



H. Armstrong Roberts

More Waltzing To Antique Collectivist Clichés

THE SAME OLD SONG

Gary Allen is author of *None Dare Call It Conspiracy*; *The Rockefeller File*; *Kissinger*; *Jimmy Carter/Jimmy Carter*; *Tax Target: Washington*; and, *Ted Kennedy: In Over His Head*. **Sam Wells** assisted Mr. Allen with this article.

■ IN PART ONE of this review of "Liberal" clichés we emphasized that in public affairs sincerity and good intentions are not by themselves enough. Even noble goals do not justify the counterproductive means of governmental interventionism. We also explained that, contrary to "Liberal" notions, freeing the American economy would *not* produce chaos,

disorder, or economic warfare among conflicting interests; far from being chaotic or disharmonious, a free economy would give us an intricate and spontaneous harmonizing of efficiencies based upon myriad automatic adjustments in our price system.

We explained carefully how central planning is not only extremely inefficient and counterproductive, but se-

riously encroaches on individual freedom. We showed the internal contradictions in the claims of "democratic socialism," and discussed the nature of "economic power" as compared to "political power." We explained that, far from being a threat to society, what "Liberals" call "economic power" is really just the ability to satisfy human wants and needs by producing goods and services for which other people are willing to trade in a free market. No firm operating in a free-market economy would have the power to compel anyone to buy its goods; customers, if dissatisfied for any reason with one company or its products, would have the ever-present option of buying similar products or substitutes from competing firms.

We also made clear, by means of hypothetical dialogue, why a free-market economy — in the absence of anti-trust laws or other governmental policing — would *prevent* the existence of exploitative monopolies and "price gouging." The only way in which a coercive monopoly can be maintained is by some form of government intervention; in fact, the most monopolistic enterprises are those (like the Postal Service) which are owned and operated by the government itself.

We further discussed the myth of "destructive competition," explaining that *economic* competition in a free marketplace is constructive. Moved by profit incentives, people in a free market compete in the sense that they try to outdo one another in satisfying the wants of others by producing the best products at the lowest prices possible. It is only in the *political* arena where competition among various lobbies and pressure groups is destructive. In politics, one group gains only by taking power or wealth from others.

Finally, we rebutted the wide-

spread belief that the Less Developed Countries are poor because the more affluent nations of the West are rich. This warmed-over Leninism, called "neocolonialism" or "economic imperialism" is merely an extension of the fallacy that when someone profits in the marketplace it is only because someone else loses. The idea that *for every winner there must be a loser* is true in sports, gambling, politics, and war. It is not true in free-market economics. In every transaction freely entered into, in which force and fraud are absent, *both* parties get what they want.

With all of this freshly in mind, let us now turn to other "Liberal" myths which cloud the minds of millions still deluded by collectivism.

National Debt

For decades, whenever concern has been expressed about our mounting National Debt, Keynesians and other "Liberals" have glibly responded: "The size of the National Debt doesn't matter because we owe it to ourselves!" Never mind that the U.S. Treasury is suffering annual deficits in the neighborhood of \$200 billion, and the National Debt is more than \$1.5 trillion.

The notion that we owe the National Debt to ourselves is an example of the kind of error which results from collective thinking. The fallacy in the statement, "We owe it to ourselves," is that the subject pronoun "we" does not refer to the same people as the reflexive pronoun "ourselves."

Federal Debt is created when the U.S. Treasury borrows by selling government securities (bonds, bills, and notes) to those willing to purchase them. As an inducement to get people to lend the government what it needs, the government offers high interest rates — whatever it takes — to soak

One widespread "Liberal" myth holds that our \$1.5 billion National Debt should not be of concern because "we owe it to ourselves." The truth is that U.S. taxpayers are obligated to financial institutions, foreign banks, and the Fed. Interest will run \$130.4 billion this year, and by 1988 will have gouged a trillion dollars.

up the people's savings. This consumes huge amounts of wealth which would otherwise have been used for investment in productive tools, machines, factories, and job opportunities. Instead, that money is taken to pay for unproductive government programs and goes down the federal rathole, reducing productivity and real wages.

