "anarcho-fascist" and leading literary critic in Paris, was particularly moved by the Nazi sense of drama in his visit to Germany in the 1930's:

> Brasillach's real introduction to the new Germany took place in the Zeppelinfeld stadium on the outskirts of Nuremberg. The ceremonies of the Arbeitskorps, the muster of the political leaders, and the consecration

> of the standards were grandiose spectacles of a type not even remotely matched by anything else he had seen in his travels. The sudden illumination of a thousand searchlights bracketed vertically against the night sky as Hitler entered the stadium, the "cathedral of light", left an unforgettable impression. The impact of what he witnessed made a mockery, he thought, of the "theater for the masses" proposed from time to time by certain Leftist intellectuals in France. At the Zeppelinfeld he found the authentic theater for the masses, with its monumental beauty, the enormous but correct proportions of the stadium, and the songs and maneuvers of the participants in the ceremonies. 36*

36* William R. Tucker, The Fascist Ego: A Political Biography of Robert Brasillach (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), p. 108.

The role of emotion and spectacle is emphasized by Leonard Liggio in his depiction of the methods of the Nazi movement. He writes that:

> The major organizational contribution of the (Nazi Party) was mass meetings. They were not aimed at electoral politics ... but aimed at creating a popular culture around the (Nazi) world-view. Based on opposition to the Versailles treaty and the economic sufferings caused by it, the Nazis drew people into the movement and integrated them into the movement's culture by festivals, outings, musicals, parties, all based on making the movement as near to a religion as possible. It might be said that the stress of the Nazi movement was not to get people to work for the party but to integrate them into the movement culture out of which they might wish to work for political activities ... but to be a part of the movement culture was a political movement and statement in itself. 37*

37* Leonard P. Liggio, "National Socialist Political Strategy: Social Change in a Modern Industrial Society with an Authoritarian Tradition", (Unpublished MS, 1976), pp. 8-9. We might add that in Germany, and in Europe generally, many ideological parties, including the Social Democrats and the Catholics, tried successfully to integrate all of their members and followers into their own culture: Social Democratic sports clubs, fraternal associations, etc. But none matched the emotional clout of the Nazi movement.

In a brilliant analysis of the history of Italian Fascism, Professor A. James Gregor points out that as a radical Marxist, Mussolini, around 1902 -- at the same time as Lenin in Russia --

began to grapple with the same problem that Lenin faced: the failure of spontaneous working class revolution to develop as classical Marxism had anticipated. Hence, Mussolini, at about the same time as Lenin, came to the conclusion that a hierarchically organized vanguard elite -- a cadre party -- was essential to making a successful revolution. 38*

38* A. James Gregor, The Fascist Persuasion in Radical Politics (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1974), pp. 106-11.

An early difference between Mussolini and Lenin is that the former, in contrast to rationalistic Marxism-Leninism, was beginning to emphasize the leading role of emotion, sentiment, and charisma in influencing the masses. As early as 1903, Mussolini had read and been greatly influenced by Gustave LeBon's Psychology of Crowds, with its emphasis on the irrationality of mob behavior. He was also highly influenced by Vilfredo Pareto's emphasis on the guiding role of irrational "sentiments" on mass action. In 1903, at the age of twenty, Mussolini expressed the conviction that "sentiments are the dynamic motives of human actions". The torpid masses would be led by the evocation of such sentiments by a guiding elite. Thus, Gregor writes about Mussolini's developing concepts:

> Some of the further, if informal, implications of such notions include a disposition to conceive parliamentary maneuvering or the pursuit of exclusive economic interests as neither the sole nor most important strategies for a revolutionary movement. Both such strategies appeal to pervasive material interests and restricted rational concerns, but fail to tap reservoirs of psychic energy generally characterized as "ideal" or "sentimental". Absent from such political strategies is a technique for creating a "psychological unity that reinforces the will and directs energies" -- a sensitive and broad pedagogical and mobilizing task involving not only intellectual cultivation but "paralogical" invocations -- what Mussolini was, hereafter, forever to refer to as "myths"... A truly competent revolutionary persuasion must be composed of ideal,

> as well as practical and doctrinal constituents. To mobilize masses in the service of ideal ends, to appeal to episodic, albeit real, interests can never be sufficient. What is required is a sustained recognition that one moral order must intransigently oppose itself to another. 39*

39* Gregor, Fascist Persuasion, p. 147.

Gregor identifies as the founders of the irrational "fascist style" the ranting and violent Italian youth movement known as "Futurism", founded by the wealthy young Filippo T. Marinetti in 1909. The Futurists were a nihilistic and avant-garde youth movement who called loudly for the rejection of the past, of bourgeois civilization and all of its trappings, proclaiming the virtues not only of irrationality but also "lunacy", of "youthful madmen" who would disturb and rejuvenate a torpid people. The Futurists lauded destruction, instinct, force, violence, and courage, lauded caprice, fantasy, bizarre actions and clothing, and proclaiming a "hatred of intelligence". All existing values, from family life, monogamy, religion, to money and private property, were bitterly attacked. 40*

40* For an English translation of the Futurist Manifesto, the original credo of the movement, see James Joll, Three Intellectuals in Politics (New York: Pantheon, 1960), pp. 179-184.

When the Fascist movement developed after World War I, the Futurists became an important part of the movement and provided its political style if not its organizational form or its explicit corporatist content. 41*

41* Gregor, Fascist Persuasion, pp. 141, 155-74. Also see Joll, Three Intellectuals, pp. 158-178.

> Thus, Gregor writes that the Futurists brought an inimitable style to the collection of ideas that were to constitute the substance of Fascism. Since Mussolini was convinced that history was made by resolute minorities activating the elemental energies of the masses, Futurist style, the histrionics and choreography of the streets, could readily become a fundamental organizing and mobilizing instrument of the Fascist armarium ... The Futurists and Arditi (the shock-troops of the Italian army during World War I) brought to Fascism the principal trappings that were to subsequently identify the movement. They brought the Black Shirt and the battle cries. They brought the posturing and the gestures, the slogans and the street locutions, that so endeared Fascism to the crowds ....
> Fascists themselves recognized that Futurism had provided the "sentimental and temperamental" adjuncts that gave Fascism its public character, but they correctly argued that Fascism's content found its origins in other sources. 42*

42* Gregor, Fascist Persuasion, pp. 172-73.

It seems clear that what the libertarian movement should strive for is an integration of reason and emotion, of enthusiasm and a passion for justice that stem from a rational understanding of libertarian doctrine. For emotion without a solid groundwork in rationality is unstable, unguided, hopped up, ready to play itself out in disorder, and bound to stray widely from sound doctrine. On the other hand, reason without emotion tends to be dull, mechanical, uninspiring, boring. To acquire cadre-and-other movement members who are expected to work steadily and rationally in a protracted struggle for victory, it is vitally important that they be emotionally committed to the movement and the goal. Reason alone may be true but is it interesting or inspiring? Richard Weaver, in his excellent and neglected work, The Ethics of Rhetoric, recalls the long-forgotten Aristotelian tradition of a fusion of reason and emotion, of ethics and rhetoric: in short, of a rhetoric (either verbal or written) that is passionate and dramatic

and persuasive, and solidly grounded in rational ethical theory. For Aristotle and Weaver, ethical theory per se is empty, for it is vital to get people to apply these ethics in their lives; and to do so, the ethical system must be put in the most inspiring and persuasive manner possible, in a way that will capture their hearts and their imaginations as well as their minds. 43*

43* Richard M. Weaver, The Ethics of Rhetoric (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1953).

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12. Emphasis on Youth

We have seen above that Marxist attempts to reduce the Nazi phenomenon to a particular economic class were in error. There was one conspicuous stratum of society — covering all economic classes — that was prominent in the new Nazi movement: the "class" of the youth.

Gordon writes:

> The most striking single social fact about the National Socialist Party is that it was a party of the young. Both followers and leaders tended to be far younger than their opposite numbers in the traditional political parties and remained so throughout the period of the Weimar Republic, as is indicated by the fact that the mass entry of National Socialists into the Reichstag in 1922-23 reduced the average age of that august body by a full decade. 44*

44* Gordon, Hitler, pp. 68-69. Also see ibid., pp. 69-71.

Again and again, throughout the provinces and localities, we find references to the prominence of Nazi students, to the "very young", and "half-grown youths". Most of the members and the leadership were in their twenties. Thus, Gordon reports that of a sample of 994 Nazi party members before November 9, 1923, a sample including

a considerable proportion of leaders and activists, 195 were 21 years or less; and fully 610 were under 31 years of age. The same pattern holds for the leadership cadre, with the proportion of young people declining as we go up the leadership ladder. Thus, out of a group of 25 local SA leaders, 3 were under 21 and 17 under 31. Out of 16 leaders at the provincial or central party level, 3 were under 21 and 6 under 31. Out of 45 municipal party leaders (Ortsgruppenleiter) 2 were under 21 and 24 under 31. Very few Nazi leaders were over 40. By 1928, the membership of the Nazi party, now a mass party, was over a hundred thousand, of which fully half were under thirty years of age.

On the Nazi emphasis and attraction for youth, Liggio writes:

> The content of the National Socialist world-view was revolutionary: destruction of existing political and social structures and their elites; disdain for the civil order, the intelligentsia, middle class values, upper class and capitalism ... The most important focus for (Nazi) activity was the young, and it was the young who carried the National Socialists into power. The young were viewed almost as a class themselves and politics was viewed as a conflict between the youth and the older generation, with its comfortable, secure and guaranteed lives ...
> Nazi recruitment drives were aimed at youth, especially through the schools. Rudolph Hess started his career by founding the National Socialist student association at the University of Munich. The Nazis gained because the schools were centers of discussion of revisionism, and the Nazi propaganda was a radical continuation and practical application of foreign policy revisionism ...
> The Nazi party proclaimed itself to be the movement of Youth -- untied by the chains of the present and immediate past, vaguely connected to a long distant past, and setting forth radical and revolutionary perspectives. The middle class nationalists did not gain recruits among the young: they were too concerned about recapturing the past when the students were looking to the future, generally in an individualist direction.
> The official slogan proclaimed: "National Socialism is the

organized will of the youth". Post-world war one youth, especially the university students formed the core of militant party adherents. 45*

45* Liggio, "National Socialist", pp. 6-8. Also see Pridham, Hitler's Rise to Power, pp. 205-06

It was the prominence and the cult of youth that provided much of the attraction of European fascism for the French literary figure, Robert Brasillach, still in his twenties in the mid-1930's. Brasillach experienced the fascist movements in Italy, Belgium, and Germany as primarily youth movements, and was charmed by the fact that the Belgian Rexist leader, Léon Degrelle, was only a few years older than he was, Brasillach was not alone in seeing in these movements: heroism, comradeship, and aesthetic beauty, all associated with youth. He was also inspired by the Futurism, Italian pre-fascist movement of literary youths, whose leader Filippo Marinetti, summed up their outlook in 1910: "The oldest among us is not yet thirty. Let us make haste to remake everything. We must go against the current". 46*

46* Tucker, Fascist Ego, p. 131. Also see ibid., pp. 124-36.

Two decades later these sentiments were echoed by the young French fascist intellectual Jean-Pierre Maxence: "We have only ourselves to count on. Neither teachers, nor parties, nor systems, nor institutions, nor regime, nor society, nor state". 47*

47* Tucker, Fascist Ego, p. 136.

Liggio's point about the Nazi movement being one of youth as against the settled comfort of their elders is echoed again and again in European fascist literature. Thus, William Tucker writes of Brasillach and his circle:

> Determined not to be made by the bourgeoisie into a sacrificial offering to the gods of comfort, respectability, and dullness, they rejected the liberal ideology and proclaimed the right to live their own lives by their own standards. 48*

48*: Tucker, Fascist Ego, p. 126.

A fascinating problem for libertarians is how a man like Robert Brasillach, a fierce individualist influenced by anarchists, could call himself an "anarcho-fascist" and become the leading pro-Nazi among French intellectuals. As a right-wing anarchist and individualist who believed in the inequality and diversity of men, a believer in the virtue of the elite and having contempt for the masses whom he felt would have to be led by the elite; himself led by emotion and knowing nothing of economics or political philosophy and totally out of sympathy with systematic thought of any kind, it became easy for Brasillach to slip into view that the elite should dictate to the masses through a strong State. That this was a contradiction in his thought is obvious; but then again, most important political ideologies have contained numerous crucial contradictions, which did not prevent them from holding away over numerous people. In fact, many of Brasillach's statements are eerily akin to those of Ayn Rand (especially the non-philosophic Rand of the suppressed passages of the first editinn of We the Living) as well as some of the more moderate speeches of Adolf Hitler. Probably the most judicious summation of Brasillach's attempted resolution of this problem is by Tucker:

> The only possible conclusion is that Brasillach assumed that the taste for nonconformity and adventure, natural to every generation of liberated youth, would continue to guide the young elite (and its intellectual mentors

like himself) following the revolution, while the older generations would be forced to conform to the values decreed by the fascist party ... Still, he never felt any urgent need to resolve such contradictions in his thought. 49*

49* Tucker, Fascist Ego, p. 147.

Perhaps even more interesting to the libertarian was the early support to Mussolini and Fascism by such classical free-market economists as Maffeo Pantaleoni, Ernesto Rossi, the Misesian Luigi Einaudi, and Alberto DeStefani, Fascist Minister of Finance until 1925. These liberals hoped, in the long run in vain, to use an authoritarian dictatorship to impose free-market, free-trade, low-budget, and privatization policies. Einaudi's disillusion was swift, while DeStefani was partially successful until his ouster in 1925, after which Fascism became fully corporatist and statist. Particularly fascinating to libertarians is the case of the important early Fascist theoretician Massimo Rocca (not to be confused with the statist and corporatist Fascist theoretician Alfredo Rocco), who began as an individualist anarchist, and who constantly strove to use Fascism and the cult of Mussolini's personality to achieve free-market, low-budget, and anti-statist goals, as against the statist aims of the Fascist party militants. Rocca moved step-by-step toward an exaltation of the cult of his early ally, Mussolini, and even toward a kind of Herbert Hoover "voluntarist" corporatism. He was ousted from the Fascist party and expelled from Italy in 1924. See Adrian Lyttelton, The Seizure of Power: Fascism in Italy, 1919-1929 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973), passim. Unfortunately, there are no writings or studies of Rocca in English. The case of the classical liberals, and even more poignantly of Rocca, is a striking example of the inner contradiction of any classical liberals or libertarians attempting to use a dictatorial state for anti-statist ends.

The Nazis and the fascists were not the only successful radical groups that placed great emphasis on youth. As early as 1906, Lenin wrote that, in contrast to the more reformist Mensheviks:

We are the party of the future, and the future belongs to the youth. We are a party of innovators, and it is always the youth that most eagerly follow the innovators. We are a party that is waging a self-sacrificing struggle against the old rottenness, and the youth is always the first to undertake a self-sacrificing struggle. 50*

50* Lenin, "The Crisis of Menshevism", Works, Vol. 11, p. 354.

In fact, in 1907, the Bolsheviks were significantly younger than their Menshevik rivals. In the rank-and-file, Bolshevik members under 30 outnumbered their over-30 colleagues by 3:1, whereas in the Mensheviks the ratio was 2:1. There is a still greater discrepancy among their respective cadre. Among the activist cadre, the under-30 Bolsheviks outnumbered the over-30 by 5:1, while among the Mensheviks the ratio was 2.5:1. Still more striking was the difference in age among the top leadership. The average age of the nine Bolshevik leaders in 1907 was 34; of the Mensheviks it was 44. 51*

51* Cliff, Lenin, I, pp. 179-80.

By 1917 the Bolsheviks had grown even younger. The average age of the delegates to the Sixth Bolshevik Party Congress in 1917 was 29. 52*

52* Cliff, Lenin, II, p. 161. In February 1917, Lenin wrote to his close friend Inessa Armand: "The young are the only people worth working on!". Ibid.

In the pre-war phase of the American Revolution, too, the breakdown between radical and conservative among the American leadership was in many ways an age conflict.

One reason for the importance of youth in a radical movement is simply that it serves as a probable sign of future success or failure. The fact that the current conservative movement, both in its Buckleyite and Bircher wings, has little or no young people, is a sign of their probable eventual decay. And the contrasting fact that the average age of the Libertarian Party and of the libertarian movement in general is somewhere around the late 20s is a harbinger of future growth.

The second reason for the vital importance of youth is that young people, by their very nature, are not yet settled into the channels of life. Neither are they settled into the grooves of routine, habit and ideology. Hence, young people are at the same time particularly open to new ideas, and are especially eager to seek the truth and to find that truth in unfamiliar and radical paths. As the libertarian Randolph Bourne put it, youth is scornful of "the rigidity of tradition; youth puts the remorseless questions to everything that is old and established -- Why? What is this thing good for?". 53*

53* Randolph Bourne, "Youth", The Atlantic Monthly (April 1912), reprinted in L. Schlissel, ed., The World of Randolph Bourne (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1965), p. 9.

Also, not being yet committed to a particular career or set of attitudes, students are likely to possess broader concerns and a more critical perspective on society than their elders. Hence, young people are likely to be the most energetic activists of a radical movement, while the student sub-set of the young are likely to be particularly drawn to the radical ideology. Leonard Liggio puts it this way:

> Students were a major focus for the National Socialist movement because in a period of relative stability among the general public only students have sufficient broader concerns to become involved in opposition. Only students are in a situation in which they are engaged in a lot of reading, in listening to classroom and visiting lecturers, and in a context in which discussion is a natural part of life-style. As the refugee professoriate in America (ex-German professors who saw a parallel between the Nazis and the anti-Vietnam war movement) charged, it was the students from the humanities-social science program who were those whose reading led them to challenge the liberal establishment in America as German students did. 54*

54* Liggio, "National Socialist", p. 7.

Of course there is another side to the coin. There are drawbacks to an emphasis on youth, drawbacks that came particularly to the fore in the New Left movement of the late 1960's. Part of the remarkably rapid decline of the New Left stemmed from the fact that it was exclusively a youth movement, summed up in the imbecilic and ultimately self-destructive motto: "Trust no one over 30". For if youth is radical and open-minded, this very open-mindedness and inexperience makes for extreme volatility and instability, for rapid shifts of mood and ideology. The inexperience of youth means that young people tend to know very little of the data, the facts, of reality, past and present. Hence, their strategic and tactical judgments are inclined to gross errors. As the old motto states: "He who is ignorant of history is condemned to repeat it", and this is particularly true of youthful movements. Furthermore, the instability and error are bound to be intensified and aggravated by the fact that youthful ideologists are often preoccupied with their own personal psychic problems and inner experience, and with such familiar behavior as adolescent rebellion, than they are with actual social problems. Young people who challenge tradition are often too ignorant or impatient to wait around to learn and study the answers -- which are sometimes correct ones. Finally, the emphasis on youthful emotionalism as against systematic thinking characteristic of the fascist and Nazi movements -- and of the New Left -- is bound to lead to destructive errors in ideology as well as strategy and tactics; for only the method of reason can supply the answers. When Bourne wrote of youth as "the incarnation of ... the fresh,

clean spirit of reason" he was engaged in a considerable degree of wishful thinking; for the spirit of youth is often the reverse.

Both the advantages and the drawbacks of the importance of youth in a radical movement are illustrated in the history of the modern libertarian movement. Attracting almost exclusively youthful adherents, the movement also suffered, particularly in the late 60's and early 70's, from a high rate of defection as previously promising youth wandered off into other paths. Similarly, with the plusses and minuses of emotionalism. Almost all of the young people drawn to libertarianism in the 1960's and early 70's came through the Randian movement, drawn almost completely by the emotionalism of Atlas Shrugged. Tuccille's title It Usually Begins With Ayn Rand was certainly correct for that period. The result of this large influx, however, was that the Randians tended to become fixated on the emotionalism, and on the personality cult of Ayn Rand; the explicit ideology and devotion to reason tending to be a mere camouflage for an emotional subservience to the Rand cult. Furthermore, due to the paranoid nature of Rand herself, her youthful followers were actively discouraged from reading any divergent opinions, or, indeed, any of the facts of reality; each young individualist was encouraged to believe that he could spin out all theories and facts of reality from his own unaided mind (in practice, of course, to adopt slavishly the theories and realities of Rand's mind.) Hence, this Randian mind-set tended to fixate the libertarian youth at an immature level, and to discourage the maturity of learning about theory and practice that are essential to the development of a successful movement.