Interest on the National Debt is now the third-largest item in the federal Budget. One out of every six dollars spent by Washington goes to service that Debt. And interest on it is the fastest-growing item on the federal ledgers. According to David Stockman's estimates, these annual interest payments will have grown from \$111.1 billion in 1984 to \$130.4 billion this year, \$142.6 billion in 1986, \$152.9 billion in 1987, and more than \$160 billion for 1988!

But Stockman's guesstimations are extremely conservative since they are based on the Administration's assumption that ninety-day Treasury Bill rates will decline to 5.9 percent by 1988. If you are not Pollyanna, and recognize that T-Bill rates will be at least eight or nine percent, you see the *interest* alone on the National Debt will consume more than \$200 billion in 1988. This will mean that, between 1984 and 1988, at least *one trillion dollars* will be siphoned out of

the productive sector to support this profligacy.

If you own a Treasury Bill or Bond, you own a small portion of the National Debt. But the main holders are major institutions, including money-market mutual funds, big banks, foreign central banks, and the Federal Reserve System. The size of the National Debt is important because it measures the amount that the taxpayers and property owners owe in taxes, *not* to themselves but to foreigners and these big institutional holders of the public Debt incurred by Big Government.

Wage-Price Controls

During times of rapidly rising prices, "Liberals" invariably demand wage and price controls to curb inflation. They explain that inflation (by which they mean *rising prices*) is caused by greedy businessmen and workers "bidding up" the prices charged to greedy consumers. Whenever labor unions demand higher wages, they note, management raises prices. But if businessmen raise prices to the consumers in order to get the money to pay higher wages to their employees, where do the consumers get the money to pay higher prices? It is at this point that the "Liberal" wage-price mythology breaks down.

Consumers cannot pay universally higher prices *unless* more money has been made available to do so. We are talking about the money supply. Businessmen do not increase the money supply, nor do labor unions nor wage earners. Only the federal government has the power to do this. It does so through the government-chartered Federal Reserve System and politically privileged fractional-reserve commercial banking. The power to increase the quantity of fiat money is not one that originated in a free market. It comes only from government intervention and political privilege. What caused prices to rise universally was government expansion of the money supply to fund huge deficits, causing more dollars to chase a fixed amount of goods, forcing up prices and wages.

As usual, "Liberals" calling for wage and price controls are demanding more government intervention as a remedy for the evil effects of previous political intrusions into the economy.

If the wage-price spiral is a false explanation for inflation, then wage-price controls are a false solution to the problem. Which is why they have failed whenever tried throughout history. The notion that there is some "fair" or "just" price for a commodity or service that is somehow written in the stars, and that such a price for each item should be enforced by government, has been around since the inception of organized politics. In ancient Egypt, government price controls over foodstuffs led to chronic famines, and eventually government ownership of the land, until the people were enslaved. The Roman Emperor Diocletian also imposed a detailed set of fixed prices and controls on wages. Despite the fact that these controls were enforced by the death penalty, they created economic

havoc and were eventually abandoned — but only after thousands of Roman citizens had been put to death for violating the guidelines. During the American War for Independence, George Washington's courageous Army nearly starved to death at Valley Forge because of a combination of inflation (fiat currency) and what John Adams called "That improvident Act of limiting prices [which] has done great injury, and [which] in my sincere opinion, if not repealed will ruin the state and introduce a civil war."

Whenever price controls have been enforced they have done great damage, and the longer they were forced on the people the worse things became. One reason there are chronic food shortages in Poland and all other Marxist-controlled nations is because of price controls on food products. Yet "Liberals" persist in advocating this mythical remedy. Why don't they learn from history?

Prices are not set by costs of production, or by manufacturers, or by merchants. The merchant may put a price tag on his goods, but it is his customers who set the price by choosing to purchase or not to purchase goods at prices offered. There are millions of items for sale which, regardless of how "low" the figure is on their price tags, are not bought by consumers. There are millions of products on the market which, despite the "high" asking price written on their tags, are bought by consumers. Only when an item is purchased — only when an exchange takes place — is a price set for that transaction. Every transaction is unique, and so is the price associated with it. When the customer agrees to buy a particular item it is he who sets the price.