Perhaps one way for a movement to attain the advantages of youth without being hobbled by the disadvantages, is to seek a body of members who are mostly young, but whose leaders are a bit older, say in their thirties, and who can leaven youthful enthusiasm and drive with stability and experience. In short, degrees of youthfulness should be considered rather than "the young" as a monolithic age category.

13. Optimism and Pessimism

One of the most important problems for any minority radical movement is the question of long-run optimism or pessimism. Namely, while the short-run prospects for victory may be non-existent, does the movement believe that, in the long run, it will win? In my "Left and Right: the Prospects for Liberty", I pointed out that the conservative, here and in Europe, is always a long-run pessimist. The conservative believes that the inevitable march of history is against him:

> Hence, the inevitable trend runs toward left-wing statism at home and communism abroad. It is this long-run despair that accounts for the Conservative's rather bizarre short-run optimism; for since the long-run is given up as hopeless, the Conservative feels that his only hope of success rests in the current moment. In foreign affairs, this point of view leads the Conservative to call for desperate showdowns with communism, for he feels that the longer he waits the worse things will ineluctably become; at home, it leads him to total concentration on the very next election, where he is always hoping for victory and never achieving it. The quintessence of the Practical Man, and beset by long-run despair, the Conservative refuses to think or plan beyond the election of the day. 55*

55* Rothbard, Egalitarianism, p. 14. The essay was originally published in 1965.

That conservatism rarely attracts youth is explainable by Randolph Bourne's incisive comment that

> Our elders are always optimistic in their views of the present, pessimistic in their views of the future; youth is pessimistic toward the present and gloriously hopeful for the future. And it is this hope which is the lever of progress ... 56*

56* Bourne, in The World of Randolph Bourne, p. 11. Also cited in Rothbard, Egalitarianism, p. 33.

I go on to say that conservatism, with its attachment to the feudalistic theocratic, and militaristic Old Order, deserves to be pessimistic. Many if not most libertarians have also tended to be long-run pessimists, partly in imitation of conservatism with whom many once were allied, but partly because it is easy to be pessimistic in the twentieth century if one focusses on the continuing advance of State power. But to adopt this position is to fall prey to what the Marxists call "impressionism", that is, responding only to the journalistic surface march of events without analyzing the underlying laws and essences of the real world.

It should be obvious that long-run optimism is important for the success of any radical movement. In the libertarian movement, pessimism has led either to despair, dropping out, confinement of the ideology to an intellectual game, or to the opportunistic hankering for short-run gains that leads to betrayal of basic principle and which has governed the conservative movement. Or, put simply, long-run optimism leads both to a buoyant spirit and to the willingness to engage in a protracted and determined struggle for ultimate goals.

All this is psychologically clear. But, if libertarianism is to be grounded on a rational apprehension of reality, is long-run optimism the correct stance to take, or is it only a psycho-

logical placebo? Of all the past radical movements, the Marxists have been the most securely guided by long-run optimism, for it is deduced from Marxian theory itself: namely, the theory of the inevitable eventual triumph of proletarian socialism, an inevitability that is supposed to be part of the ineluctable "laws of history". 57*

57* Hitler, too, regarded himself as an inevitably successful agent of the workings of history, but Hitler's view was scarcely as rationally grounded as that of the Marxists (despite the fact that the Marxist theory is ultimately completely wrong). Thus Orlow writes that Hitler "regarded himself as an agent of history, the instrument of fate through whom 'good' would triumph over 'evil'. In this role he was solely responsible to history and to history alone; his life was a service to fate". Orlow, History of the Nazi Party, p. 5.

It is clear for this reason that the Marxists can work steadily with their eyes fixed on the future goal, why they can say confidently with Mao, that "to walk a thousand miles it is necessary to take the first step". The Marxist perspective is also expressed in Mao's injunction that communists "respect the enemy tactically (the short-run), but despise him strategically (the long-run)", as well as in Mao's confident assertion that, in the long run, the capitalist and imperialist state is "a paper tiger" although it is a real tiger in the short-run). 58*

58* Thus, Mao writes: "To destroy the rule of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat-capitalism in China took the Chinese people more than a hundred years and cost them tens of millions of lives before the victory in 1949. Look! Were these not living tigers, iron tigers, real tigers? But in the end they changed into paper tigers, dead tigers, bean-curd tigers ... Hence, imperialism and all reactionaries, looked at in essence, from a long-term point of view, from a strategic point of view, must be seen for what they are -- paper tigers. On this we should build our strategic thinking. On the other hand, they are also living tigers, iron tigers, real tigers which can devour people. On this we should build our tactical thinking". And again: "Over a long period we have developed this concept for the struggle against the enemy:

strategically we should despise all our enemies, but tactically we should take them all seriously. This also means that we must despise the enemy with respect to the whole, but that we must take him seriously with respect to each and every concrete question. If we do not despise the enemy with respect to the whole, we shall be committing the error of opportunism ... But in dealing with concrete problems and particular enemies we shall be committing the error of adventurism unless we take them seriously". Mao Tse-tung, "Imperialism and All Reactionaries are Paper Tigers", Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1972), pp. 73-74, 79-80.

In striking contrast there is the interesting figure of Georges Sorel, the French syndicalist in the early twentieth century who later influenced and became an admirer of Italian fascism. Sorel was, quite explicitly, a profound pessimist; hence he believed that the only way to victory for the revolutionary movement was to adopt "myths" which would be embraced wholeheartedly and could not be subjected to detailed, rational analysis. Such myth, embraced whole and non-rationally, such as the "myth of the general strike", then becomes the propellant for drastic, radical action by the masses. 59*

59* Georges Sorel, Reflections on Violence (New York: B. W. Huebsch, 1912). For a different view of the Sorelian myth, cf. Walter Grinder and John Hagel III, "Towards a Theory of Social Transformation", (unpublished MS., 1976, pp. 8-9.

Libertarians, however, do not have to rely on non-rational myths. It is my contention, which cannot be elaborated here, that libertarianism will win, and therefore that long-run optimism is not only psychologically exhilirating but also rationally correct. In my "Left and Right: The Prospects for Liberty", I elaborated the basic reasons for this contention: that, given the commitment by everyone, since the Industrial Revolution, to industrialism and to mass consumption, that the free market is the only economy

which will work, which enables the industrial system, and above-subsistence living standards for the growing mass of population, to survive and flourish. In short, moral and economic truth is of course on our side; but, in addition to this sometimes not very comforting fact, freedom is necessary to the survival and prosperity of the industrial world of the modern age.

But this, of course, can still be very long-run, and might be cold comfort to impatient spirits. In various writings since 1973-74, I have concluded that Mises' long-run prediction of the "exhaustion of the reserve fund" -- that the unfortunate consequences of government interventionism will one day become glaringly evident -- has now come true. That, for various coinciding reasons, including inflationary recession, the breakdown of Keynesianism, crippling tax rates, the failures of Vietnam, the revelations about the CIA, FBI, and Watergate, the crises in crime, the public schools, etc., that, at least in the United States, the objective conditions are now and will continue to exist for an accelerated leap forward in libertarianism and for a rapid speeding-up of the "timetable" for victory. (For more on objective and subjective conditions, and the "crises situations" leading to a victory, see below). I cannot believe that the visible great leap forward in the quantity and quality of the libertarian movement since about 1973 is unrelated to this new, continuing crisis of the American state. In short, the growth in the "subjective conditions" for libertarian victory (the libertarian cadre and movement) is partly a function of the objective breakdown of statism.

As the Marxists point out, pessimism stems from impressionism and the failure to think dialectically. In short, in libertarian terms, that while statism may be marching onward, that this march

inevitably leads to a growing breakdown of statism which in turn leads to a growing reaction in favor of libertarianism and against the State. (In popular terms, we could call this an inevitable "backlash"). The difference here between libertarians and Marxists stems from their different theories. Thus, while the Marxists believe that capitalism will founder on its "inevitable contradictions", giving rise to a proletarian movement for its eventual abolition, libertarianism holds that statism, government interventionism, will founder on its inevitable "contradictions", and that this breakdown will give rise to a libertarian movement among the public for its eventual abolition. And, further, if my analysis of post-1973 is correct, that this breakdown of statism has already begun.

It must be said that its long-run optimism has also posed a problem for the Marxist movement. There has always been a tension between "objectivist" and determinist wings of Marxism on the one hand, and more "subjectivist' and voluntarist wings on the other. The former, typified by Engels and German Social Democracy, has had a tendency to sit back passively and wait for the inevitable laws of history to do their work. The latter, typified by Lenin and Castro, have tended to emphasize man's will, have been willing to skip allegedly inevitable "stages", and to act boldly and decisively. In general, however, the Marxists have sensibly resolved the problem by saying that while objective conditions for victory are inevitable, active effortsby cadre and followers are necessary to bring those conditions to fruition. Or, in Marx's metaphor, that the revolutionaries are supposed to be the "midwife" of the new proletarian stage of history.

I think that the libertarian resolution of this problem would be similar. Libertarian victory is inevitable *in the sense* that objective breakdowns of statism are bound to intensify, and also that such breakdowns will *tend* to give impetus to the growth of libertarian ideas and activists; but, with our belief in individual freedom of will, it is clear that the free and voluntary adoption of libertarian ideas is not *determined* and therefore cannot be inevitable in the strict sense. Long-run optimism for libertarians is rational, but victory hardly takes on the status of an inevitably determined event.

In any case, considering the nature of the current libertarian movement, there is no danger of passivity arising from excessive optimism.

14. The Influence of Radical Ideas

I have touched repeatedly on the concept of cadre. Let us now consider the concept in more detail: specifically, who are the cadre, how is it generated, and what are the proper relations between cadre and various groups of non-cadre?

The cadre are the pure and consistentent libertarians. (For a discussion of various *degrees* of libertarians, of the pyramid of ideology, see below). In the first place, libertarianism is a *set of ideas*, and hence the original cadre are bound to be largely intellectuals, people who are professional or semi-professional dealers in abstract ideas. Mises and Hayek have pointed out how ideas filter out from original theoreticians to scholars and followers, to intellectuals as dealers in general ideas, to the interested public. Thus, in the cadre, the body of intellectuals is of prime importance in influencing the general

public, and the handful of systematic theoreticians is of decisive importance in influencing and moulding the general intellectuals. Of course, the ideas of intellectuals are removed in time from the attitudes held by the general public, and the systematic theories of scholars or political philosophers are still further removed in time, so that emphasis on intellectuals and scholars does not have an immediate "payoff" in social action; but their influence is far more powerful in the long-run than immediate concentration on the public or on political action. In an apt analogy with Austrian capital theory, Walter Grinder has called this the "increased productivity of roundabout, or longer, processes of intellectual production".

We are all familiar with Keynes' famous conclusion to his General Theory:

> The ideas of economists and political philosophers, both when they are right and when they are wrong, are more powerful than is commonly understood. Indeed the world is ruled by little else. Practical men, who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influences, are usually the slaves of some defunct economist. Madmen in authority, who hear voices in the air, are distilling their frenzy from some academic scribbler of a few years back. I am sure that the power of vested interests is vastly exaggerated compared with the gradual encroachment of ideas. Not, indeed, immediately, but after a certain interval; for in the field of economic and political philosophy there are not many who are influenced by new theories after they are twenty-five or thirty years of age, so that the ideas which civil servants and politicians and even agitators apply to current events are not likely to be the newest. But, soon or late, it is ideas, not vested interests, which are dangerous for good or evil. 60*

60* John Maynard Keynes, The General Theory of Employment Interest and Money (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1936), pp. 383-84.

The baleful influence of Keynes' own work in the last forty years has been eloquent testimony to his own point.

In his seminal essay, "The Intellectuals and Socialism", F. A. Hayek has put these points more profoundly. He begins by pointing to the socialist trends of this century. But "Socialism has never and nowhere been at first a working-class movement. It is by no means an obvious remedy for an obvious evil which the interests of that class will necessarily demand. It is a construction of theorists, deriving from certain tendencies of abstract thought with which for a long time only the intellectuals were familiar; and it required long efforts by the intellectuals before the working class could be persuaded to adopt it as their programme". 61*

61* F. A. Hayek, "The Intellectuals and Socialism", in Studies in Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 178.

We might add that Marx and Engels themselves were scarcely members of the working class which they exalted, and neither were Lenin, Castro, et al. 62*

62* The predominance of bourgeois intellectuals among their leaders and earliest members has always been a source of some embarrassment for Marxists. Karl Mannheim tried to resolve this problem of Marxian leaders coming from the "wrong" class by creating a new, class-free category of "free-floating intellectuals" who are able to transcend their class background. Thus, see Karl Mannheim, "The Socialogical Problem of the 'Intelligentsia'", in George B. deHuszar, ed., The Intellectuals (Glencoe, III, The Free Press, 1960), pp. 62-68, and deHuszar, ibid., p. 53.

Hayek then proceeds to consider the dominant influence that the handful of systematic philosophers have over the general body of intellectuals.

> ... the philosopher is in more than one sense a sort of prince among the intellectuals. Although his influence is further removed from practical affairs and correspondingly slower and more difficult to trace than that of the ordinary intellectual, it is of the same kind and in the long run even more powerful than that of the latter. It is the same endeavour towards a synthesis, pursued more methodically, the same judgment of particular views in so far as they fit into a general system of thought rather than by their specific merits, the same striving after a consistent world-view, which for both forms the main basis for accepting or rejecting ideas. For this reason the philosopher has probably a greater influence over the intellectuals than any other scholar or scientist ... 63*

63* Hayek, Studies, p. 185. On the crucial role of "middlemen-intellectuals" in diffusing ideas, see Fritz Redlich, "Ideas: Their Migration in Space and Transmittal Over Time", Kyklos (1953), pp. 301-322. The Redlich article is an interesting attempt to set forth a systematic typology of the transmittal of ideas.

The theme of the remainder of Hayek's article is that the influence of socialism has stemmed from the socialists' offer of a systematic world-view, a general body of seemingly consistent ideas which can serve the intellectuals and the public as a guide and benchmark. In contrast, the negligible modern influence of classical liberals stems from the fact that, after achieving partial success by the mid-19th century, the liberals in effect abandoned their general system and goals in behalf of piecemeal and detailed reforms. In short, they had bartered the general set of radical ideas which had carried them part-way to their goal, in exchange for short-run influence with "practical" men of affairs. The result was an ultimate loss of intellectual support for liberalism, and hence ultimate loss of all influence on the very public affairs they had eagerly sought to guide.

Interestingly, Hayek points out that radical general systems of thought are most likely to appeal to both intellectuals and the young:

> Speculations about a possible entire reconstruction of society give the intellectual a fare much more to his taste than the more practical and short-run considerations of those who aim at a piecemeal improvement of the existing order. In particular, socialist thought owes its appeal to the young largely to its visionary character; the very courage to indulge in Utopian thought is in this respect a source of strength to the socialists which traditional liberalism sadly lacks. This difference operates in favour of socialism, not only because speculation about general principles provides an opportunity for the play of the imagination ... but also because it satisfies a legitimate desire for the understanding of the rational basis of any social order and gives scope for the exercise of that constructive urge for which liberalism, after it had won its great victories, left few outlets. The intellectual, by his whole disposition, is uninterested in technical details or practical difficulties. What appeals to him are the broad visions, the specious comprehension of the social order as a whole which a planned system promises.. 64*

64* Hayek, Studies, p. 189.

As for the classical liberals,

> Once the basic demands of the liberal programmes seemed specified, the liberal thinkers of the old type turned to problems of detail and tended to neglect the development of the general philosophy of liberalism, which in consequence ceased to be a live issue offering scope for general speculation. Thus, for something over half a century, it has been only the socialists who have offered anything like an explicit programme of social development, a picture of the kind of future society at which they were aiming, and a set of general principles to guide decisions on particular issues. Even though, if I am right, their ideals suffer from inherent contradictions ... It is because theirs has become the only explicit general philosophy of social policy held by a large group, the only system of theory which raises new problems and opens new horizons, that they have succeeded in inspiring the imagination of the intellectuals. 65*

65* Hayek, Studies, p. 190.

As a result, Hayek adds, the actual developments of society were determined, "not be a battle of conflicting ideals", but by the contrast between the existing status quo and the "one ideal of a possible future society held up" by the socialists. Hence, the

other programs offered to the public were varying degrees of compromise between the status quo and the socialist ideal, so that the inevitable broad "middle-of-the road", and society in general, was pushed constantly in a socialist direction. "There seemed to exist only one direction in which we could move, and the only question seemed to be how fast and how far the movement should proceed". Amen!

In the meantime, the classical liberals were trapped by their alliance with the "practical" men, into forswearing any sort of radical general principles and sticking to the practical short-run details, with ultimately disastrous results. As Hayek puts it:

> Whatever power he has to influence practical decisions he (the classical liberal) owes to his standing with the representatives of the existing order, and this standing he would endanger if he devoted himself to the kind of speculation which would appeal to the intellectuals and which through them could influence developments over longer periods. In order to carry weight with the powers that be he has to be "practical", "sensible", and "realistic". So long as he concerns himself with immediate issues he is rewarded with influence, material success, and popularity with those who up to a point share his general outlook. But these men have little respect for those speculations on general principles which shape the intellectual climate. Indeed, if he seriously indulges in such long-run speculation he is apt to acquire the reputation of being "unsound" ... because he is unwilling to identify the existing order with the free system at which he aims. 66*

66* Hayek, Studies, p. 191.

Hayek concludes his essay with an inspiring call for the necessity of a new, Utopian radical classical liberalism:

> ... we must be able to offer a new liberal programme which appeals to the imagination. We must make the building of a free society once more an intellectual

> adventure, a deed of courage. What we lack is a liberal Utopia, a programme which seems neither a mere defence of things as they are nor a diluted kind of socialism, but a truly liberal radicalism which does spare the susceptibilities of the mighty ..., which is not too severely practical and which does not confine itself to what appears today as politically possible. We need intellectual leaders who are prepared to resist the blandishments of power and influence and who are willing to work for an ideal, however small may be the prospects of its early realization. They must be men who are willing to stick to principles and to fight for their full realization, however remote ... The main lesson which the true liberal must learn from the success of the socialists is that it was their courage to be Utopian which gained them the support of the intellectuals and thereby an influence on public opinion which is daily making possible what only recently seemed utterly remote. Those who have concerned themselves exclusively with what seemed practicable in the existing state of opinion have constantly found that even this has rapidly become politically impossible as the result of changes in a public opinion which they have done nothing to guide. Unless we can make the philosophic foundations of a free society once more a living intellectual issue, and its implementation a task which challenges the ingenuity and imagination of our liveliest minds, the prospects of freedom are indeed dark. But if we can regain that belief in the power of ideas which was the mark of liberalism at its best, the battle is not lost. 67*

67* Hayek, Studies, p. 194.

Naturally, I am convinced that it is precisely we libertarians who have that inspiring, adventurous, consistent, radical fulfillment of classical liberalism to offer to intellectuals and to mankind. We are the answer to Hayek's call.

15. The Failure of Classical Liberalism

Among twentieth-century classical liberals, there has been a great deal of pondering of why classical liberalism, so vibrant and increasingly triumphant in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, began to fade in the last half of the nineteenth, and

die out in the twentieth. What went wrong? I am convinced that Hayek has his finger on the nub of the problem. In the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth centuries, the classical liberals were not only a consistent intellectual movement. They were leaders of a genuine mass movement; indeed, they led the masses in their attack on the aristocratic-monarchical Old Order. In the seventeenth century at the beginning, the Levellers; in the eighteenth century in England, the Prices and Priestleys, in America the Sam Adamses, Henrys and Paines, in nineteenth century England the James Mills and the Radicals, in America the Jacksonians, were conscious leaders of a mass movement. They were not afraid of bringing the masses into social and political action, because they realized that the interests of the masses were in opposition to their exploitation by the old oligarchic elite. In contrast, of course, conservatives have always feared the masses and have identified as their biggest enemy, not the State and its ruling classes (as did the early liberals) but the masses themselves. For to the Conservatives, the good is tradition, oligarchy, and the Old Order of Throne-and-Altar, and the masses moving directly can only pose a threat to that order. The successful radicals in the modern world, from Sam Adams and Patrick Henry to the Jacksonians to James Mill and Cobden and Bright, to Lenin, Mussolini, Hitler, and Mao, were all people who believed that the masses should rightly be on their side and set about to make that vision come true.