The only thing that government can ever do is to try to control people,

to prevent them from doing what they wish to do or to compel them to do what they do not wish to do. The government cannot control prices without controlling people — and when it controls people it necessarily deprives them of their freedom to use their property as they see fit. They don't like it, and find ways to act in their own interest. Consequently, when the government intervenes by forcing merchants to "price" their goods below a certain level, manufacturers and merchants tend to stop dealing in that product. If the price of a good is not high enough to cover all the costs of production, plus a profit to encourage production, then it won't be produced.

The consumer will then no longer be able to get what he wants at *any price* — unless a "black market" arises. In that case, consumers who choose to deal with black marketeers will have to pay the market prices . . . including a premium. Extremely high prices result because sellers are dealing in an illegal activity with risks which add to the costs. Clearly, price ceilings imposed by law work *against* the interests of consumers.

When shortages and "black markets" develop as a result of the government's controls, "Liberals" advocate rationing as another political palliative to cope with problems resulting from previous government interference. Rationing makes matters much worse by further discouraging production. If the government is serious about enforcing price and wage controls, it requires a literal army of bureaucrats to police the economy and monitor the rationing process. The favoritism and special privileges which such controllers can provide is of course enormous. Corruption soon becomes rampant.

Wage and price controls are irrele-

vent as a solution to the consequences of inflation. Inflation is an increase in the supply of fiat money. Only the federal government and those who operate under its license can increase the money supply. Controls should be placed on *government* power and on *government* spending — not on producers and consumers.

The Population Dud

Thomas Malthus, the famous Eighteenth Century economist, predicted a dismal future for mankind because he claimed that population growth would inevitably outstrip the food supply. It was Malthus and his followers who gave economics the undeserved reputation for being "the dismal science." Fortunately, they were wrong. Malthus did not reckon with the tremendous increase in productivity generated among free peoples where government stepped aside to allow the Industrial Revolution.

But collectivists closed their eyes to the lessons of the Industrial Revolution, which embarrassed their Marxist predictions of grinding poverty. To compensate, they forecast worldwide famine, aching poverty, civil turmoil, and utter chaos as the result of an exploding population bomb — *unless* Big Government steps in to control life from conception to cremation. Marxist Indira Gandhi of India instituted compulsory sterilization. Mainland China has imposed such draconian policies as infanticide and forced abortion.

Do American "Liberals" really want to police our bedrooms to keep us from overpopulating our country? Consider the following from Paul Kurtz, editor of *Humanist*: "We are rapidly approaching the time when not everyone who chooses can be permitted to bear and raise children." After calling for worldwide eugenic planning, Kurtz goes on to state quite

Another common "Liberal" myth claims that inflation can be curbed by wage and price controls. But by inflation they mean rising prices. The truth is that prices rise in response to the Fed inflating the money supply. Thus, it is government that causes inflation, and wage-price controls are counterproductive.

candidly what he means: "It is often the poor and underdeveloped in intelligence and capacity who tend to have large families. This means that a gradual lowering of the quality of the genetic stock is likely to occur without conscious eugenic planning aimed toward improvement."

And who will decide which are to be sterilized? Sir Julian Huxley of Britain, an internationally famous "Liberal," called for the United Nations to establish an Agency for Population Control. He received support from Sir Francis Crick, another British socialist, who foresees the day when "no newborn infant will be declared human unless it has passed certain tests regarding its genetic endowment. If it fails these tests, it forfeits its right to live." How far removed is this from the eugenic planning advocated by such collectivists as Adolf Hitler?

In 1965 a *Life* magazine editorial quoted a British scientist who claimed that in less than a thousand years "people will be jammed together so tightly that the earth itself will glow orange-red from the heat." In 1968, fright peddler Paul Ehrlich warned in his over-hyped book *The Population Bomb* that the 1970s would bring mass famines which would kill off one-fifth or more of the world's population, beginning in the poor countries, then spreading to

America and other industrialized nations. Among Ehrlich's recommendations to prevent the catastrophe were the imposition of prohibitively high taxes on cribs, diapers, toys, and other baby products; an escalating tax on births; nationalized adoption agencies; and, a new federal agency with the authority to take *whatever steps are necessary* to establish a "reasonable population level" in the United States.