But, by the mid-nineteenth century, the English classical liberals, for example, began to sit on the laurels of their partial

triumphs, and to begin concentrating, as Hayek points out, on niggling short-run details rather than on their broad world-view. In particular, they abandoned natural rights and moral principles for utilitarianism and ad hoc cost-benefit and efficiency analyses of specific, concrete issues. With the Civil War and the end of the Jacksonian movement, a similar process occurred in the U.S. In short, by the latter half of the nineteenth century, classical liberalism had become conservative rather than radical, ad hoc rather than systematic, efficiency and "practical"-oriented rather than moral. As a result, they allowed the new socialist movement to replace them as the "Left", the Party of Movement, the Party of Hope and Ideals, and the classical liberals increasingly took their place as mere conservatives, fighting a desperate and in the long run hopeless rearguard action against the rising socialist and neo-mercantilist tide. As I put it in "Left and Right: the Prospects for Liberty": "Thus, with liberalism abandoned from within, there was no longer a Party of Hope in the Western world, no longer a 'Left' movement to lead a struggle against the State and against the unbreached reminder of the Old Order. Into this gap, into this void created by the drying up of radical liberalism, there stepped a new movement: socialism". 68*

68* Rothbard, Egalitarianism, p. 18. In the late nineteenth century, Lord Acton understood this problem. Contrasting (radical) "Liberalism" with "practical" conservative Whiggism, he wrote: "The Whig governed by compromise. The Liberal begins the reign of ideas ... One is practical, gradual, ready for compromise. The other works out a principle philosophically. One is a policy aiming at a philosophy. The other is a philosophy seeking a policy". Gertrude Himmelfarb, Lord Acton (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), p. 209.

This inner failure of classical liberalism is being replicated in today's heirs of English classical economics: the Chicago School. While Friedman and the Chicago School have had great influence over professional economics, they are unlikely to have much influence outside of that important but narrow sphere. For their emphasis, in Friedman and even more in his followers such as Becker, Peltzman, Alchian, Tullock et al. is not at all on general principles, let alone on moral principles, but on ad hoc empirical and mechanistic analyses of concrete issues, and strictly on efficiency and cost-benefit grounds. Hence, they are committing the same errors as did the classical economics and liberals (in a more mechanistic form), and are bound to meet the same long-run fate. This sort of world-view cannot inspire either youth, the run of intellectuals or the general public. Note, for example, how much more inspiration for youth, intellectuals and the general public outside of professional economics, has already been wielded by Mises and the Austrians, with their emphasis on general consistent principles and on the purposive, living individual; and by Rand, with her emphasis on moral principles and natural rights. Outside of professional economics, the wave of the future libertarian influence lies with consistent moral and general economic principles, rather than with mathematical or statistical cost-benefit analysis of concrete issues.

There is another basic reason for the internal collapse of classical liberalism, which is all too relevant to today's movement. Namely, that while generally sound and consistent on "domestic" issues, the classical liberals were split in two whenever the Old Order raised the issues of war, militarism, empire,

and foreign policy. For while seeing the nature of the State plain in internal affairs, many if not most of the liberals were never able to cast off their reverence for the State in foreign affairs; the State as militarist and war-monger. In short, the virus of State-patriotism was still there. Not, it must be said, in such people as Cobden and Bright, Labouchere, Spencer, Eugen Richter in Prussia, or William Graham Sumner in the U.S. But for enough people to split the liberal movement and bring much of it into the nationalist and pro-war camp, wrecking it forever. In Great Britain, the classical liberals were destroyed by whooping it up for Empire and then World War I; in Prussia, half the liberals endorsed Bismarck's militarist program of unifying Germany through a conquest; in the U.S. there were few classical liberals to oppose entry into World War I. 69*

69* On nationalism, militarism, and imperialism as the prime factor in the defeat of nineteenth century laissez-faire liberalism, see Ralph Raico, "Liberal Revolutions in Europe in the 19th Century", (unpublished MS., 1976). In addition there is the replacement of natural rights by utilitarianism, as mentioned above, and the corollary Benthamite devotion to a centralized bureaucracy as against "inefficient" decentralized and diverse forms within a nation. On all these elements, and on virulent anti-Catholicism within the British laissez-faire movement leading to the crumbling of laissez-faire Radicalism on the Irish Question, see Thomas William Heyck, The Dimensions of British Radicalism: The Case of Ireland 1874-95. (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1974).

We see the same process at work in the current libertarian movement, when the Rands and the Hosperses whoop it up for war against Russia or Communist or even Arab countries; we see it in the general failure of libertarians to apply their principles and their anti-State attitudes to foreign policy and to domestic militarism.

Returning to Hayek for a moment, I think it instructive to consider his own personal and psychological optimism and pessimism over the years. For, ever since the collapse of Austrian economics in Britain in the teeth of the Keynesian onslaught in the mid-1930's, Hayek had been totally isolated, surrounded by socialists and statists. Is it any wonder that he was personally pessimistic, himself fighting a rearguard action against the "road to serfdom"? Furthermore, is it too far-fetched to point out that Hayek's personality was, in those days, gloomy, aloof, isolated? When he taught, still isolated, at the University of Chicago in the 1950's and 60's, he paid no attention whatever to the few admiring students he had, and even later tried to justify this behavior by saying that he "never tried to found a school of thought". (In an unpublished statement to the Volker Fund, which once asked questions about the general stance of the libertarian thought-leaders of that era.)

But consider what has happened to Hayek since 1974, when he coincidentally received the Nobel Prize, a recognition long due him, and also discovered even more radical admirers in his summer at the IHS. It is clear that Hayek, after decades of isolation among socialists and statists, enjoys greatly being affectionately criticized as semi-socialistic by young libertarian economists! Furthermore, his own personality has become markedly optimistic, expansive, happy, and outgoing, and his thinking has become visibly and admittedly more radical and libertarian! In short, Hayek, happy to be bathed in an atmosphere of libertarians even more consistent than himself, becomes optimistic because he now sees himself as part of a libertarian intellectual movement,

and allows himself to be pushed gently in a more radical direction by that movement. Here should be an instructive lesson in the great value of having a movement, a self-conscious cadre, learning from each other, reinforcing each other, and moving onward therefore in high hope. For Hayek to become so transformed in his 70's is a high tribute to himself as well as to the value of having such a cadre and movement.

16. The Cadre, Coalitions, and the Pyramid of Ideology

Every idea necessarily begins with one person -- or, at most, is independently discovered by a few. Therefore, any new ideological movement necessarily begins as a tiny grouplet, a mere handful of friends. Consequently, the early progress of the movement is necessarily slow; the number of converts is minuscule and the amount of effort in obtaining that conversion is extensive. In short, any cadre must necessarily begin slowly with a tiny handful. A few rare individuals arrive at their own conversion in a self-contained way; but the vast majority have to be converted by others -- either directly, through personal contact, or indirectly, through books or lectures. At first the movement will be encompassed by a few living-rooms or salons, then if the movement grows, there will be the stage of local "discussion circles", which Lenin finally saw the opportunity to transcend in forging a nation-wide movement. So while Marxists believe that all working class members should be Communists, and libertarians believe that all non-State members of the public should be libertarians, at any given time in the state of the movement, this will not be so. Some people will have seen the light, and others will not.

Hopefully, then, the cadre begins as a tiny few and then grows in quantity and impact. But what should be the proper relationship between cadre and non-cadre? First, we might put forward the concept of the "pyramid of ideology". For while "cadre" and "non-cadre" may be a first approximation to the real world situation, the actual condition at any given time is akin to a pyramid: with the cadre at the top of the ideological pyramid as the consistent and uncompromising ideologists, and then with others at lower rungs in possession of varying degrees of approximation to the truth. Since, usually, people become cadre by making their way up the various steps or stages of the pyramid — from totally non-libertarian to complete libertarian — some rapidly, some slowly, this implies that the stages will assume a pyramid form, with a smaller number of people at each higher stage.

The major task of the cadre, then, is to try to get as many people as high up the pyramid as possible. From this task, there follows the importance of ideological coalitions, of working with allies on various ideological issues. In this way, Lenin and the Bolsheviks worked within the Soviets with other Marxists, or with the peasants against the old regime, or with the broad masses of Russians who wished to leave the World War as quickly as possible. A coalition -- or what the Marxist-Leninists call a "united front" strategy -- accomplishes several things. In the first place, it maximizes the influence of the numerically small cadre on important social issues, and does so by allying oneself with people who agree on that particular issue, albeit on few others.

Which issues the cadre chooses to form alliances and work on depends on a judgment of importance in relation to the real-world context at the given time and place. Thus, it would be an evident waste of time and energy for current libertarians to find shipping interests with whom we could make a united front agitation in the cause of denationalizing lighthouses. But coalition strategies for: repealing OSHA or the income tax, or legalizing marijuana, or (in the late 60's) pulling out of the Vietnam War or repealing the draft, might have a high priority in the mass agitation of the libertarian movement.

While using coalitions with numerically larger allies on concrete issues, the libertarian cadre is also pursuing a double strategy: namely, to recruit more people, if not for top cadre immediately, at least for a few rungs up the libertarian pyramid. These recruits can come from the allies themselves, or from the mass of the public who are being informed about the specific issues. Normally, the proper tactic will be to begin with the concerns of the people being worked on, to show that you are with them on this particular issue, and then to "widen their libertarian consciousness" by showing them that to be really consistent on the issues they favor they must also adopt the other libertarian positions. Thus, while working with left-wing civil libertarians on common issues, it can be pointed out to them that libertarians are the only consistent civil liberties advocates, that personal freedom cannot exist without private property rights, etc. Similarly, conservative advocates of free enterprise can be shown that outlawing pornography or drugs violates the very system of private property and free enterprise that they profess to favor.

Tom Palmer has recently put very well the difference in approaches toward prospective allies between the proper centrist, movement-building approach on the one hand, as against the Left-Sectarians and Right-Opportunists on the other:

> Left-Sectarianism, according to Lenin, is the view that no alliances, dialogues, etc. should ever be made with similarly inclined groups, as this would be a "compromise". In their desire to remain purist this strategy would rule out any chance of ultimate success. An example of this viewpoint would be the libertarian who, when addressing a group of business people, rather than "sizing up" his audience and stating the case for liberty in as convincing a manner as possible, would, instead, declare that if you don't want heroin in vending machines, you are an enemy of liberty and the hell with you. A Right-Opportunist, contrarily, would not mention the libertarian arguments for legalization of activities deemed worthy of restrictive legislation and would, instead, speak only to those issues on which he and the audience were in agreement, hoping to enlist their support for one project or another to roll back government. The most effective approach, I believe ... would run something as follows: government regulation of small business is bad; we should realize that government regulation of drug use is another manifestation of "Big Brotherism"; and if drug users and business people wish to be free, they must adopt a policy of live and let live toward each other, etc.; thus going from specific cases to general principles and then applying these principles to areas which would at first have seemed absurd to those listening, giving empirical analyses of costs and benefits to back up the general principle enunciated by the speaker. 70*

70*—Tom G. Palmer, "Toward a Libertarian Movement", The Libertarian Forum (November, 1976), p. 6.

I have indicated above that one of the strengths of libertarianism is that we have a clear-cut, two class "good guy vs. bad guy" dichotomy, that we have a clear concept of the Enemy. How do we distinguish between non-cadre who are The Enemy and people who may be potential allies or movers up the ideological pyramid? In theory, our answer is clear-cut: rulers of the State are The Enemy, oppressed citizens who have not yet seen the light

are the potential future cadre or movers up the libertarian pyramid. In practice, the answers will be sometimes clear and at other times fuzzy, and here again, judgment and "ideological entrepreneurship" must be employed. Thus, it is clear that Nelson Rockefeller, John Gardner, John K. Galbraith, and the head of General Dynamics, are not about to march up the good-guy ladder. Mao Tse-tung, in his essay "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People", has come up with a useful distinction here: between "antagonistic contradictions", where the cadre and those with differing views are at genuine and basic loggerheads; and "non-antagonistic contradictions", where those who differ really agree at bottom, and where the two groups should engage in friendly discussion and persuasion. 71*

71* Mao Tse-tung, "The Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People", Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1972), pp. 45-57.

Of course, there are pitfalls in a coalition strategy that must be guarded against. In the late 1960's, I issued a call for a libertarian alliance with the New Left, on the twin vital issues of the day of opposition to the draft and to the Vietnam War (with subsidiary emphasis on opposition to the public school system.) As will be discussed further below in an analytic history of the modern libertarian movement, I still think that this basic thrust was necessary — especially to generate a sharp and radical break with the libertarian movement's parent of that time: the conservative movement. But the problem was that many of our young, tiny cadre, upon cooperating with the Left, became Leftists, losing their libertarian grip.

In pondering the question: what happened? I think it clear that the major problem was that the libertarian movement was still tiny and minuscule; there was virtually no cadre but only a few discussion circles, and throwing these people into a vastly more numerous New Left movement meant that many of the younger and less-tempered souls would defect from liberty. The conversion, too, was not so much through theoretical discussion and conviction as it was through action, through street fighting or at least talking feverishly about street fighting.

In short, the libertarian movement at that time had two grave weaknesses that left us wide open for such defection: (1) it was very small, and therefore had no self-conscious cadre, no organs of opinion, no mutually reinforcing cadre to talk to and deal with, and (2) partly as a result of this tiny size, the libertarian movement of that day had no activity with which to attract young and eager cadre or quasi-cadre members. Many is the time when a new convert to the libertarian system would ask me: OK, now I'm a libertarian, what can I do about it? What activity can I perform? There was no answer. If a person were a budding young scholar, he could go to graduate school and join the educational wings of the movement; but what if he was not? As a result, the number of defections from cadre, not just to the New Left but to dropping out altogether, were legion. This again highlights the wisdom of the Marxist emphasis on a unity of theory and action, on providing for both essential functions in order to have a growing, inspired, and flourishing movement. The above example of the inspiriting of Hayek through discovering a movement is the reverse side of the coin of this problem of drop-out and

defection. And this is one of the main reasons why the Libertarian Party has been such a vital and important development in the last few years: that it has given to eager young (and older) libertarians a wide and open-ended field for continuing an energetic activity. In short, because of the LP, we have become a genuine movement rather than just a small group of thinkers and talkers (as important as the latter functions may be).

The importance of a cadre as mutual reinforcement highlights the fallacy of a criticism often heard in the libertarian as well as Marxist movements: "that we are only talking to ourselves". The implication is that movement people should only be talking to others, to work on their conversion. But "talking to ourselves" is also extremely important: to educate the movement ("internal education"); to advance the discipline of libertarianism, to discuss strategy, tactics, and our relationship to the outside world; and, not the least, to reinforce and encourage each other in the protracted struggle ahead — to thereby work against isolation, discouragement, and defection. Aileen Kraditor put the case very well:

> The abolitionists recognized also that they must continually reinforce their own commitment to their cause. The frequent meetings and intragroup journals of any movement for change serve an indispensable function even when they repeatedly pass the same resolutions and proclaim familiar truths to the already committed. These activities help to assure members that they are part of a group with a historic mission, are not fighting alone, and have somewhere to go and others to turn to when public opprobrium weakens their dedication. 72*

72* Kraditor, Means and Ends, p. 236.

In his strategy paper, Charles Koch asks: "Under what conditions should radical ideas be introduced gradually and tactfully,

and when should they be advocated starkly for shock value. 73*

73* Charles G. Koch, "The John Birch Society", (unpublished MS., 1976), p. 17.

I think the answer is that opportunities for these and other paths toward conversion must be kept open by any movement. In short, most people probably move gradually and step-by-step up the pyramid. In their most successful period of intellectual and mass influence in the United States (the late 1930's and early 1940's -- the "Popular Front" era) the Communist Party ably pursued the strategy of organizing ad hoc "front" organizations by which it could multiply its leverage through the use of more numerous allies, sympathizers, and "fellow travellers", and by working with these allies in the fronts to move them up the Marxist pyramid toward, and often directly into, the Communist Party. The fronts ranged from low-level humanitarian endeavors such as Milk for Loyalist Spain, to far more ideological groups of writers, trade union members, etc. But while fronts were maintained for leverage and for step-by-step recruitment, the Communists were careful also to maintain an "open center" where people could go who became Communists very rapidly, skipping many of the stages, or who had virtually converted themselves all along and just needed to hear of the existence of an organized ideology and movement for them to sign up. And so there would always be an open Communist Party local, and a Communist Party newspaper to recruit and organize all the fully advanced cadre, and to provide a beacon for those who were, in isolation, ready all along.

For the contemporary libertarian movement, I think it particularly important to maintain such open centers. For I am convinced

that, for many reasons, including the libertarian heritage that is partially imbibed by most Americans, there are many people who are "instinctively" and inchoately libertarian and don't know it, and who only need a few open reiterations of the pure radical creed to join up. Finding the movement becomes extremely important for isolated actual or potential cadre. In the late 1940's and for years afterwards, for example, FEE provided the enormous service of being the only open center for laissez-faire in existence, and I vividly remember the vital importance to me and other young libertarians of discovering libertarian ideas and persons through FEE, and the effect this stimulus and reinforcement had in radicalizing our own positions. Furthermore, many of the personal conversions I have been able to accomplish were of individuals who had achieved all but one step of the way on their own; it then became easy to convert them by simply pointing out the final logically consistent step. In short, they had converted themselves through thinking and reading, almost all the way; just one slight push was then needed to complete the task. It would be tragic for a movement not to have open centers for the pure radical creed, and thereby lose these potential libertarians who had all but converted themselves. 74*

74* Thus, Fritz Redlich stresses the importance of a person's mind being already prepared, in order to convert to an idea, or to grasp its significance. " ... to be effective the ideas incorporated in an objectification (e.g., a book) must meet a well prepared mind. Discovered by the latter a piece of junk may turn out to be a masterpiece; what is but an ordinary stone to a layman may be a most interesting artifact to the student of pre-history. Ideas embodied in an objectification do not speak to the ignoramus". Redlich, "Ideas Migration", p. 310.

In addition to the importance of radical open centers, the starkly but radical case often has shock value in accelerating the conversion of readers and listeners -- especially among those groups most open to new ideas, and most charmed by radical consistency and iconoclasm: notably students, youth in general, and intellectuals. Youthful iconoclasm, student fascination with new ideas and critiques of their intellectual elders, and the devotion that Hayek mentioned to Utopian general systems by intellectuals, all reinforce this point. Young cadre like Jerry O'Driscoll and Ralph Fucetola were converted from ardent conservatism to libertarianism by this kind of shock tactic. And Walter Block has had great success with his students in championing the seemingly "worst cases" of non-aggressive, voluntary activity. Another important value of shock tactics is to perform fairly rapidly what the behavioral psychologists call "desensitization", where a phrase or an idea may shock on first hearing, but on repeated hearings it will first lose its shock value, and then the listener will become habituated to it, and finally he will be able to see some merit in the idea.

Thus, our conclusion is confirmed of the importance of many different "propaganda" and conversion tactics in different facets of the movement.

17. Radical in Content, Conservative in Form

It is probable, however, that this kind of shock tactic will not work for most people, who will be converted more gradually. This is particularly true when the libertarian is working, not face to face and individually where he can gauge his listeners, but in mass agitation. In such mass propaganda,

it is probably the best tactic to use the more gradual approach of beginning at the level of interest and consciousness of the mass readers or listeners and then widening their consciousness to general libertarian principles from that point. In this sort of educational effort, another wise rule would be not to shock the listeners by being unduly radical in form. In short, libertarian principles are radical enough without needlessly alienating listeners by being radical in form -- that is, in ways that are not related to libertarian principle. Thus, the cultivation of bizarre manners, labels, antagonistic hostility to the public and to the bourgeoisie in general, can only be needlessly counter-productive.

Many youthful libertarians have arrived at their position not on rational grounds, but solely or largely to aggravate society at large, in the marvellous French phrase, to "épater la bourgeoisie". But we must realize that since our appeal is to the entire public, and since most of the public is, or likes to think of itself as, "bourgeois", it is fatal to the libertarian cause to seek as our mass base the lumpen-youth, or bizarre, shiftless lumpen elements in general. It is sometimes a temptation to seek as our main body of support those who are most out of sorts with the status quo, who are generally the lumpen. But this would be a fatal error. For not only do such lumpen alienate — and rightly so — the mass of the bourgeois and even working class public, but also these lumpen have no social leverage or influence whatsoever. Just as the Marxists, and the Old Left in its criticism of the lumpen orientation of the New, scorn the lumpen as ineffectual and counter-productive, and seek

the support of the broad mass of workers as their "agency for social change", so should libertarians avoid the lumpen and seek the support of the broad mass of the public, middle class and workers alike.

Pertinent here is William Lloyd Garrison's sound reaction when one of his supporters, Charles C. Burleigh, was ridiculed for his unusual long hair and beard when he spoke at the 1850 convention of Garrison's American Anti-Slavery Society. Expressing his agreement with the content of Burleigh's speech but regret at his hair-style, Garrison wrote of his regret

> because it is so wide a departure from customary usage as to excite general remark and provoke popular raillery, thus substracting from his usefulness as a public lecturer ... We are not given to hair-splitting in matters pertaining to the head or chin, and despise a slavish conformity to fashion; but all things that are lawful are not always expedient. Where there is moral principle involved, it is sometimes wise to sacrifice what is convenient or agreeable to us, that no unnecessary obstacle may be thrown in the way of a great or good cause in which we may be engaged, and which has arrayed against it all that is formidable in universal apostacy, and inveterate in long cherished prejudice. 75*

75* Garrison, in The Liberator, May 24, 1850. Quoted in Kraditor, Means and Ends, P. 224. Also see ibid., p. 239.

I have summed up this position in the slogan, "radical in content, conservative in form". Since the libertarian position, for example, is in the tradition of the American Revolution and much of the American heritage, it is important to stress this continuity, this fulfillment that we seek of the original American dream. And in form, it is important, therefore, to cultivate a "respectable" rather than a kooky, lumpen image.

There is a corollary point raised by Charles Koch in his strategy paper. Most people — the broad bulk of the masses —

do not accept ideas because they have it through by rational conviction. They accept them on the basis of perceived "authority". As we have noted above, the contention that they should not do so, that this process is fallacious or immoral, that the "argument from authority" is rationally invalid, misses the entire point. Namely, that most people have neither the ability nor certainly the inclination or interest to think deeply about social or political problems. Just as they accept medical opinion because the latter are the "authority", so they tend to accept political ideas on a similar basis. The very nature of the division of labor in society insures that this situation will always prevail. Indeed, it is precisely because of this condition that the State has been able to maintain its exploitative rule over the centuries: by purchasing the alliance of intellectual "authorities" (originally the Church, now mainly secular intellectuals) who can gull the public into believing that the State's rule is necessary and beneficent.

Because of this fact, it becomes necessary that the libertarian movement and its leadership attain an image of "respectability" and authority that will induce the public to take them seriously and to hearken to their ideas. 76*

76* "People tend to accept theories and statements of 'fact' because of who states them and how they are presented rather than their validity; therefore, it is essential to develop the image and credibility of the movement's leaders". Koch, "Birch Society", p. 15. And Redlich writes: "To be a successful communicator (carrier of ideas) the would-be communicator should possess prestige among those to whom he transmits the ideas in question". Redlich, "Ideas Migration", p. 305.

By good fortune, and because of the high quality of the movement's spokesmen and candidates, the libertarian movement has been able

to attain a public image of respectability and impressive authority far greater, in truth, than it deserves, when we consider the bizarre and even lunatic ideas and people bubbling beneath the libertarian surface.

18. The Necessity of a Graded Hierarchy

Above, we discussed Lenin's discovery of the necessity for a centrally controlled movement, and its groundwork in Lenin's insight into the vital importance of the division of labor grounded in individual differences in dedication and ability. Our current discussion of the pyramid of ideology reinforces that conclusion. For if every ideological movement forms a pyramid from a broad base of slight sympathizers up to a small number of pure cadre, then it is vital for the cadre to be the leaders of the movement. Otherwise, if egalitarian participatory democracy holds sway, the cadre will be swamped amidst the mass of partial or slight followers, and the credo will be watered down to the least and lowest common denominator.

There is a corollary lesson here. For what we are dealing with, as I've stated above, is not "cadre" and "followers" but a gradation of degrees, in short a hierarchical order up the pyramid. It seems to me that the libertarian movement should also have hiearchical degrees of leadership, so that people with only slight knowledge enter the movement in a rank and file capacity, and then, as knowledge and dedication are improved and tested in activity, the person should be able to move up the ranks of the pyramid in conformity with the improvement in his ability and understanding. Eventually, and hopefully, he moves up into top

cadre-leadership posts. In this way, as his understanding, ability, and experience in the movement deepen, his scope of responsibility and leadership increases proportionately.

The Bolshevik party, the Fascist party, the Nazi party, all had gradations of leadership in their organizations. In fact, we can now see with greater clarity that one of Lenin's great accomplishments was simply to take the modern theory of organization, of hierarchy of ability and corresponding leadership, which had come to fruition in the corporation, and to introduce it, for the first time, in a movement for radical social change. 77*

77* Thus, Philip Selznick writes: "... the communist movement itself is composed of layers of adherents who, relative to a controlling group, functions as masses. First, there is the hard core of self-conscious agents within the party ... Their commitment is so deep that it need not be shored up by hatreds, by symbols, or by other forms of mass persuasion. These are the steeled cadres upon whom the continuity and the basic power of the party rest". Philip Selznick, The Organizational Weapon (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1952), pp. 83-84. On rank and file vis-à-vis cadre within the Communist Parties, see also Frank S. Meyer, The Moulding of Communists: The Training of the Communist Cadre (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1961); for a corrective as well as generalization of some of Meyer's conclusions, see Murray N. Rothbard, "Frank Meyer on the Communist Bogey-Man), Left and Right (Spring-Summer, 1967), pp. 22-42.

That the Nazis understood the importance of hierarchical organization is made clear by Godffrey Pridham, who writes that "The nature of the Nazi Party's organization with its elaborate system of graded commands provided headquarters with a framework for controlling activities at the grass roots level. 78*

78* Pridham, Hitler's Rise to Power, p. 103. The colorful Nazi Gauleiter in Upper Franconia, Hans Schemm, wrote that "organization; if that does not happen, then it peters out without any effect". Ibid., p. 102.

Hitler also understood the importance of having a dedicated cadre within a broader party organization. Thus, he once spoke to the S.A. that "It is necessary to have something ... within the organization of the law of association (as) a further organization which carries through the Führer idea to the full degree in order to preserve the instrument of the unity of the movement against all attempts to destroy it". 79*

79* Pridham, Hitler's Rise to Power, p. 94.

Hitler was particularly impressed with the graded hierarchical organization of the Roman Catholic Church. A disgruntled former Nazi leader recorded in his diary a speech Hitler made in June 1930 before the party press:

> The NSDAP should be built on the model of the Catholic Church. On a broad basis of preachers and "political clergymen" operating among the people, the leadership pyramid of the party should rise through the tiers of district leaders and Gau leaders to the senators and finally to its Führer-Pope. Hitler did not shun the comparison between Gau leaders and bishops and between future senators and cardinals, just as he unhesitatingly carried over the notions of authority, obedience and belief from the spiritual into the worldly field ... 80*

80* Pridham, Hitler's Rise to Power, p. 182. On Hitler's centralization of the NSDAP as soon as he took control of the party in 1921, see Orlow, History of the Nazi Party, pp. 33-38.

There is another great advantage to degrees of hierarchy in the movement, an advantage which also exists in the corporation. Namely, that the libertarian can earn visible rewards for good work (and visible punishments for bad). This, of course, is what the free market always does: to reward good and efficient work with higher income and profits, and to punish the bad with losses. One of the contributions of the behaviorist school of psychology

has been to demonstrate (in an unwitting analogy with the operations of the market) the important role in guiding human action of a "reinforcement" system of rewards and punishments, of positive and negative incentives in guiding their behavior.

One of the problems with the contemporary libertarian movement (e.g. the Libertarian Party) is that, probably because the personnel and funding are lacking, there is no hierarchical structure for bringing newcomers into the ranks, and then rewarding their good work and increasing dedication and understanding by moving them up in the hierarchy, until they eventually reach top cadre leadership status. The Libertarian Party structure is basically two-level: a rank-and-file, and then a tiny number of leaders (e.g. the state chairman, the state newsletter editor, etc.). What is needed is not a simple two-stage process, but a many-stage graded hierarchy of rank. Another corollary problem of the Libertarian Party might be a partial function of a legally imposed democratic structure. First, that <u>anyone</u> can become a party member, simply by signing a vague (and non-enforceable) pledge, and once a member he cannot be expelled; and second, that, therefore, every party member, regardless of how ignorant, un-libertarian, or moronic, is encouraged to think of <u>himself</u> as cadre, of being as good as any other libertarian. While through informal methods, good people in many cases (including the National Office) have managed to overcome these handicaps and assert their leadership, this success is often precarious, and in many state parties could not be accomplished. One of the advantages of a possible future Libertarian Society (see below) would be that this lack of a frankly graded hierarchy in the movement would at last be overcome.

The Communist parties have understood this insight, and have abandoned any attempt at egalitarian or participatory democratic parties. Every party member is not equal to every other (or almost every other). From the very beginning, the new party member knows his place: for he cannot become a full member right away. 81*

81* In the Fabian Society, too, one could not simply join the Society; one had to be proposed and seconded, and then one had to work to prove one's right to be a member. A candidate-member had to have two members who guaranteed that he was in accord with Fabian Society objectives; then, after he became a candidate-member, he was on probation for a year to see if he would do serious work for the Society. (Charles Koch?) "The Fabian Society" (unpublished MS., July, 1976), p. 1.

He must begin as a "candidate-member" and can only gain a right to be invited as a full member and, later, as a cadre member, by displaying two interrelated abilities and dedications over a period of time: learning and knowledge of Marxist theory, and participation in party activities. This stems from the Marxian insight that "theory" and "practice" (or "praxis" in the jargon) should never be divorced. What is needed is cadre who are able both in theory and in practice, for whom the one is never divorced from the other. Of course, the division of labor operates here too, and some Communists will end up with a major focus on theoretical work, and others on organizing or other activity. But the fact that everyone is trained and must prove himself in both, functions as a barrier against theory developed in isolation from knowledge of the real world context (such as is all too true of many contemporary libertarians) or against practical activity that slides into an opportunism divorced from the ultimate theoretical goal. In short, while the stress on "unity of theory and practice" has

not eliminated sectarian and opportunist deviations, this emphasis has kept them to a minimum.

Within the Communist movement, no clearer explanation of the concept of "unity of theory and practice" has been delivered than this well-known passage by George Dmitroff:

> We Communists are people of action. Ours is the problem of practical struggle against the offensive of capital, against fascism and the threat of imperialist war, the struggle for the overthrow of capitalism. It is precisely this practical task that imposes upon the Communist cadres the obligation to equip themselves with revolutionary theory. For, as Stalin ... has taught us, theory gives those engaged in practical work the power of orientation, clarity of vision, assurance in work, confidence in the triumph of our cause. But real revolutionary theory is irreconciliably hostile to any emasculated theorizing, any futile toying with abstract definitions. Our theory is not a dogma, but a guide to action, Lenin used to say. It is such theory that our cadres need ... 82*

82* George Dmitroff, The United Front Against Fascism and War (New York: Workers Library, 1935), pp. 48-49; quoted in Meyer, Moulding of Communists, p. 19.

19. The Error of the Infallible Party

The major and grave error of the organizational theory of the Communist Party was not, as its Menshevik critics within Marxism would have it, Lenin's emphasis on the division of labor and the importance of revolutionary theory. Rather, it was in the developing attitude of Lenin and particularly his followers that the Party, as the instrument of History, was always right in its decisions. In short, it was the placing of reason and objectivity, not in a rational analysis of the real world, but in a specific set of persons: the Party leadership. In this way, the Communist aim of "objectivity" became mired in the subjectivity of particular persons. It is this transposition that accounts for the blind obedience of the Communist as Super-Organization-Man; for the bizarre

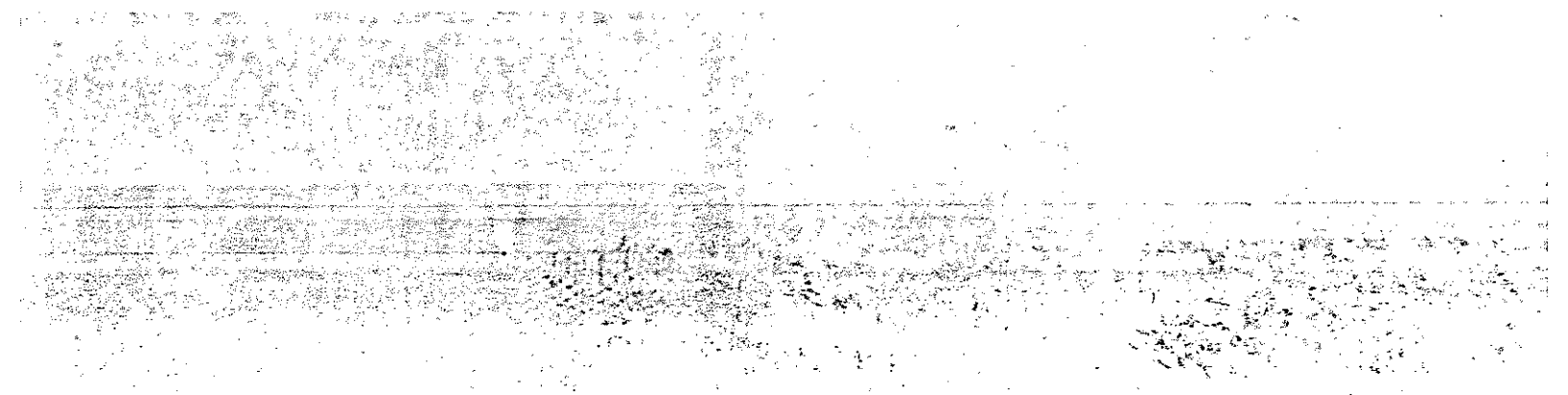
loyalty of many Old Bolsheviks, even though purged by Stalin, to the Party; for the unwillingness of even such quasi-individualist opponents of Stalin as Nikolai Bukharin to mount a popular crusade against Stalin's Communist Party, etc. In a profound sense, in short, the Communists developed the mystical fallacy that the Party had a concrete existence, and an infallibility, beyond the mere individuals constituting the organization. As Bill Evers writes:

> Leninists see the party as the concretization of the proletarian aspect of the historical dialectic. The revolutionary organization hence has an existence apart from the individuals who constitute its membership. 83*

83* Williamson M. Evers, "Lenin and his Critics on the Organizational Question", (unpublished MS.,), pp. 14-15. Evers then quotes from Alfred Meyer: "Lenin seems to have believed that the party, as organized consciousness, consciousness as a decision-making machinery, had superior reasoning power. Indeed, in time this collective body took on an aura of infallibility, which was later elevated to a dogma, and a member's loyalty was tested, in part, by his acceptance of it. It became part of the communist confession of faith to proclaim that the party was never wrong ... The party itself never makes mistakes". Alfred G. Meyer, Leninism (New York Praeger, 1962), pp. 97-98; quoted in Evers, "Lenin and his Critics, p. 15. Also see Rothbard, "Frank Meyer", pp. 34, 40.

In his discussion of Leninist organizational theory and strategy, Evers correctly concludes:

> It does seem that a coordinated effort by professional revolutionary activists equipped with sound theories should have more likelihood of success than the uncoordinated efforts of unrelated study circles, part-time revolutionary amateurs, and anguish-torn intellectual dilettantes. An organization of professional revolutionaries employing an appropriate division of labor in carrying out tasks could have the measured firmness and persistent determination necessary to carrying through the day-in, day-out work of bringing about revolutionary change. An organization can provide continuity and sustenance for the revolutionaries during the long period of groundwork designed to promote a revolutionary mass movement ... To a large degree, the fears of the Mensheviks and the anarcho-communists are distrust of the division of labor as anti-democratic and anti-egalitarian. While it is true that the division of labor reflects the dif-



While this fundamental trap that a cadre organization can fall into should be duly noted, there is little possibility of libertarians making such a mistake. For libertarians are fundamentally committed to freedom of the will, to a disbelief in omniscience, to independent exercise of reason and judgment, and above all, to methodological individualism; hence, despite the Rand cult experience (see below) it is difficult for them to fall into this kind of Leninist or Nazi error. On the contrary, as the experience of the current libertarian movement has shown, their errors are likely to be the diametric opposite: to oppose, in the name of freedom and individualism, all organization, all leadership, and all hierarchy, even a voluntary one.

20. The Importance of the Press

At about the same time (1899-1901) that Lenin was developing the concept of an organization of professional revolutionaries, he was also, as a corollary, pondering the means of transforming a collection of local clubs into a nationwide organization, the Social-Democratic Party. From the beginning, he realized that the key to this task was his own creation and development of a national periodical (a newspaper or magazine) that would play the central role in organizing the movement. Lenin envisaged two periodicals: a bi-monthly theoretical organ, and, more importantly, a more widely distributed bi-weekly magazine that would give central direction to the movement. The latter, which was to be named Iskra (the Spark) was of such critical importance that this crucial formative period of Bolshevik development came to be known in later years as "the Iskra period".

In his first article on the subject, Lenin wrote:

> We believe that the most urgent task of the moment consists in ... the founding of a Party organ that will appear regularly and be closely connected with all the local groups ... Without such an organ, local work will remain narrowly "amateurish" ... It is impossible to conduct a political struggle if the Party as a whole fails to make statements on all questions of policy and to give direction to the various manifestations of the struggle. The organization and the disciplining of the revolutionary forces and the development of revolutionary technique are impossible without the discussion of all these questions in a central organ ... 86*

86* Lenin, "Our Immediate Task", (second half of 1899), Works, Vol. 4, pp. 218-19.

Lenin went on to assure his readers that he did not mean to urge abandonment of other forms of local or national activity, in the course of concentrating on building the magazine:

> On the contrary, we are convinced that all these forms of activity constitute the basis of the Party's activity, but without their unification through an organ of the whole Party, these forms of revolutionary struggle lose nine-tenths of their significance; they do not lead to the creation of common Party experience, to the creation of Party traditions and continuity. The Party organ, far from competing with such activity, will exercise tremendous influence on its extension, consolidation, and systematization. 87*

87* Ibid., p. 219.

And again, in a later article:

> Only the establishment of a common Party organ can give the "worker in a given field" of revolutionary activity the consciousness that he is marching with the "rank and file", the consciousness that his work is directly essential to the Party, that he is one of the links in the chain ... 88*

88* Lenin, "An Urgent Question", (second half of 1899), Works, Vol. 4, p. 224.

In the fourth issue of Iskra, Lenin spelled out in more detail the basic functions of the national "newspaper" or periodical. First, to provide regular and nationwide dissemination of ideas ("agitation and propaganda"):

> A newspaper is what we most of all need; without it we cannot conduct that systematic, all-round propaganda and agitation, consistent in principle, which is the chief and permanent task of Social-Democracy in general and, in particular, the pressing task of the moment, when interest in politics and in questions of socialism has been aroused among the broadest strata of the population. Never has the need been felt so acutely as today for reinforcing dispersed agitation in the form of individual action, local leaflets, pamphlets, etc., by means of generalized and systematic agitation that can only be conducted with the aid of the periodical press.

Second, the national newspaper must be frankly political:

> ... what we need is definitely a political newspaper. Without a political organ, a political movement deserving that name is inconceivable ... Without such a newspaper we cannot possibly fulfill our task — that of concentrating all the elements of political discontent and protest, of vitalizing thereby the revolutionary movement of the proletariat.

And Third, the newspaper must perform a central role in organizing the radical movement:

> A newspaper is not only a collective propagandist and a collective agitator, it is also a collective organizer. In this last respect it may be likened to the scaffolding round a building under construction, which marks the contours of the structure and facilitates communication between the builders ... With the aid of the newspaper and through it, a permanent organization will naturally take shape that will engage, not only in local activities, but in regular general work, and will train its members to follow political events carefully, appraise their significance and their effect on the various strata of the population, and develop effective means for the revolutionary party to influence these events. 89*

89* Lenin, "Where to Begin" (May, 1901), in Works, Vol. 5, pp. 20-23.

In 1917, as Tony Cliff makes clear, the Bolshevik party press played a central role in instructing party members and sympathizers throughout Russia. By that year, the Bolshevik party was publishing 41 periodical organs, of which 17 were daily papers, spearheaded by Pravda, published in Petrograd. 90*

90* Cliff, Lenin, II, pp. 163-64

Similarly, the crucial role of the major party newspaper, the Volkischer Beobachter (The People's Observer) in the development of the Nazi movement after its acquisition in 1920, has been pointed out by Dietrick Orlow:

> The VB became an indispensable ideological and organizational link between the party's central leadership and its local, and, later, provincial membership. Hitler frequently used the pages of the VB to give ideological clarification and interpretation to current political issues, so that control of the newspaper was a major means of preventing uncontrolled discussion and disunity among the membership. And, perhaps even more significant, the VB became a major vehicle for transmission of orders and directives relating to the party's organizational developments ... (Furthermore,) through its pages, Hitler could address the large group of sympathizers (and potential members) who were repelled by the more theatrical atmosphere of the party's rallies. 91*

91* Orlow, History of the Nazi Party, pp. 21-22.