The world headquarters for what we may call the "Doomsday Internationale" is an organization called the Club of Rome. In 1972 this internationalist group of elitist planners published *The Limits To Growth*, a much-publicized report which foretold planetary disaster in consequence of runaway population growth and dwindling resources. It called for government programs and policies designed to limit economic and industrial growth in Western affluent nations, forced conservation of "mankind's" resources, and controls on human reproduction.

Of course, neither Paul Ehrlich's gloomy predictions nor the dark scenarios of the Club of Rome have materialized, but this doesn't prevent doomsday con men from continually updating their forecasts of the coming procreational plague.

One such study is the *Global 2000*

Report, a piece of scientific propaganda which has been published in at least five languages and distributed in the millions. This report projects a set of dire scenarios fraught with hopeless problems centering on the specters of overpopulation and limited (or even declining) resources and food supplies.

The latest major warning of global suicide by procreation is a Big-Bang forecast from the World Bank. In their Annual World Development Report issued last summer, these Left-wing internationalists gravely predict that, if present trends continue, our planet will have a population of ten billion human beings by the year 2050, resulting in disasters on a mammoth scale. Like the *Global 2000 Report*, the World Bank's screed reflects the "Liberal" myth that it is increases in population density which are responsible for poverty, hunger, and disease.

World Bank president A.W. Clausen, insists that higher population "means lower living standards for hundreds of millions of people." To this way of thinking, "too many people" naturally means not enough space, not enough food, not enough energy, and not enough of anything else for everyone to have a decent standard of living. This comes from the "Liberal" view of the economic universe as being static, the notion that the amount of wealth in the world is fixed, and the determination that the key problem is how to create a New World Order to divide it up fairly among the masses of people.

The pattern is a familiar one. Based on faulty assumptions and concocted analyses, these studies portend profound planetary perils. "Liberals," youth, and other dupes of the disaster brigade are whipped into frenzies by the bogeyman stories. They are then organized with funds

from cooperating "Liberal" moneybags and stampeded into demanding more government meddling — on both a national and a global scale — as the "only" solution. As "Liberal" economic historian Robert Heilbroner (who insists that the population explosion will ultimately lead to the extinction of all mankind) has put it: "The freedom of man must be sacrificed on the altar of the survival of mankind."

Are the followers of the Doomsday Internationale correct in the belief that population increases or "high" population densities are to blame for poverty, starvation, and other ills? Must individual liberty be sacrificed for the sake of collective survival? The answer to both questions is a resounding No!

With 12,926 people per square mile, the tiny free-market colony of Hong Kong has one of the highest population densities in the world, very few natural resources, and is a haven for huge numbers of refugees. Yet it has one of the most prosperous and booming economies on the Pacific rim. By contrast, socialist Bangladesh suffers from chronic hunger and starvation, even though its population density of 1,350 per square mile is only about one-ninth that of Hong Kong. The major difference is that Hong Kong enjoys a free-market economy while Bangladesh does not.

India is well known as one of the poorest nations on earth. Masses of people live in dreadful squalor and suffer chronic hunger. India is said by "Liberal" propagandists to be "overpopulated" despite its enormous land mass and rich natural resources. Socialist India's population density is but 572 per square mile. Compare this to free-market countries with much higher population densities — such as West Germany (642), Belgium (842), and The Netherlands (1,002).

"Liberal" doomsayers claim that overpopulation threatens famine and depletion of resources. Their response is draconian regulation. But, around the world, wherever economic freedom exists, new resources are developed, economies flourish, and children are needed to expand the pool of creativity.

Capitalist Japan, a nation of islands having but a small fraction of the natural resources found in India, is one of the most prosperous nations on earth. The people there are very productive and enjoy a high standard of living. Yet Japan, with a population density of 810 people per square mile, is forty-two percent more crowded than socialist India. Why are the Japanese people well fed while the masses of India go hungry? One clue to the answer is that socialist India imposes a sixty percent tax on earnings of only \$10,000 per year. Private savings are not permitted to accumulate, there is no incentive for investment in productive capital goods, and progress is utterly stifled.

Sally Struthers and other "Liberal" celebrities advertise on television the terrible conditions and mass starvation now pandemic in such places as Ethiopia. But are the widespread hunger and poverty in Ethiopia caused by "overpopulation" in that country? Ethiopia has an average of but sixty-one people per square mile — a little lower than the population density of the United States (sixty-four per square mile). The difference is that in the United States we are free to produce, while Ethiopia is a Communist satrapy with collectivized agriculture and is perpetually at war with its own people.