21. Requirements for Success

Given a professionally organized and structured cadre, dedicated to consistent principle and its ultimate goals, flexible in tactics in response to changing historical conditions, allied with and recruiting from like-minded sympathizers, what then are the conditions for its success? Here again, the Leninist movement has done the most systematic thinking. Basically, it seems that the mass of the public (or, in its particular construction, the

working class and its allies) are, in normal times, not interested in political affairs, and are therefore willing to continue passive or active support for the status quo. It is only the development of "crisis situations", crises that result from the breakdown of the existing system and with which the system cannot cope, that the radical movement can accelerate its strength and possibly achieve victory. It is such periods of breakdown that stimulate a massive willingness among the public to think deeply about the social system and to consider radical alternatives. Such crisis situations or "revolutionary situations", might be any one or a combination of: economic (such as depression or inflation), a losing or a stalemated war, or political repression of free speech and activity. In fact one of the constants of the history of modern revolutions is this: no successful revolution has occurred without (1) a previous losing or stalemated war, or (2) the repression or outlawing of free political activity. In fact, no violent revolution has taken place successfully in a country with democratic elections; all have occurred either against domestic dictatorships (Russia, Cuba, China, Vietnam, France) and/or against foreign imperialism (the American Revolution, Vietnam); and most have occurred after a losing or stalemated war (Russia, China) or at least an expensive one (France, America, Italy). Germany's Nazi revolution was non-violent, taking place through the democratic electoral process; and it, too, occurred in the aftermath of a losing war (as well as a runaway-inflation). 92*

92* On the importance of a losing war for revolution, Professor Lawrence Stone writes: "Revolution only becomes probable ... if

certain special factors intervene: the 'the precipitants' or 'accelerators'. Of these, the three most common are the emergence of an inspired leader or prophet; the formation of a secret, military, revolutionary organization; and the crushing defeat of the armed forces in foreign war. This last is of critical importance since it not only shatters the prestige of the ruling elite, but also undermines the morale and discipline of the soldiers and thus opens the way to the violent overthrow of the existing government". Lawrence Stone, The Causes of the English Revolution, 1529-1642 (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), p. 10.

These crisis situations, as well as the basic soil that prepared them, constitute for the Marxists the necessary "objective conditions" for a successful radical triumph. 93*

93* Thus, Redlich writes: "... often the soil (for the triumph of an idea) must have been prepared by events. One can remember how difficult it was to disseminate the idea of an American central bank prior to the crisis of 1907 and how relatively easy it was thereafter". Redlich, "Ideas Migration", p. 306.

In addition to these requisite objective conditions, there are also what the Marxists term the "subjective conditions" — namely a cadre and a movement of sufficient strength and influence to take advantage of these objective conditions. Specifically, to prepare in advance by predicting the crisis, to point out how the crisis stems systematically from the political system itself and is not simply an historical accident (something that both libertarians and Marxists are equipped to do), and to point to the radical alternative by which these crises and others like them can be surmounted. The cadre is like a skeletal force in place, ready to take advantage of the inevitable crises (the results of the numerous "inner contradictions" of the existing system) and to grow rapidly during these periods. In fact, of course, the cadre and sympathizers will tend to grow rapidly during these crises situations, so that the objective conditions will strengthen and reinforce the "subjective".

The cadre in place, ready to take advantage of crisis situations, well describes the Nazi route to power when the Great Depression struck Germany. Thus, Geoffrey Pridham writes:

> ... it is important to realize that the NSDAP had already developed the organizational framework of a mass movement by the time the Depression broke in Germany. What the Depression did was to facilitate enormously the expansion of its popular support. The NSDAP benefited from the Depression more than any other party partly because it had a propaganda machine far superior to those of its rivals ... The second principal reason for the NSDAP's success during the Depression was the nature of its appeal. The party's exploitation of the economic crisis was primarily political, as it used it to argue that the whole political system needed changing rather than simply the government in office at the time. The NSDAP was now in a stronger position than ever before to lambaste the governing parties, and claim the role of the main opposition force. The Depression severely affected loyalty to the state and sharpened class antagonism. It reinforced the tendency, especially among those who had an "ideological" aversion to the Weimar Republic or were concerned about their social status, to opt for a party which offered "a choice, not an echo" of what the traditional parties were saying. 94*

94* Pridham, Hitler's Rise to Power, pp. 217-18. Also see Orlow, History of the Nazi Party, p. 171.

As Lenin pointed out, for victory for the radical cause to occur, there also needs to be a breakdown of morale among the existing ruling classes, a vital loss of confidence in their own capacity to rule, to understand and surmount these crises situations. Such massive losses of confidence will also lead to splits within the "ruling class", a falling away of crucial support to the existing system, and a possible victory for a radical alternative.

Lenin set forth these insights with great clarity in the course of his critique of the pro-war Marxists after the start of World War I:

> ... it is indisputable that a revolution is impossible without a revolutionary situation; furthermore, it is not every revolutionary situation that leads to revolution. What, generally speaking, are the symptoms of a revolutionary situation? ... the following three major symptoms: (1) when it is impossible for the ruling classes to maintain their rule without any change; when there is a crisis, in one form or another, among the "upper classes", a crisis in the policy of the ruling class, leading to a fissure through which the discontent and indignation of the oppressed classes burst forth. For a revolution to take place, it is usually insufficient for "the lower classes not to want" to live in the old way; it is also necessary that "the upper classes should be unable" to live in the old way; (2) when the suffering and want of the oppressed classes have grown more acute than usual; (3) when, as a consequence of the above causes, there is a considerable increase in the activity of the masses, who uncomplainingly allow themselves to be robbed in "peace time", but, in turbulent times, are drawn both by all the circumstances of the crisis and by the "upper classes" themselves into independent historical action.
> Without these objective changes, which are independent of the will, not only of individual groups and parties but even of individual classes, a revolution, as a general rule, is impossible. The totality of all these objective changes is called a revolutionary situation. 95*

95* Lenin,"The Collapse of the Second International", (June 1915), in Works,Vol. 21, pp. 213-214.

Lawrence Stone also stresses, for the success of a revolution, the decay of the will of the ruling elite. "The elite may lose its manipulative skill, or its military superiority, or its self-confidence, or its cohesion; it may become estranged from the non-elite, or overwhelmed by a financial crisis; it may be incompetent, or weak or brutal." 96*

96* Stone, Causes of the English Revolution, p. 9.

And, in analyzing the first modern, if ultimately unsuccessful, revolution, the English Revolution of the 17th century, Stone writes:

> Before civil war could break out, it was necessary for the major institutions of central government to lose their credibility and to collapse. Although the crisis only becomes intelligible in the light of social and economic change, what has to be explained in the first place is not a crisis within the society, but rather a crisis within the regime, the alienation of very large segments of the elites from the established political and religious institutions. 97*

97* Stone, Causes of the English Revolution, pp. 56-57. On the weakened will of King Victor Emmanuel and the ruling elite in Italy to resist Mussolini's March on Rome as crucial to the latter's success, see Lyttelton, The Seizure of Power, pp. 90-93.

Lenin goes on to mention various revolutionary situations in the past which did not rise to a successful revolution.

> Why was that? It was because it is not every revolutionary situation that gives rise to a revolution; revolution arises only (when) ... the above-mentioned objective changes are accompanied by a subjective change, namely, the ability of the revolutionary class to take revolutionary mass action strong enough to break (or dislocate) the old government, which never, not even in a period of crisis, "falls", if it is not toppled over. 98*

98* Lenin, "The Collapse of the Second International", p. 214.

After pointing out that the war would inevitably give rise to a revolutionary situation, Lenin asked "Will it lead to revolution? and answered "This is something we do not know, and nobody can know. The answer can be provided only by the experience gained during the development of revolutionary sentiment and the transition to revolutionary action by the advanced class, the proletariat". In this situation, Lenin concluded, the crucial duty of the socialist movement is to stimulate the "subjective conditions" as much as possible:

> ... the indisputable and fundamental duty of all socialists -- (is) that of revealing to the masses the existence of a revolutionary situation, explaining its scope

and depth, arousing the proletariat's revolutionary consciousness and revolutionary determination, helping it to go over to revolutionary action, and forming, for that purpose, organizations suited to the revolutionary situation. 99*

99* Ibid., pp. 216-17.

22. The American Revolution

The American Revolution holds special significance for modern American libertarians, and deserves discussion in its own right. In the first place, it was the first successful revolution against the State in modern history (the success being later partially reversed with the adoption of the Constitution); 100*

100* The English Revolution of the 17th century, which preceded and in many ways inspired the American Revolution, was largely unsuccessful, its libertarian thrust reversed early with the accession to power of Oliver Cromwell.

secondly, it was also the first successful libertarian revolution in modern history; thirdly, it was the first successful national liberation struggle against Western imperialism. On the other hand, it must be realized that the revolution presented special problems not relevant to today, since it took place in a pre-industrial, thoroughly decentralized colonial structure—facing the difficult problems of unifying the thirteen colonies into a common struggle against the British Empire.

It is now recognized, since the researches of Bernard Bailyn (e.g. The Intellectual Origins of the American Revolution, 1967), that the indispensable groundwork for the revolution was laid decades earlier in the spread of a radical libertarian ideology throughout the American colonies. Based on the individualist,

radical, natural rights ideology begun by the Levellers (in the English Revolution), systematized by John Locke in the late 17th century, and inspired by the revolutionary views and martyrdom of the 17th century English republican Algernon Sidney, the libertarian ideology was radicalized and spread throughout the colonies particularly by Cato's Letters in the early 1720's (written by John Trenchard and Thomas Gordon). Cato's Letters not only advocated the right and the duty of revolution against a State which went beyond the protection of individual person and property; they also went beyond Locke by pointing to the State as always poised to aggress against liberty. Hence, Cato pointed to Power as the ever-present threat to Liberty, which must be guarded against with eternal hostility and vigilance; Cato then specifically applied this hostility to tyranny to the British government of the day.

Schooled in libertarian devotion to natural rights and hostility to statism, a devotion endorsed by statesmen, intellectuals, and ministers alike, the Americans were prepared to resist the Grand Design of the British government to reimpose an Empire that had grown slack and had permitted a virtual de facto independance. But a climate of opinion, however strong and pervasive, was not enough. Organization and leadership were desperately needed in the struggle against the Empire, and it had to start from scratch. Furthermore, it had to proceed largely outside the official colonial governmental apparatus, and it had to develop separately within each colony.

Considering the magnitude and unprecedented nature of the task, the radical leadership of the developing American Revolution

gained an achievement that was truly remarkable. At the head of the list was Samuel Adams, the leader of the resistance in the major revolutionary city and colony, Boston and Massachusetts. Secondary honors must be accorded to Patrick Henry, the young leader of the radical grouping in Virginia. Working without a role model in previous revolutions, Adams instinctively arrived at the essential preconditions of successful revolution: an inflexible, determinedly held radical goal (intransigent opposition to British statism, and then independence), combined with innovative, flexible tactics and strategy suited to rapidly changing real world conditions. Furthermore, in the course of working out those tactics, Adams developed the various types and levels of organization necessary to directing and advancing the revolutionary movement.

Thus, early in the resistance, in the opposition to the Stamp Act, Adams realized that the major appropriate tactic to defeating the stamp tax was to rally mob action to pressure the British-appointed Stamp Distributors to resign their posts. This was done, of course, in concert with more orthodox political and petition campaigns. To do so, Adams secretly organized the Loyal Nine, which in turn directed mob action against the Stamp Distributors and against the Tory leaders in the Massachusetts government. His direction was secret because Adams realized that, as the open political leader of the Boston resistance, he could not afford to be involved openly in violence. A remarkable feature of the mob violence, by the way, is that it never got out of hand — it was carefully controlled and directed at cleverly picked targets.

The violence was never more extensive than necessary to accomplish the radicals' goals -- and thus the radicals never suffered any backlash of popular sympathy for the victims or any revulsion against excesses. On the one or two occasions when the violence became excessive -- in Boston and in Newport -- the radicals repudiated the actions, or, in the case of Newport, arrested the leaders.

When the problem became one of inducing the British to repeal measures -- the Stamp Act and particularly the Townshend Acts -- Adams and the other radicals generated the effective weapon of voluntary merchant and consumer boycott of British imports, thereby successfully generating British political pressure for repeal. When any American merchant broke the boycott, they themselves were voluntarily boycotted by their colleagues. When the British sent tea ships to Boston in the final confrontation, Adams again secretly organized the Tea Party just before the ship would have been seized by the British authorities and the tea sold in Boston at auction. Always, the tactics were precisely and superbly suited to the particular occasion.

Adams and the radicals also early realized the importance of a periodical press as a center for continuing agitation, propaganda, and organization. In addition to pamphlets, many of which were reprinted in the newspapers, the newspaper press served as the central focus of the radicals in each colony -- led by the Boston Gazette, the editor of which was a member of the Loyal Nine.

In addition, Adams generated the necessary revolutionary organization -- the infrastructure -- for a successful movement. The Loyal Nine and their mobs soon grew into the Sons of Liberty,

which were swiftly copied in each of the other colonies. Later, in the lull of 1770-72, before the Tea Act, when many of the radicals despaired, when Adams' cousin and ally John had retired to private life and other allies had deserted him, Sam Adams did not despair. He wrote, undaunted, that "where there is a spark of patriotic fire, we will enkindle it". Hence, it seemed that Adams realized that no movements for revolutionary change can proceed in an unbroken, straight-line manner, but rather in ups and downs. Then, after more British intrusion in Massachusetts, Adams, in 1772, generated the highly successful institution of local and colony-wide committees of correspondence, which served to form a network of revolutionary and radical organization throughout America. Then came local committees of inspection and safety, to enforce boycotts and pursue resistance measures. This network of committees served to establish alternative institutions, which, when the war began, became quasi-anarchistic governments to replace the empty husk of the old legal colonial governments.

The committees of correspondence and their inception were carefully and hierarchically structured by Sam Adams and his followers. Thus, in moving the committee plan through the Boston town meeting, Adams appointed six "prime managers" (who were known to few of the rank and file), each of which headed a division which included several sub-divisions with their own leaders; the sub-divisions, in turn, led the rank and file. The Boston Committee of Correspondence consisted of the major radical leaders, headed by Adams, and all of whom had struggled together in the earlier resistance to the Stamp and Townshend Acts, and who therefore could trust one another. The members ranged from wealthy merchants

and capitalists to professional men to small tradesmen or artisan-manufacturers.

> Equally significant, the membership of the committee linked it closely to the existing institutions of Boston politics, so closely that it was hardly separate. At least eight of the twenty-one members also belonged to the North End Caucus, a private political club which met regularly to discuss and to influence Boston affairs. Members also participated in several Boston congregations, in both of Boston's Masonic lodges, the fire companies of several wards, as well as a variety of private clubs. Personal and professional connections attached them to virtually every circle in Bostom, political or otherwise, excepting the Governor's circle. 101*

101* Richard D. Brown, Revolutionary Politics in Massachusetts: The Boston Committee of Correspondence and the Towns, 1772-74 (New York: W. W. Norton, 1976), p. 60.

Professor Brown wrote incisively when he concluded that "It appears that in an essentially unstructured situation, Adams and the others achieved their power largely by providing structure". 102*

102* Brown, Revolutionary Politics, p. 54n.

When Sam Adams arrived at the firm goal of independence is not known: probably it was several years before the outbreak of the war. Since the bulk of Americans were opposed to independence until well after the war began, Adams and the other radicals refrained from proclaiming their goal. But while independence was not proclaimed as the outright goal, the radicals, early in the resistance, escalated the arguments against British imperial and statist measures from conservative legalisms to the radical and revolutionary libertarian emphasis on the natural rights of the individual to liberty and property. Even after the war began, most Americans were reluctant to break with the mystique of the

British King as their sovereign. Early in the 1760's, Patrick Henry had tried to desanctify the King; but he quickly withdrew when he was met with cries of "treason" from fellow-Americans. In early 1776, however, the unknown radical pamphleteer Tom Paine provided this desanctification with an outright call for independence and a bitter and sustained attack upon the King himself; his Common Sense became a runaway best-seller throughout the American colonies.

23. The Modern Libertarian Movement: History and Analysis

The contemporary libertarian movement in the United States may be precisely dated as beginning just after World War II. World War II serves as the watershed for several reasons. In the first place, libertarians, unorganized though they were, classical liberals, and conservatives had all grouped together during the 1930's and World War II in opposition to the New Deal, first at home and then in its foreign policy. As opponents of advanced statism at home and of foreign intervention abroad, it was natural for libertarians to think of themselves as "extreme rightists", as purer versions of the anti-statist Old Right opposition to the New Deal, foreign and domestic. The advent of World War II led to the routing of this opposition, to the entrenchment of the welfare-warfare state, in domestic and foreign policy.

At the end of World War II, it seemed as if that opposition, and especially its small but ideologically active libertarian wing, had been routed permanently. Albert Jay Nock was dead; his only disciple, Frank Chodorov, had been ousted as head of the Henry George School in New York for opposing the war, and was now the editor of his own obscure and unknown broadsheet, analysis.

The aging H. L. Mencken was moving toward retirement; and the anti-statist and anti-imperialist Garet Garrett had been ousted as an editor of the Saturday Evening Post for his opposition to the war and was now the editor of an obscure and unknown quarterly, American Affairs, published by the National Industrial Conference Board. Isabel Paterson, author of the brilliant God of the Machine, had retired to a farm; Rose Wilder Lane had virtually retired to her farm in protest against the self-employed social security tax; Ayn Rand's Fountainhead, while a cumulative best-seller, was not perceived by her readers as a political novel. All these authors, while hard-hitting and exciting libertarian ideologists, had retired from the scene. Ludwig von Mises' American works, Omnipotent Government and Bureaucracy, had had little impact, and Mises was teaching part-time, in poverty and obscurity at N.Y.U. F. A. Hayek's best selling Road to Serfdom had had considerable impact among intellectuals, but, since Hayek was teaching in England, it had no organizational or movement consequences in this country. So while the Old Right was still active in Republican politics and in the press, the small libertarian wing of the anti-New Deal coalition, a wing which had provided much of the intellectual armamentarium for the coalition, had disappeared.

Into this wasteland there stepped Leonard E. Read, late of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce and the National Industrial Conference Board, who, in 1946, founded the Foundation for Economic Education. The creation of FEE marked the beginning of the modern libertarian movement in America. Read gathered together all the libertarian and classical liberal intellectuals he could find, beginning the necessary process of forming an

educational center to advance and spread the ideas of liberty. After a brief fling in political activism (e.g. agitating against rent control), Read decided that what was sorely needed was not activism but the beginning of the buildup of libertarian ideas and ideologists.

Read brought to his staff all the leading libertarians, first in economics and then in political philosophy, that he could find. At the beginning this consisted of his Los Angeles Chamber economic adviser, V. Orval Watts, and a group of Cornell agricultural economists who had been trained and "converted" to liberty and laissez-faire by F. A. "Baldy" Harper; these included Harper himself, W. M. Curtiss, Ivan Bierly, Paul Poirot, and Ellis Lamborn. Soon, the distinguished Ludwig von Mises was added as a part-time member of the staff. During those early years, every leading libertarian intellectual, young and old, was at one time or another on the FEE staff.

In addition to publishing pamphlets and newsletters, FEE served as an open center for libertarian intellectuals by holding numerous cocktail parties and dinner meetings, thus bringing new people into contact with like-minded colleagues. Whether consciously or not, FEE, as an open center, was gathering, sustaining, and nourishing cadre.

When Harper, the leading intellectual light among the full-time staff at FEE, first joined in 1946, he was given to understand by Read that FEE would develop into a kind of libertarian Institute for Advanced Study, publishing books, pamphlets, and a scholarly journal. What happened? How did FEE evolve into the sleepy backwater that it is today?

There were two problems. One, possibly of lesser importance, was the question of anarchism. By early 1950, Harper had evolved into an individualist anarchist, of a pacifist, or partially Tolstoyan, variety. Soon Harper had converted every member of the full-time staff, including even Leonard Read, as can be seen in several of Read's Tolstoyan anti-war and anti-organization pamphlets appearing in 1952-53. But, then, perhaps influenced by increasing edginess among his big business donors, Read backed sharply away from anarchism, and from a tacit anarchist-laissez-faire coalition at FEE which had decreed that while FEE publications would not be explicitly anarchist, that neither would they ever positively endorse the institution of government (something like the LP situation today). For Read, feeling the need to come out positively for the State, published Bradford Smith's Liberty and Taxes, which explicitly endorsed proportional income taxation, and his own Government -- the Ideal Concept (1954). In both cases, and particularly with his own book, Read ruptured the agreement he had had with his staff that FEE would publish no work that was not endorsed unanimously by himself and his staff. By publishing his own explicitly pro-government (albeit "limited") book at FEE over the intense opposition of his entire staff, Read insured the rapid decay of FEE as an intellectual force or as a center of libertarian thought and ideas.

But there was probably a more important point. For Read, a prolific author, operated on the elementary intellectual level of little homilies, of a "no one can make a pencil" and "butterflies are free" approach. Apart from problems of ideology, it became crystal clear to his staff that Read would tolerate no

intellectual output at FEE that was beyond the level of his own work. Furthermore, Read began to insist that FEE publications not only avoid direct political activity, but also refrain from any kind of intellectual critique of statist views or measures, that is, from anything more controversial than "no man can make a pencil". Hence, there rapidly developed a situation intolerable for the flourishing of any would-be center of intellectual activity: namely, that the owner and fund-raiser dictated his own level of intellectual output, in conversation as well as in print. As a result, any FEE member with intellectual spunk had to leave, and the exodus from FEE left it as a place of intellectual sterility and impotence.

The last real attempt at intellectual activity at FEE came in 1955, when Read acquired the near-bankrupt Freeman. The brilliant individualist Frank Chodorov was brought up to edit the Freeman, and to make of it a real libertarian magazine, commenting on and analyzing the news and trends of the day. (Previously, the Freeman had been a conservative magazine with certain free-market admixtures.) But Chodorov's lively and challenging mind interrupted the somnolent flow of Read's homiletic monologues, and Read signalled his intense displeasure by ceasing to come to lunch (the luncheon meetings were the key daily discussion-ritual at FEE.) Chodorov soon left, and the Freeman quickly became the elementary pap that we know today.

Trying to make the best of a bad situation, Read later rationalized this development by maintaining that FEE had never meant to be anything else than a "high school of liberty", converting housewives, high school students, and, to some extent,

blue-collar industrial employees. Gone and forgotten were the aspirations toward serving as an institute of advanced study. The intellectual leadership of the libertarian movement went elsewhere.

Fortunately, another institution had arisen to take up the banner. A now forgotten source of free-market activism in the late 1930's and 1940's were various urban "citizens' bureaus", who had battled for more efficient local government and combatted urban corruption. Some of these activists had moved toward a laissez-faire approach. One was the veteran William H. Allen in New York; another, central to our story, was Loren "Red" Miller, who had become a laissez-faire adherent, and who, while battling the corrupt Pendergast machine in Kansas City, converted Harold W. Luhnow, head of the William Volker Company. Possibly Miller and Luhnow had also shared experiences in the America First Committee fight against intervention in World War II. Moving to Detroit after the war, Luhnow converted a brilliant young administrator, Herbert C. Cornuelle, who, in the very early days of FEE, came there as executive director. As head of the William Volker Fund, Luhnow had found a full-time, if subsidized, academic post at N.Y.U. for Ludwig von Mises and at Chicago for F. A. Hayek. When Cornuelle was ousted from FEE in a personality-and-power struggle, he went to the Volker Fund as its first full-time paid director.

In a couple of years, Herb Cornuelle had left the movement for a business career in Hawaii, but by that time he was succeeded by his younger brother Dick, who had been a Mises student at NYU, had worked as an associate editor under Garrett at American Affairs, and had then been a full-time staffer at FEE. During the late

1950's, an exodus from FEE moved to the Volker Fund at Burlingame, California, bringing Harper and Bierly, as well as Ken Templeton, Herb Cornuelle's navy friend Bill Johnson, and Harper's young protege George Resch.

The William Volker Fund, as can be seen, gathered to it a very large cadre of staff -- thus, with assets of $10 million, it had far more employees than, say, the Lilly Endowment, which had fifteen times the assets. The reason for this large staff was the new Volker Fund concept of creative and individual philanthropy. In short, while Establishment foundations remained content to funnel their funds to large institutions, such as the Social Science Research Council, or Harvard University, the Volker Fund actively sought out individual scholars of conservative or libertarian bent (the conservative-libertarian alliance mentioned above still continued.) The Volker Fund staff travelled a great deal, seeking out and contacting individual scholars, and -- here is where the creative concept came in -- encouraged them to do research in those areas desired by the Fund. Most foundations, of course, wait for applications to come in across the transom. The importance of creative philanthropy is that most libertarian or conservative scholars were too isolated and discouraged to even begin any sort of important or long-term projects; for, after all, who would read or publish their results? I, for example, would never have thought of beginning Man, Economy, and State without the encouragement and support of the Volker Fund, which was seeking a Misesian college textbook. (It was a measure of the sensitivity and understanding of the Volker Fund that when MES began to grow from a boiled-down textbook to a lengthy treatise,

the Fund encouraged rather than discouraged this shift, and extended its support for the project).

Furthermore, the Volker Fund initiated the important tactic of advancing conservative and libertarian thought, as well as bringing libertarian and conservative scholars together, by holding three scholarly conferences each year (East Coast, Mid-west, and West Coast). The conferences were immeasurably important in finding and developing good scholars, and in bringing them into fruitful contact with each other.

To find good scholars, the Volker Fund, as early as 1954, hired two people half-time (Frank S. Meyer and myself) to read and monitor an enormous number of scholarly journals, also subscribing to these journals for us. We would then clip, send, and review any good or promising articles that we might find, thus bringing scholars to the Volker Fund roster. Furthermore, Meyer and I reviewed a continuing stream of books sent to us by the Fund, to evaluate the work done as well as the scholarly authors. By 1961, I had come on full-time as a Volker Fund analyst.

The next step came with the realization that much good scholarly work was being done, but that there were no secure publishing outlets for this activity. And so the Volker Fund arranged with Van Nostrand to publish its series in the social sciences (1960-62), which included the proceedings of various Volker Fund conferences, my MES, original work by Mises, and translations (which the Fund had arranged for and financed) of Mises and other long-forgotten European works.

By 1961-1962, Baldy Harper had moved to establish his dream of a well-funded libertarian institute of advanced study, by

creating the Institute for Humane Studies, which, by agreement with Luhnow, was to receive the bulk of the Volker Fund money to continue and expand its programs on a permanent, endowed basis. Then disaster struck, and the Volker Fund collapsed in 1962, levelling a body blow to libertarian scholarship and ideas from which it has only begun to recover and surpass in the last few years.

In hindsight, the collapse of the Volker Fund reflected the larger disintegration of the conservative-libertarian alliance that had marked "the right" in the 1940's and 1950's. The Old Right of Taft, McCormick, Buffett, et al. had been anti-statist, civil libertarian (e.g. anti-draft) and isolationist. (Buffett, Taft's midwestern campaign manager in the 1953 Republican convention, was virtually an anarchist). But around 1955, a sea-change and transformation occurred in the conservative movement. By 1955, Taft and McCormick were dead, and the isolationist Republicans, who were the only organized group outside of the Communist Party to oppose the war in Korea, had begun to disappear. Into this vacuum, and into the intellectual vacuum that had always existed in the conservative movement, stepped National Review, which quickly assumed the intellectual and political leadership of American conservatism. National Review was pro-war, pro-militarist, and theocratic, gathering about itself a scintillating group of older pro-war, ex-Communist and ex-Leftist intellectuals of the 1930's dedicated to destroying the "God that had failed" them — the Soviet Union and the Communist movement. To this group of ex-Communists were added a group of younger, theocratic anti-Communist Catholics (Buckley, Bozell, the early Wills). By 1960,

N. R. publisher William Rusher, a former Dewey Republican, had seized control of the national Young Republicans, had established a Goldwater-for-President movement which came to fruition in 1964, and Buckley and Rusher had supervised the creation of an activist youth arm, Young Americans for Freedom in 1960, as well as taking Frank Chodorov's idea for a collegiate individualist group, Intercollegiate Society of Individualists, and transforming it into a conservative idea group.

It is characteristic of this New Right that its hero, Barry Goldwater, had been an Eisenhower, not a Taft, delegate in 1952. By 1960, the Right-wing had been transformed from an isolationist, semi-libertarian group to the movement we know today. Thus, libertarians and conservatives were no longer natural political allies; the designation of libertarians as "extreme right-wingers" was increasingly obsolete.

(Recent information from Buckley and Wills indicates that National Review may well have been a CIA-front, established with the design of converting the right-wing from an isolationist to a militarist, pro-war and interventionist movement. Buckley had been a CIA operative in Mexico in the years up to the founding of National Review, with E. Howard Hunt as his control; NR editors James Burnham and Willmoore Kendal, as well as Priscilla Buckley, were CIA operatives).

In retrospect, the collapse of the Volker Fund seems related to this larger conservative-libertarian split. With the exception of Ivan Bierly (Dick Cornuelle was in the process of hiving off to his own right-opportunist formation, the "voluntary welfare"

concept), the other Volker Fund members were full libertarians; anarchists, and isolationists. By 1961-62, Ivan Bierly had been converted to the ideology of the Rev. Rousas J. Rushdoony, that is: pro-militarist, and theocratic. Convinced that Armageddon was near at hand, Rushdoony was pushing for a Calvinist-theocratic dictatorship in America to prepare men's souls for that climactic event. Bierly managed to convince the increasingly senile Luhnow that the Volker Fund (especially Harper, Templeton, Resch, Rothbard) had fallen into the hands of a dangerous anarchist, pacifist, atheist clique out to subvert the Volker Fund's Christian mission -- whereupon Luhnow arbitrarily dissolved the Volker Fund as an active organization (brief attempts to revive it under Bierly, Rushdoony, and the pro-Nazi revisionist historian Dave Hoggan foundered when Luhnow sensibly drew back from the implication of the new trend).

The sudden collapse of the Volker Fund left its previous cadre isolated and scattered. Harper bravely proceeded to launch the Institute for Humane Studies, but this time alone and without funds. Johnson went into business. Templeton went to Lilly Endowment, which granted Rothbard funds for an American history work, after which Rothbard went into college teaching at Brooklyn Poly. Resch went into business: Cornuelle pursued his opportunist path to call for Federal and State cabinet posts to channel private charity funds ("the independent sector") into outlets determined by liberal critics of the market; close at one point to Romney, Bob Finch, and Richard Nixon, Cornuelle talked of running for governor of California or even vice-president of the

U.S. on the Republican ticket, but then lost out in the scramble for power in the early Nixon administration. Ivan Bierly went into real estate.

By this time I had broken with National Review and conservatism on the foreign policy question. Ralph Raico and Ronald Hamowy founded the New Individualist Review as a distinguished student quarterly in 1961. But while Hamowy and others attacked conservative foreign policy in the early years, a deep split over the issue between libertarians and conservatives on the magazine brought about a pact of silence on the entire question in NIR. After Raico and Hamowy were graduated and left Chicago in the mid-1960's, the magazine lost its former brilliance and soon disappeared.

Meanwhile, in the late 1950's, a new center for the development of libertarians had been originated by Robert LeFevre; previously a right-wing activist and staff member of Mervin K. Hart's rightist National Economic Council, LeFevre had become an anarchist. Moving out to Colorado Springs to be an editorial writer for R. C. Hoiles' anarchistic Gazette-Telegraph, LeFevre established the rural Freedom School, where he gave enormously successful two-week summer courses in his philosophy of "autarchism" (an ultra-pacifist version of anarchism). LeFevre had an extremely successful conversion rate at the Freedom School, aided by his charismatic oratory and by the rural isolation of the school.

After the collapse of the Volker Fund, and apart from NIR and Mises' small seminar in New York, LeFevre's Freedom School was the only active center for the development of libertarian,

and certainly anarchist, ideas and cadre. There were certain grave problems with the LeFevre approach, however, which became increasingly evident as time went on. In the first place, after the highly successful two-week course, there were really no advanced courses to which LeFevrians could turn for increasing knowledge and sustenance. Beyond the basic axioms, then, there was no continuing source of education for Lefevrians in history, the social sciences, or the other disciplines of human action. Secondly, and related to this problem, there was nothing for LeFevrian converts to do, no actions that they could take, once they went back to their respective homes. In short, there was no way for the newly-converted and eager LeFevrians to continue to sustain themselves as a conscious and functioning cadre. Hence, LeFevrians, while generally continuing loyal to the ideology, tended to drop out of libertarianism as any sort of active movement. A third problem was akin to that of Leonard Read -- that LeFevre would not tolerate any deviations from the "pure" LeFevrian line. Since brilliant disciples, by their very nature, will never agree line for line with the work of their master -- even if continuing in his general spirit -- this meant successive "purges" of the best LeFevrians from the ranks. (Such practices as "forcing" youthful LeFevrian instructor Roy Childs to marry his girl friend were hardly conducive to harmonious development of the movement).

The operative end of LeFevrianism came with his hubris in transforming the Freedom School into Rampart College Graduate School. Realizing that LeFevrianism needed advanced courses, LeFevre tried to implement his dream of being a university pre-

sident -- by trying to establish a graduate school with W. H. Hutt as a one-man head of the economics department, and Jim Martin as one-man head of the history department. There were many insuperable problems with this concept: including an expensive attempt to found a new university; an attempt launched with a president (LeFevre) who was scarcely intellectually qualified for the venture; and interference with the academic freedom of those professors (e.g. Hutt) who were scarcely pure libertarians or LeFevrians.

There was another strategic problem with LeFevrianism inherent in its central creed. For LeFevre's ultra-pacifism consciously implied that no libertarian activism was really possible in attempting to dismantle the State. Political activities were barred as immoral; violent revolution ditto. There were only two possibilities for LeFevrian strategic action. One was to convince all State rulers that what they were doing was immoral and that they ought to resign. Effective in one or two cases, this is hardly a strategy for social change, foundering as it does on the Marxian historical insight that no ruling class in history has ever voluntarily and gratuitously surrendered its power. Or to put it starkly: no one (virtually) ever resigns. A second possibility is non-violent resistance: that is, a refusal of the public to pay taxes or to accept State fiat money. Aside from this being an insufficient social strategy in itself (apart from a general breakdown of the State brought about by crisis situations and by radical political opposition), LeFevre himself has always counselled against tax rebellion. LeFevre's quietism is logically grounded on his basic tenet that the repeal of a government inter-

vention is just as immoral as the original act of intervention, based on his pacifist view that the coercive taking back of one's stolen property is just as immoral as the original act of coercive theft. In short, on LeFevre's axiom that defensive violence is just as immoral as aggressive, initiatory violence against person and property. (All this was expressed in the dictum to which LeFevre was "forced" to accede by ex-Lefevrian Roy Childs; that it is immoral for a kidnapped person to break the chains that bind him because those chains are the kidnapper's private property).

We are left with another movement which developed in the late 1950's and which was later to supply the vast majority of the mass base — and even cadre — of the libertarian movement: the Randian movement. The Ayn Rand movement began with the publication of her magnum opus, Atlas Shrugged, in late 1957, and with the establishment of the Nathaniel Branden lecture series in early 1958. The Randian movement was strictly hierarchically structured, with Rand herself as the maximum Leader, handing down a strict line on every conceivable question, ranging from the most abstract to the most particular, concrete matters. Since absolute obedience to Rand was the major qualification for "membership", the top cadre of the movement were those few who had already demonstrated their "loyalty" by becoming 100% Randians as a result of reading The Fountainhead. Hence, they were known in the movement as "the class of '43". This pre-Atlas cadre, nurtured by weekly Saturday seminars at Rand's home, began with the youthful Nathan Blumenthal and his fiancee, later bride, Barbara, and in a few years came to include a group of Nathan's and Barbara's relatives (Nathan's first cousin, Alan Blumenthal,

his sister Elaine Kalberman, her husband Harry Kalberman, Alan Blumenthal's wife Joan Mitchell, Joan Mitchell's first husband Alan Greenspan, Barbara's first cousin Leonard Piekoff. The only non-family top cadre member was Mary Ann Rukovina, who got in by virtue of being Joan Mitchell's college roommate; later Mary Ann Rukovina's future husband Charles Sures, was to join the inner circle). Later, Nathan Blumenthal changed his name to Nathaniel Branden (for two reasons; as part of the trend, begun by Rand herself, to change one's name from Jewish to "tough", "heroic" Anglo-Saxon; and also to include the talismanic acronym BEN-RAND ("son of Rand" in Hebrew)).

In contrast to the Fountainhead, Atlas Shrugged, also a best seller, was able to serve as the basis for the first modern libertarian mass movement, and for two reasons: (1) that Atlas, unlike the Fountainhead, was an explicitly ideological and political book; and (2) that Branden's considerable organizing ability was able to weld this inchoate mass into a genuine movement. The Nathaniel Branden Institute, eventually established in Rand's symbolically heroic Empire State Building, furnished a constant stream of books, pamphlets, and above all, tapes of Branden's charismatic lecture series. In contrast to LeFevre's being mired in his elementary course, other, advanced lecture series and tapes were swiftly added: Branden's courses on Objectivist Psychology and on Sex; Barbara Branden's course on Thinking; Peikoff on the History of Philosophy; Rand on fiction, etc. To organize the movement across the country, NBI established an NBI rep in each city, with the NBI rep as a 100% obedient Randian,

and running the various tape series in his own city. Often, Branden would go out in person to launch the tape series in each outlying city. Binding the movement together, and serving to hand down the line on numerous issues, was Rand and Branden's monthly periodical, The Objectivist.

The Randian cadre reached its pure form in New York City, which was under close watch and control by the top leadership. Frank Meyer's description of the "moulding of the Communist cadre" was as nothing compared to the successful moulding of the Randian cadre; the New Randian Man was far more radical a transformation of personality -- and hence far more frightening to an unbeliever -- than the New Communist or the New Fascist Man. For every aspect of the Randian's personality, values, attitudes, and actions were transformed under the relentless pressure of Rand, Branden and the top cadre.

The remarkable feature of the New Randian Man was that, in contrast to similar ideological and personal cults with which we are now all too familiar (Hare Krishna, EST, the Maharishi, Sun Moon, etc.), the inner ("esoteric") Randian creed was in direct and total contradiction to the external ("exoteric") creed which attracted the believer in the first place. Hence, the moulding process, and the repeated "crisis situations" confronting the hardening cadre, were far more intense than in the Communist Party or in the various religious cults. For the official external creed stressed the virtues of individual independence, judgment, reason, and free choice; whereas the inner creed, in contrast, stressed the highest virtue as unquestioning obedience to the

dictates of Rand on every conceivable subject. Since Randian views were not always known to the believer over a whole range of concretes (e.g. should I prefer Johnny Carson or Dick Cavett? Is the subpoena power legitimate?, etc.) the Randian could not think for himself or express his views; he first had to check with headquarters for the approved line. Laughter and humor were stamped out as expressing "lack of seriousness in one's values". Essentially, the Randian organization ruled by fear and terror, terror at incurring the displeasure of Rand and her cadre. Somehow, through an act of charisma and will, Rand was able to instill in all of her disciples, from Branden on down to the rank-and-file, the view that she was the living embodiment of Reason and Reality, and therefore that excommunication from the cult (which in the Communist movement meant being cut off from the ineluctable course of History) here meant being cut off from reason and reality. Even among her top cadre, <u>every one</u> of that cadre was put on probation by Rand more than once, and had to crawl back into her good graces by repeated and continuing acts of obedience and loyalty.

Since every Randian had to take a position on every question, and one in total accord with Rand's, a whole range of concrete issues, which are not amenable to unanimous agreement, had to be decided on the basis of one's position in the Randian hierarchy. Thus, in one case, Greenspan's secretary Tina Zucker, a certified Randian, felt that she was being underpaid and demanded a raise; Greenspan, on the other hand, felt that she was incompetent and fired her. Now here was in issue that it is <u>impossible</u> to decide by third parties, even when they all agree on basic moral and esthetic principles. Yet, everyone <u>had</u> to take a stand. The

issue was therefore decided on the basis of hierarchy; since Greenspan was a top cadre and Tina was not, Greenspan was automatically considered correct, while Tina was condemned as "irrational" and excommunicated from the Randian movement.