Singapore has a population density of more than ten thousand people per square mile, yet free-market Singapore's per-capita income is over thirty times that of Ethiopia. Market-oriented South Korea's population is thirteen times as dense as the African nation of Kenya, yet Korea's per-capita income has risen three times as fast as that in Kenya. Like India's, the state-controlled economies of impoverished Black Africa are among the most heavily regulated and taxed in the world.

Whether increases in a nation's population — either by higher birth rates, lower death rates, or immigration — result in more poverty or further progress depends on how free that country's economic system is to adapt and produce. Neither population density nor availability of indigenous natural resources is sufficient, by itself, to explain a nation's poverty or progress. Much more important factors are the extent to which private incentives are permitted to operate and private property is protected. We agree strongly with economist Paul Craig Roberts when he observes:

"If red tape pre-empts initiative, if private property is subject to confiscation by price controls, taxation, or government decree, if capital markets are replaced by government in-

vestment decisions, then people are denied their role as producers and confined to their role as consumers. Whenever government crowds out individual initiative, an increase in population can make a country poorer instead of richer."

It is assuredly no coincidence that the most prosperous and fastest-developing countries in the world are those with the least regulation and lowest taxes, where private property rights are protected both from criminal violation and from government intrusion. These prosperous countries include Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, and the Republic of China — all densely populated and having few or no natural resources of their own.

Lawrence W. Reed* summed up the situation well in *Human Events* for February 2, 1985:

"[I]ndividual freedom makes all the difference in the world when it comes to the impact of population growth. In Socialist countries another birth becomes 'just another mouth to feed' — a burden on an economy strangled by intervention. In free societies, on the other hand, another birth represents a very real and likely potential for advancement. People are *assets*, not liabilities. When free, they produce, create, innovate and otherwise solve problems which remain endemic to Socialist societies." Hence the effort of nihilistic collectivists to reduce our birth rate.

Commentator Ben Wattenberg, writing in the *Washington Times*, is worried about the growing "birth

dearth" in the developed nations. He makes the following points: "It takes an average of 2.1 children per woman to replace a population over time, exclusive of immigration. If people have fewer children than that, then sooner or later the population declines

"The key fact of our time is that the important, modern, free, powerful nations of the world are not having 2.1 children per woman. Not even close. In the United States the rate is 1.8 children per woman. In England, it's 1.8. In France, 1.9. In Japan, 1.7. In Italy, 1.6. In West Germany, 1.4.

"This is the first time in history that a collection of nations — without the stress of war, famine, or disease — have [*sic*] opted not to reproduce themselves. Consider the devastating effects of such rates if continued over time: West Germany's population today is 62 million; by the year 2000 it will be 59 million. By 2050 — down to 38 million. And by 2100, there will be only 20 million Germans left! The numbers for the other nations do not sink as rapidly, but they do sink sharply over a period of time." (December 26, 1984)

The *Wall Street Journal* noted in its editorial for July 20, 1984, that "... population growth has fallen fastest in those countries where the economies have grown the fastest. And those countries are the ones that have allowed their people, including their poor people, the most economic freedom. The fastest-growing, free market states of Pacific Asia, for example, have all shown dramatic declines in population growth: South Korea, from 2.6 percent a year to 1.7 percent, and Singapore, from 2.4 percent to 1.5 percent

"Countries where economic growth has lagged, on the other hand, have also shown some of the smallest declines in population growth. Slow-

*Mr. Reed is an adjunct professor of economics with the Northwood Institute of Midland, Michigan, and is also director of the Center for the Study of Market Alternatives in Caldwell, Idaho. He writes and edits a monthly newsletter, *Answers To Economic Problems*, Box 58, Cedar Hill, Texas 75104, \$5.00 the year.

growing India, for example, has seen its population growth drop by only a fraction: from 2.3 percent per year to 2.1 percent. The explanation is simple. Socialist India hasn't industrialized fast enough to draw workers from its poor rural areas, where children are the major (if not the only) assets of many Indians, a source of some small measure of income security."