How were Rand and her minions able to impose her will across the board on the entire movement? Apart from the influence of her charisma, one factor was the fact that all Randians entered the movement -- despite the professed Randian devotion to Reason -- on the basis of pure emotion -- love for the novel. In my few months in the Randian movement, I remember Branden commanding everyone to keep rereading Atlas (as early as the spring of 1958 he proclaimed that he had already read the novel something like 35 times), thereby keeping everyone in a continuing hopped-up emotional state, with the individual's reason in effect suspended. Secondly, most Randians were remarkably ignorant of the facts of the world, or of the disciplines of history, philosophy, or the social sciences. The Randian tactic was to keep them ignorant of everything except Randian doctrine. In contrast to the old Catholic Church tactic of having an Index of Prohibited Books which the faithful were not allowed to read, the Randian movement had an Index of Permitted Books, a small number which they were allowed to read. Reading anything else -- without specific and special dispensation to the top cadre members -- was considered as "giving one's sanction to the Enemy". (And as we all know about the members of the libertarian movement, keeping members in ignorance is not an insuperable task). Furthermore, any contact with other, non-Randian libertarians was strictly prohi-

bited, as again giving one's sanction. Any deviationists or transgressors of the Randian line were expelled and excommunicated, and all contact with the excommunicates -- let alone reading of their works -- was strictly forbidden.

In this way, kept in ignorance of the world, of facts, ideas, or people who might deviate from the full Randian line, held in check by adoration and terror of Rand and her anointed hierarchy, the grim, robotic, joyless Randian Man emerged.

Another vital step in keeping totalitarian control of the movement was the development by Branden of Objectivist Psychotherapy. All aspiring Randians were expected to be psychiatrized by Branden or his psychotherapeutic disciples (again, total control could only be exercised in the New York movement). Brandenian psychotherapy consisted in holding that all neuroses, all psychic unhappiness (and who does not suffer such?) were the result of ideological deviations from the total Randian line on all questions. Told continually that Rand, Branden, et al. were psychologically perfect (later revealed as far from the truth), the Randian patients were examined, and examined themselves, for all deviations from the Randian system, the eradication of which and the rational and emotional integration of the full line into one's ideas, attitudes, and values was supposed to guarantee a full psychological cure. "Brainwashing" seems to be not an excessive term for this procedure. In New York at least, this psychotherapeutic brainwashing was reinforced by seeing to it that all of one's waking life (pace the pale reflection of this in Meyer's Moulding of Communists) was spent in listening to lectures by one or other of the top cadre, or in associating with other cadre

members. (The explicit rationale: the Randian cadre are the most rational people in the world; if you are rational -- which of course everyone wanted to be -- you should want to spend all your time with these people, etc.) Branden also set himself up as a kind of marriage-broker for the young Randians, matching men and women on the basis of his psychological knowledge into their personalities, and breaking up existing marriages if one of the partners proved unworthy or insufficiently Randian. Then, if any member should backslide from full Randian obedience in any way (e.g. laughing at Branden's accent), his mate, spouse, or friend was duty-bound to report his deviation to Branden, who would proceed to exorcise this deviation through his "psycho-therapy".

That there were problems and flaws in Randian strategy, from the point of view of the victory of liberty, goes without saying. In the first place, since the entire ideology was the arbitrary effusion of one woman, any of her deviations from liberty (and they were many) could never get corrected. Indeed, since one could not have personal or written contact with non-believers, and since therefore reality could not break through, no feed-back from reality was possible. Secondly, the totalitarian suppression of independent thought and judgment is not the sort of world an individualist and libertarian wishes to achieve. Thirdly, to call the Randian movement "sectarian" is a masterpiece of under-statement. It was impossible for Randians to organize front groups, talk to other like-minded libertarians, or form coalitions with infidels. Hence, while the Randian movement was large, it

had minimal impact on the real world or on non-Randian libertarians. And fourthly, the sustained ignorance of the movement meant that anyone who knew any facts or laws about specific subjects on which Rand had a dogmatic line (virtually everything) could not remain a Randian. An economist could not remain a Randian if he held to subjective value theory ("all values are objective"). An historian could scarcely remain a Randian at all, given Rand's ignorance of history ("Big Business is America's Most Persecuted Minority"; the Constitution was a libertarian document, etc.). And so on. Knowledgeable people therefore had to break with the movement. Finally, and fifthly, the Randian movement crippled the productivity of all of its members. For before publishing or writing anything, Rand would censor every word ("This word is insane"; "that is a hooligan concept"; etc.). It is no coincidence that not a single book has emerged from any Randian cultists, including the top cadre; no one could create or write under such intolerably censorious conditions. Thus, Piekoff's long promised Nazi Parallels has never appeared; all of Branden's books only appeared after his expulsion from the Randian movement; Barbara's published work was confined to the adulatory pap of Who is Ayn Rand?; Edith Efron's books only appeared after her expulsion from the movement, etc.

A final effect of Rand's mentality may be noted in Rand herself. Cutting herself off from even a hint of difference let alone opposition, she has increasingly isolated herself from everyone, including the facts of reality. She no longer sees, except for once or twice a year, even what remains of her own loyal cadre. Cut off from reality or communication, her own views

have become increasingly contradictory, and eccentric, and her own productivity has dwindled to zero.

Even in its heyday (1958-68), then, the Randian movement, while large and tightly controlled, was isolated, sectarian, and suffered from continuing defection by knowledgeable and/or independent-minded people. The Randian movement, of course, came to an end with the Rand-Branden split of 1968, in which her proclaimed "intellectual heir" and the St.Paul of the movement, Branden, together with Barbara, were expelled and excommunicated. With the organizing leader purged, NBI disappeared, and the organized Randian movement was no more. It was characteristic that in New York, Washington and other tightly controlled cadres, everyone was ordered to sign a loyalty oath swearing fealty to Rand and swearing never to contact or read another line written by the arch-heretic Branden. Anyone who failed to sign, or who even asked what the facts in dispute might be so they could form a judgment, were summarily excommunicated as disloyal and "irrational". The family was split, in a literal sense, as Branden's sister and cousin, and Barbara's cousin, determined never to see or speak to the Brandens again.

With the disappearance of the organized Randian movement in 1968, the Randian masses and cadre were set free, for the first time in a decade, to think for themselves. Many of them dropped out in disgust; others moved to become the mass base for the current libertarian movement. As Jerry Tuccille wrote, "It Usually Begins With Ayn Rand", that is, the great bulk of current libertarians began as Randians and emotional devotees of Atlas Shrugged.

While many ex-Randians have thrown off their former shackles, and have become dedicated and knowledgeable libertarians, either within the Libertarian Party or outside of it, the Randian legacy has left us with many problems permeating the current movement.

In the first place, there is the problem of invincible ignorance. Armed with the knowledge that no one should initiate force against another, all too many libertarians are content to remain with this axiom, and to refuse to learn the concrete facts and insights about the real world, about contemporary history or about the social sciences. The resulting ignorance about political issues, economics, foreign affairs, or strategic theory, is alarming and endemic. Much of this ignorance is willful and "invincible", stemming as it does from the Randian-born belief that every individual is armed with a priori truth which he can spin out of his own head, and therefore does not need to learn the facts and laws of reality. Many ex-Randians hold that, being Randian, they are capable of spinning out an entire philosophy by themselves, and that learning the data of reality is therefore unnecessary and irrelevant. Hence, ex-Randians tend not to see the need for apprenticeship, for experience, for graded hierarchy within the movement; since every one possesses the faculty of reason, isn't every libertarian as good as everyone else?

Secondly, there is the lingering legacy of various anti-libertarian positions held by Rand: e.g., a pro-war foreign policy, a devotion to the American government <u>per se</u>, an attachment to

militarism, an attachment to the State of Israel.

Thirdly, there is a lingering sectarianism and a trumpeting of one's own "moral purity" and everyone else's moral "evil". Thus, in the New York, Massachusetts and Maryland Libertarian Parties there has been, as a substitute for interest and concern with real world political issues, an intense concern with everyone else's moral purity or impurity on petty and minor tactical issues. As in the case of all sectarians, there is a tendency to elevate every petty tactic -- which should be treated flexibly and instrumentally -- as a matter of high moral principle. Except that the moralizing is greatly aggravated by the common Randian legacy. There is a tendency to ignore the larger issues amidst a focus on petty concerns, and a failure to recognize the need for strategic thinking.

And, finally, there is an understandable but unfortunate tendency of some ex-Randians to go totally in the other direction, to react against the alleged excessive "rationality" and moralizing of the Randian movement, and therefore to exalt unreason and whim, and to abandon moral principle altogether. And, in similar understandable reaction against the totalitarian Rand cult, to reject leadership and hierarchy altogether.

There is another strategic legacy of the Randian movement that needs attention. For, oddly enough, even though the Randians were ultra-sectarian vis-a-vis other libertarians or quasi-libertarians, the Randian recipe for social change was to coalesce with people in positions of power. Thus, while sternly denouncing the Libertarian Party or other libertarian or semi-libertarian groups, the Randians, from the beginning, have been willing

heartily to endorse conservative politicians who seemed to be slightly more in favor of the free market. Hence, Rand's endorsement of Goldwater, Nixon, and Ford; and hence, the willingness of still-orthodox Randian Alan Greenspan to cozy up to power, and to act as a willing servitor of Power in the form of Presidents Nixon and Ford. (A role in which the supposedly "pure" Greenspan was considerably less gutsy, independent, and free-marketish than non-Randian William Simon!).

In short, we conclude from this that the Randian strategy for social change was two-fold: (a) total control over the Randian movement; and (b) a willingness to embrace conservative Presidents, whom the Randians hope to influence quietly from the top. Or, to put it another way: extreme sectarianism within the libertarian movement, combined with extreme opportunism, and willingness to coalesce with the State, in the "real world". This contradiction of a combination of sectarianism and opportunism — avoiding the correct, centrist "Leninist" line in both cases — can only be resolved, I fear, in one way: that the Randian movement was essentially a drive for personal Power by Rand. Power within the movement is secured by totalitarian control of members; power outside by cozying up to a slightly conservative President, that is, by cozying up to the State. Power, not liberty, was the driving force of Randianism.

This brings us to the "Fabian" strategy adopted by Rand and other opportunist libertarians — the idea of gradually influencing the State from the top, from within the corridors of Power. Some of this mistaken strategy comes from a misunderstanding of the

"success" of the Fabian Society's tactic of quiet infiltration of political parties and government bureaus. The Fabian strategy of quiet influence from the top was only successful in the sense that it gave an extra push to the direction in which the State was tending anyway. If one wishes to give the State an extra push toward its natural tendency, statism, then the proper strategy is to give that push by quiet infiltration and pressure on the government and on the various political parties. But the goal of libertarianism, as is that of any truly radical social movement (which Fabianism was not) is not to help along the State or coalesce with it, but to whittle it away or to smash it. Lenin, Hitler, Mao, Sam Adams, etc. could not adopt the Fabian strategy for success because their radical goal was to smash the State (or at least the existing State) rather than to advance its power. In the days of the New Left, Staughton Lynd raised a powerful voice against those right-wing, opportunist Social Democrats who wanted a coalition with the Democratic Party and the Johnson Administration. That route, declared Lynd, was coalition with the Marines, whereas the goal of radical New Left should be a coalition against the Marines. In short, the only successful strategy of a libertarian movement must be, not a coalition with the State, not quiet Greenspanian influence with the President in the Oval Office, but a coalition from below, in opposition to the State, a mass pressure from below to roll back and dismantle State power. Hence, a Fabian strategy would be fatal for the libertarian movement.

In this connection, Joseph Stromberg writes:

> ... the Fabian model fascinates the American Right, which grossly overestimates Fabian success. It is important for this reason to stress how much Fabianism was part of a universal trend toward social imperialism ... whose essence was eager abandonment of classical liberalism. Hence Fabians were swimming with the current which they in turn furthered. Anyone who equates victory with greater statism can claim success with each extension of state activity, no matter what its source ... Clearly, the celebrated Fabian methods of boring from within work better in a statist direction ...
>
> Libertarianism involves a set of social changes of a revolutionary character. It follows that to work within the system on principle and confine our goals to those manageable under the piecemeal reform model would amount to near abandonment of the "pure" vision. Devotion to the "politics of the possible" would quickly undermine our goal of a free, universal society ...
>
> Libertarianism simply is not operating within a favorable, secular "main drift" in our direction. Libertarians have to create their own trend ... In addition, going through channels -- electoral or bureaucratic -- only works well for the other side. It is their turf. 103*

103* Joseph R. Stromberg, "Fabianism and Social Change: The Perpetuity of Gradualism" (Unpublished MS., 1976), pp. 8-9.

To return to our analytical history of the modern libertarian movement. After the breakup of the Volker Fund in 1962, it was back to isolated local "discussion circles" for libertarianism. In terms of "cadre buildup" it was back to the painful addition of one or two new people per year to local discussion groups. Having broken with National Review and conservatism by 1960 on the basis of their pro-war and pro-militarist policies, I saw in despair the breakup of the libertarian cadre and the drift of many young libertarians into the YAF and Goldwater camps. It was a time when even the alledgedly anti-political Leonard Read delivered a stump speech for Goldwater at the 1964 meeting of the Mont Pelerin Society, and as individualist a

thinker as Rose Wilder Lane was telling friends that Goldwater was the last best hope of America. I did my best to fight against Goldwaterism in whatever minuscule ways were available. (It was characteristic of the paucity of libertarian organs of that period that all I could do was to publish attacks on Goldwaterism in the obscure Innovator, as well as a longer article, "The Transformation of the American Right", in an obscure pro-peace Catholic quarterly Continuum, and to make personal contact with such anti-Cold War revisionists as Harry Elmer Barnes).

When the New Left began to emerge around 1965, it appeared far more libertarian on crucial issues than the conservatives, for the following reasons: (1) its increasingly thoroughgoing opposition to the Vietnam War, U.S. imperialism, and the draft — the major political issues of that period, in contrast to conservative support for these policies. And (2) its forswearing of the old-fashioned statism and Social Democracy of the Old Left led the New Left to semi-anarchistic positions, to what seemed to be thoroughgoing opposition to the existing Welfare-Warfare post-New Deal corporate state, and to the State-ridden bureaucratic university system. Hence, Leonard Liggio and myself founded Left and Right in early 1965 for two major reasons: to try to break the youthful and scattered libertarian movement away from its attachment to conservatism; and to try to get it to ally itself with the New Left on the crucial issues of the war and the draft.

And so began the "pro-New Left" line in the libertarian movement. Left and Right and the personal activities of Leonard

Liggio (Free University of New York, May 2nd Movement, Viet-Report, The Guardian, Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation) made New Left scholars aware of the libertarian position and movement. There was considerable growth in the next few years in libertarian groupings, in New York and elsewhere, particularly among college youth, many of whom were not only converted from YAF conservatism to anarchism but also adopted the pro-New Left orientation. In 1968, Karl Hess shifted from Goldwaterism to Randianism and then on to anarcho-capitalism, lending his considerable charismatic talents to attracting college youth.

But something was happening, without anyone fully realizing it, to libertarian youth as well as to college youth in general in the late 1960's. It was a time of revolutionary change for this sector of youth, and along with political radicalization came a tidal wave of irrationality, accompanied by drugs and the "counter-culture". The first sign that I had that a certain element of emotional stability was lacking in the new youthful libertarian adherents was a message sent from the University of Kansas libertarian group, which had shifted from YAF to SDS, proclaiming me as "God". What happened increasingly, with this group and with others, including New York and Washington, was that an alliance with the New Left had propelled a large number of these youthful libertarians into becoming leftists in fact, ranging from Maoists to left-wing anarchists. Since I was partially though inadvertently responsible for this unfortunate development, I must plead mea culpa here; as indicated above, I think my error was two-fold: (a) gravely overestimating the emotional stability, and the knowledge of economics, of these fledgling libertarians;

and, as a corollary, (b) gravely underestimating the significance of the fact that these cadre were weak and isolated, that there was no libertarian movement to speak of, and therefore that hurling these youngsters into an alliance with a far more numerous and powerful group was bound to lead to a high incidence of defection. In New York and Washington, the defection was led, partially sub-rosa, by Karl Hess who, after a few short months as an anarcho-capitalist, hurtled into real leftism of the left-wing-anarchist-Maoist-syndicalist variety.

Specifically, the defection to the Left took two major forms, culminating in the wild New Left winter of 1969-70, in the form of ideological defection to leftism, and/or in self-destructive, ultra-adventurist street-fighting tactics against the State.

After Left and Right folded from the strain of heavy deficits, Joe Peden and I founded the Libertarian Forum in early 1969 as a more frequent way of providing news and political analysis, and a sense of direction, to the growing libertarian movement. In early 1969, also, Peden helped found a series of Libertarian Dinners in New York City, which, we were to find, were surveilled and infiltrated by the police (presumably as part of the widespread illegal surveillance and crackdown on the New Left). The dinners were founded because the groups in New York were growing beyond a "living room" number, and drew in far more people than we had hoped, most of whom had been unknown to us. Emboldened by the success of the dinners, the Lib. Forum issued a general call for the first modern Libertarian Conference in New York City in October, a call which ingathered about three times the expected attendance.

This Hotel Diplomat conference was a wild and wooly fiasco, which first alerted me to the extent to which leftism (both as adventurism and as leftist ideology) had penetrated our small movement. The attendees ranged from ex-Radians worried about the price of silver to anarcho-loonies from Michigan sporting black (the color of anarchism) armbands. Karl Hess's call for a march on Fort Dix the next day split the conference, and heavy and obvious police surveillance did the rest. It was the fiasco of the Hotel Diplomat conference that led me to issue a series of denunciations of the New Left in general, and of the anarcho-leftists in the movement in particular, denunciations which led to Hess's exit from the Washington editorship of the Libertarian Forum. My denunciations of the New Left were also propelled by the rapid change in the nature of the New Left movement by 1969-70; the old, promising, anarchistic strain had disappeared, to be replaced by a lunatic variant of Maoism combined with an orgy of mindless violence. The hiving off of libertarians from the Left was made easier by the fact that the New Left disappeared in 1970, propelled by disintegration of SDS, the violence at Kent State and the end of the draft. In New York, the watchword was retrenchment and "back to the living room".

But, in the meanwhile, something was happening of far more long-range significance: the birth of the modern libertarian mass-movement. It began as a split within YAF during 1969, led by ex-Randians and some anarchists, particularly over the crucial issues of the war and the draft. The Lib. Forum and Hess

played a role in generating a split within YAF at its August 1969 convention, at which libertarian chapters were expelled wholesale. A mass movement emerged from the split in two forms: a California Libertarian Alliance, and the formation of the Society for Individual Liberty in the East, arising from a merger of ex-Randian Libertarian Caucus YAFers and ex-Randian Jarret Wollstein's Rational Individualist magazine.

After the backing and filling of 1969-70, then, we managed to hive off the leftists within the movement, and to acquire at least the beginnings of a genuinely libertarian movement, a self-conscious cadre, small and ineffective as it undoubtedly was. (In these two years, LeFevre, who had moved to Los Angeles, helped organize his own "opening to the left" which was characteristically Southern Californian: that is, non-ideological, countercultural, and vaguely "humanist", i.e. the "Festival of Life" conferences in 1969 and 1970, and the abortive LeFevrian magazine Rap.). We were, if barely, off the ground.

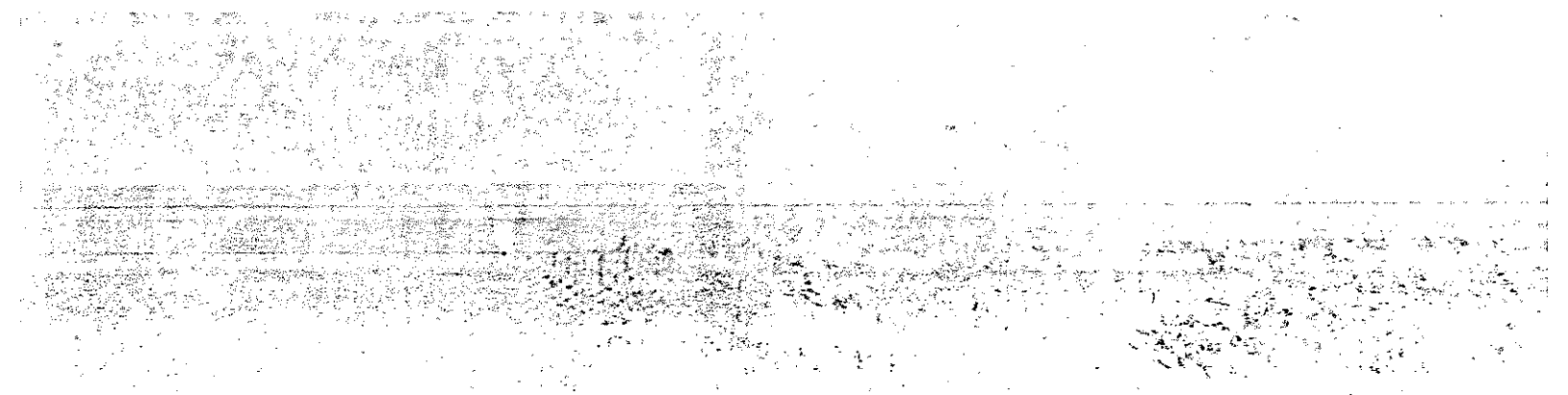
The next phase of advance, the "take-off" stage of the movement, came in early 1971 as a direct result of the publicity given by the New York Times in the fall of 1970 to the only political activity at the previously radical hotbed of Columbia University: a libertarian "Freedom Conspiracy" group in favor of Buckley for Senate. The Times, intrigued by this split on the right, and partly by the new libertarian ideology expressed, gave a great deal of publicity to the group in early 1971, which touched off a round of mass-media interest in libertarianism. It was out of that publicity that I obtained the contract

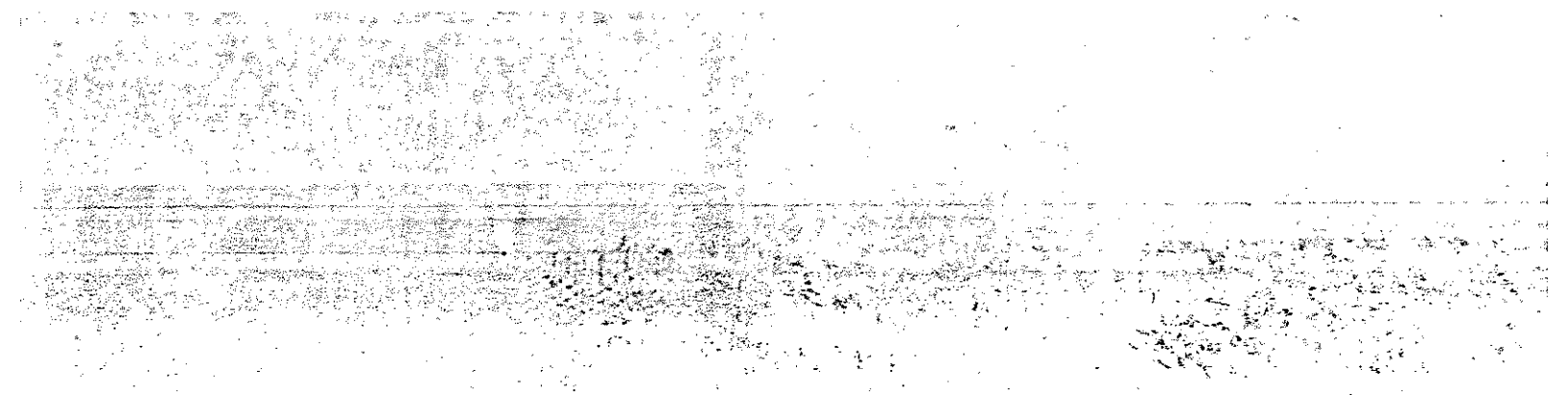
for For A New Liberty. The flurry of mass-media attention in a sense created the movement in New York and across the country, or, rather, generated its take-off stage and greatly increased its number and influence. Then, in swift succession, came the formation of the Libertarian Party, and its burgeoning success in forming a genuine mass movement of libertarians. The remainder of the history to the present is well-known and need not be detailed here.

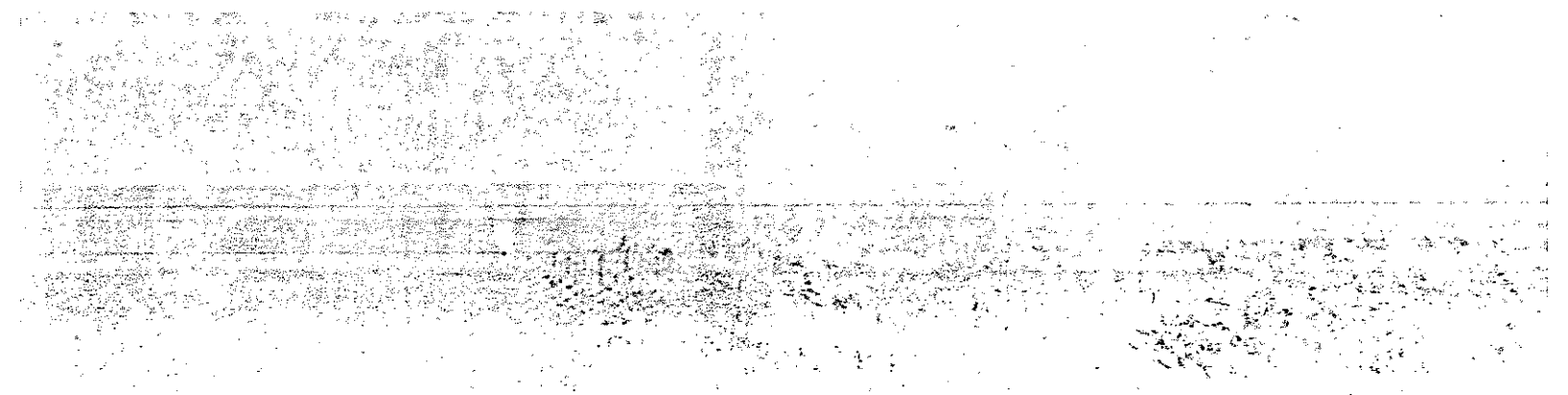
Before ending a discussion of the history of the modern libertarian movement, a word should be said about the real and potential financing for the movement. A striking fact about the financial support for all non-Establishment ideological movements of our time, ranging from libertarian to ultra-conservative to Bircher, is that there is a high correlation between businessmen supporters of such movements, and those who own their own companies or whose corporations are largely family-owned — particularly when these corporations are outside the Wall Street public corporation financial nexus. Note, for example, the prominence in such support of such men as: J. Howard Pew, Roger Milliken, the Koch family, Robert Love, Henry Salvatori, the Hunt family, Allen Bradley, Robert Welch, William Grede, Mrs. Moorman, John Olin, etc. In contrast, there is little support for such ideologies from such Wall Street corporate centers as General Motors, IBM, Standard Oil, etc.

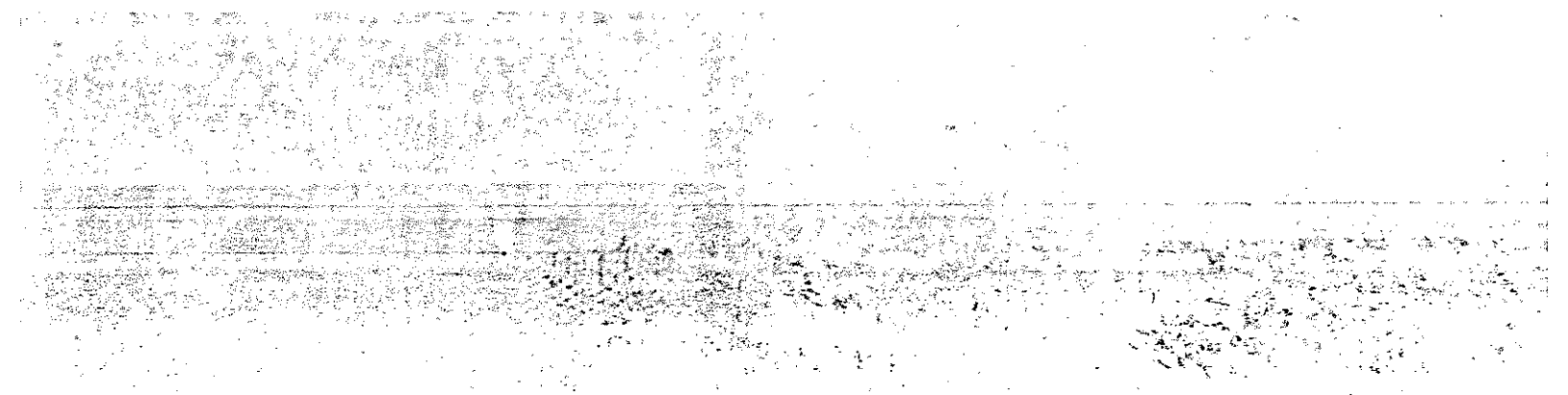
24. The Present State of the Movement

We now have a libertarian movement which is large, organized in every state in the Union, and possessed of a self-conscious









tarian penetration and conversion. First, in stark contrast to conservatism, the great bulk of intellectuals and opinion-moulders are liberals, as is the youth. Second, liberalism is and has been intellectually bankrupt for a long time. The objective crises of statism in our time have now penetrated to most liberals, who recognize their bankruptcy and are really waiting for an alternative paradigm. Since they recognize the numerous failures of government per se, foreign and domestic, they are ripe for an attractive alternative paradigm, and libertarians can supply that alternative. We can win many liberals on peace and civil liberties, and by showing them that a free-market, property right position is the only consistent argument for the former positions. And, moreover, to the extent that any conservatives hold the free-market and private property rights dearer than the anti-Communist Crusade, we can attract them as well.

With regard to our relations to the Left — in contrast to straight liberals -- certain caveats are in order. In the days of the "pro-New Left" line, I advanced the concept of the libertarian movement as a "revolutionary" movement. We were living in a genuinely revolutionary period, and, among our New Left allies and among youth in general, the term "revolution" -- in ordinary times counter-productive — had positive effects. Furthermore, it was and still is always possible to insist, properly, that "revolution" does not necessarily mean violence, as most people believe, but is a whole process of systemic radical social change. After all, such common concepts as "the Industrial Revolution" or the "sexual revolution" do not imply or connote violence.

However, in our current quieter epoch, I believe that the term "revolution" is now counter-productive, even among rational leftists. A strong connotation of violence still attaches to the term, and the fate of the New Left has reinforced the historical insight that no violent revolution has ever succeeded against a democratically-elected government. For the foreseeable future, then, even the hint of a call for violent revolution in the United States is absurd as well as counter-productive. Therefore, I think this term should be avoided, as I have been doing since the end of the New Left era.

Interestingly enough, the same process has occurred with the remnants of the New Left that now remain. Most of them have not only abandoned the term "revolution", but have even abandoned their anti-corporate state stance, and are now happily ensconced in the left-wing of the Democratic Party. In short, what has remained of the New Left has rejoined the Old Left. Thus, such ex-New Leftists as Weinstein and Radosh are now members of Michael Harrington's left-Democrat-oriented Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, while the new Weinstein-Sklar edited weekly magazine In These Times, backed by a roster of New Left scholars, reads like nothing so much as the Communist Party organ the Daily World (the Communist Party being the quintessence of the left-Democratic Party-oriented Old Left). In short, just as our olden allies the conservatives have almost totally abandoned whatever libertarian orientation they once possessed, the same is now true of the remnants of the New Left. All this reinforces

the conclusion that our natural allies, for the current historical period, are the (moderate) liberals, who, in any case dominate the media and opinion-moulding groups, rather than the conservatives or the (extreme) Left.

With the term "anarchism", a question which Ed Crane raises, the situation is slightly different. For while like "revolution", the word no longer possesses the charm for youth and for potential allies that it did in the late 1960's, the word is still respectable and attractive for intellectuals in academia. Moreover, words like "anarcho-capitalism" and "free-market anarchism" are also attractive to many within the libertarian movement. There is the further problem that no one has yet come up with a good euphemism for such words, and also that anarchists can surely not abandon their attempts within the libertarian movement to try to convert cadre to what we believe is the correct, logical, and "purer" position.

I think that a good solution to the problem is as follows: since the word is indeed counter-productive to the mass public or to opinion-moulding groups outside of either academia or of the libertarian movement itself, the word "anarchism" should not be used in mass or middle-level educational or propaganda efforts. Here terms such as "purely free market", "consistent voluntarism", "complete privatization", etc. should rather be used, in addition, of course, to the superb word "libertarian" -- the one word that we have been able to "capture" from other ideological groups (in contrast to such words as "liberal", which went the other way). In short, terms containing the word "anarchism" should be confined

to academic or scholarly circles, or strictly within the libertarian movement itself. As to the Libertarian Party, it too should and has eschewed the word "anarchism", and should continue its tacit post-1973 alliance in which anarchists and laissez-faire libertarians avoid calling for anarchism or abolishing the State, while also avoiding any terms or phrases which imply any positive endorsement of government. Moreover, the applications of our common libertarian position to concrete political issues can be and have been consistent with both the anarchist and limited-government laissez-faire versions of libertarisnism. 105*

105* Cf. Crane, "Analysis", pp. 5-6.

On the allied question that Crane raises, of the LP plank for eventual abolition of taxation, it seems to me that here is a matter of content rather than wording, so that the plank cannot be removed. It has already been defused to some extent, by the insertion into the 1976 platform of such a "transition" plank as repeal of the income tax. Furthermore, if a potential voter or supporter agrees with most or all of our other planks and then balks at the idea of tax-abolition, I don't see why we can't successfully say to him: "Look, you have voted for or supported the Republican or Democratic parties in the past without demanding -- to say the least -- total agreement with every plank in their platform. Why have a double standard when considering us? We certainly do not spurn you just because you disagree with one or two planks in our platform. Finally, much as we would like to see

taxation abolished right away, the prospects for doing so are remote; why not support us in the meantime, until the long distant day when tax abolition may become a lively and immediate political issue?" I don't see why this sort of appeal should not be effective.

Another term that should probably be avoided is "hierarchy", to apply to libertarian forms of organization. Many people fail to understand how libertarians can agree voluntarily to form themselves under a hierarchy, and see some sort of contradiction there. Terms like "division of labor" or "leadership" will less openly grate on the egalitarian sensibilities of our age. 106*

106* Cf. Crane, "Analysis", p. 9.

Let us now turn to the hopeful and extremely significant events of 1976-77 and their implications for the libertarian movement.

First, the Libertarian Party, The Party, is our mass organization, amassing 173,000 votes in the 1976 election, headed in that campaign by a splendid National Office, and -- since the conventions of 1973 and 1975 -- possessing a platform that is at the same time pure, consistent, radical, and yet pointedly directed to the major political issues of our time. In short, its policies have been "centrist" in the best sense of the term used above.

Secondly, the LP has discovered that middle-class adults, indeed, American adults as a whole, will most easily join an ideological organization when it takes the form of a political party. The New Left, even at the height of its strength on campus,

could find no organizational form with which to mobilize post-graduates or adults, and this was no small reason for its swift collapse.

Thirdly, the LP, and its Presidential campaign, was a method by which the libertarian movement could and did move organizationally from local discussion clubs and affinity groups to a coherent, nation-wide organization. No other form could have accomplished this vital task.

Fourthly, by imposing a certain degree of rationality and contact with the real world on its members, the LP has managed to hive off from its ranks, and therefore to send into well-deserved limbo, a bevy of irrational sectarians who are incapable of strategic planning or of imposing self-discipline on themselves. Left-sectarianism is no longer a threat in the LP for the foreseeable future.

Certain dangers remain, however, in the present situation of the LP, and of the movement as a whole. One is a vast amount of ignorance in its ranks on real world political issues, on the facts of history, on its own libertarian ideology, and on the proper strategic perspective for the movement. Hopefully, these problems will soon be remedied with the coming expansion of Libertarian Review into a large, monthly, general-purpose libertarian magazine, to instruct libertarians on all these issues and to give direction to the movement. I would like, however, to see a more formal structure of internal education on libertarian theory and particularly on concrete analysis of political issues within the Libertarian Party. As of now, important political issues are only discussed every two years in the Platform Committee

and on the floor of the national convention; we need more continuing structures at the grass roots to educate LP members in the vital political questions of our time and on the libertarian approaches to them. How this can be done concretely, however, I do not know at this point.

A second danger to the LP is the recent growth of right-wing opportunism; the lure of votes or political office presenting a temptation to conceal or abandon the libertarian doctrine itself. Hopefully, the existence of LR will help to prevent this also, especially since the political realities are such that right-wing opportunism will have to mean Reaganite conservatism, which needs to be combatted for the reasons outlined above.

A third, longer-range problem is the possibility or probability that, as the LP grows and gets permanent ballot status, non-or anti-libertarian groups may try to join it and take it over. In the long run, preventing this development would seem to require the formation of a disciplined, centralized membership organization, the "Libertarian Society", which would operate in a coherent way, like all successful organizations for radical social change studied in this paper. Specifically, the LS could act as a disciplined caucus to run the LP and insure against a takeover by non-libertarian forces. There seems to be no need for immediate action on this point, but, given the thinness of national LP control over the state parties, there seems to be a more urgent need to strengthen that overall control -- especially since the national LP is in far better hands than many of the

various state and local parties.

Another urgent need is to develop campus libertarian organizations. Since the days of 1969, libertarianism has remained a young middle-class (20's and early 30's) movement, but it has lost much of its former impetus among undergraduates. SIL, for example, has sunk into virtual oblivion. The work of Tom Palmer in creating Young Libertarian Alliances during the 1976 campaign, however, provides a firm foundation for future development, which will hopefully be continued by Cato Associates on campus.

On the scholarly front, there has been an enormous increase in libertarian scholarship, among graduate students and young professors -- a far more stable and productive group, man for man, than are undergraduates. Austrian economics has increased remarkably since 1974, aided greatly by the IHS Austrian program. An able group of young neo-Randians has developed in philosophy, and now more young libertarians are entering the fields of history and political science. The Libertarian Scholars Conference has aided greatly in developing a cadre of young libertarian scholars in the various fields, and in generating communication between them, as well as charting the new inter-disciplinary discipline of libertarianism. The Journal of Libertarian Studies and the Center for Libertarian Studies are in the process of advancing the original, smaller-scale work of the LSC.

What is still needed in the scholarly area is one or more graduate schools, or graduate departments, which will provide a home for our leading scholars, and which will enable them to train, as PhDs, the libertarian scholars of the future. Until

this goal is achieved, we will not be able to succeed in attaining influential posts within academia, and hence to turn around the existing academic Establishments.

In the vital, "middle level" area of beaming ideas to a wider market, and influencing ideas in our culture, the new Cato Institute is destined to play a vital role. Inquiry, a bi-weekly magazine using non-libertarians as well as libertarians to apply libertarian analyses to current issues and to influence and penetrate liberal intellectuals and opinion-moulders, will be an excellent example of "centrist" out-reach, of beaming consistent libertarian analyses of vital issues in a manner that does not immediately alienate the non-libertarian reader. The same will be true of the movies, radio and TV programs, and other mass-market programs of Cato.

Thus, because of the great events of 1976-77, we now have a libertarian movement that is well and broadly structured and organized; we have our open explicit centers and our consistent but implicit outreach groups to liberal opinion-moulders; we have a considerable number of scholars, we have writers and activists, we have a mass movement; we have explicit journals and outreach journals. The major problem for the movement as a whole, as I see the field now, is that we have a very thin veneer of talent at the "top". In the LP, for example, we have a small handful of excellent organizers and leaders, and a rank-and-file that has many able and active people, but we have no second-rank organizers or apprentice leaders ready to add to the top leadership or to fill their shoes. In short, instead of a graded hierarchy of

ability we have a few excellent leaders at the top, a rank-and-file, and virtually no one in between. For the movement as a whole, a similar problem is apparent. Sometimes I think that we are doing it all with mirrors, that a half-dozen or so very able people are doing the job of thirty or forty. There is desperate need for the development and training of new able people, preferably in the area of organizers and administrators, where the scarcity is the greatest. How this can be done I do not know, but it is something for all of us to ponder. Joe Peden always used to say, of the libertarian movement, that "we are running the largest out-patient clinic in America". With the great increase in the quantity and quality of the movement in the last few years, this insight has happily become less and less accurate; but we will only succeed when that phrase shall have become as obsolete as the dodo bird.

All in all, and considering both the advances and the problems, I conclude that the prospects for liberty, and for the success of the libertarian movement, are excellent. None of us could have predicted, twenty, ten, or even five, years ago, the rapidity with which the movement has advanced and developed, both in quantity and in quality. The objective conditions for success, as I have indicated above, are mainly already here, and will continue to exist and deepen; what we need are the subjective conditions -- a strong and viable movement -- and this we are now beginning to achieve. Liberty will win!