The real problem is not overpopulation but under-production. And under-production results from socialism and other forms of government interventionism which prevent the accumulation of capital to acquire the tools of production, and the freedom of entrepreneurs creatively to seek profits.

Above all, bear in mind that the amount of food and other wealth is not static. Man has the capacity to increase his resources and food supplies. The pie can keep getting bigger all the time. There is *no theoretical limit* to the amount and quality of food, energy, and other resources and products which can be generated by free men through the process of private savings and investment in tools and machines. We could easily produce enough food to feed ten times the present world population; but with birth rates dropping in the U.S. and Europe, and expected to drop elsewhere as other economies begin to develop, we probably will never come close to having that many people in the world.

Food production is ever higher. The rational use of pesticides and new "miracle grains" are creating a revolution in farming — a revolution which would be taking place much quicker if socialist bureaucracies were not in the way. Advanced technology is permitting us to grow more and more food on less land. By cloning the highest-quality of cattle, sheep,

poultry, fish, vegetables, and fruit, the human species need never suffer from lack of food again. Abundant quantities can be produced in a free market, and the price of high-quality food can be brought into reach of everyone.

With the expansion of freedom, as prosperity for the world replaces poverty and hunger, the population will tend to stabilize as it has in the already developed cultures of the West and the Pacific rim. Man can solve his physical problems, save himself from oblivion, and create a more civilized world in which to live. But, for all this to happen, people and their leaders must look to freedom for solutions instead of tolerating government intervention.

Menace Of Prohibition

"Liberals" are at their most arrogant when they presume to protect us from our own choices and actions. Self-appointed consumerists such as Ralph Nader call regularly for extensive government regulations, controls, and bureaucratic agencies to protect us from such alleged poisons as saccharin in our foods and beverages. After all, we have been told, studies indicate that sugar substitutes like saccharin and cyclamates cause cancer in white mice.

Does this mean that saccharin or cyclamates cause the Big C in human beings? It develops that in order for a human to consume a quantity of saccharin or cyclamate equivalent to that fed to the afflicted mice, he would have to drink some *eight hundred* cans of diet soft drink every day! He would doubtless drown before developing cancer from the sweeteners.

But in 1969, under pressure of the do-gooders, the Food and Drug Administration banned cyclamates. A study had turned up one mouse in

"Liberals" are at their most arrogant when they presume to protect us from our own choices and actions. Self-appointed consumerists like Ralph Nader seek to use government force to compel others to conform. But without the vital freedom to choose we are denied the opportunity to act as moral beings.

520 as having developed bladder cancer (a form of tumor that occurs spontaneously) after being force-fed enormous doses of cyclamates. Never mind that some substances which are carcinogenic in laboratory animals do not cause cancer in humans, and *vice versa*. (The wonder drug penicillin, for instance, has apparently caused cancer in hamsters and guinea pigs. Small quantities of arsenic appear to cause cancer in people, but not in animals.) Yet on the basis of a single study with mice the F.D.A. banned cyclamates as being carcinogenic. Finally, in 1982, the F.D.A.'s own "Cancer Assessment Committee" admitted that "no credible evidence showing that cyclamates cause cancer in animals" ever existed. Incredibly, the bureaucratic ban remains in effect.

In 1977 the F.D.A. banned the use of saccharin on the same spurious grounds. It explained that it is required by the Delaney Clause, a law passed in 1959, to proscribe products which, in *any* amounts are shown to cause cancer in animals. Fortunately, public pressure forced Congress to place a moratorium on the F.D.A. ban on saccharin for eight years. Had the Congress not set aside the F.D.A.'s prohibition, Americans would have been left with no suitable sugar substitute for several years.

The politicians realized this would provoke a revolution by American dieters and diabetics.

The trouble isn't that the "Liberal" thinks he knows what is good for us and what is bad for us, but that he would use the force of government to make us act on his opinion. He would ban saccharin because of the extremely slim possibility that it will cause cancer, but he wants to compel everyone to drink fluoridated water because it is supposed to be good for our teeth. Whether saccharin causes cancer or fluoride is good for our teeth is not the issue. What is common in both cases is that the "Liberal" resorts to the *force of government* to make others do what he thinks is best. He uses the power of government to force his notions on the rest of us, calling it a moral imperative.

But compulsion *always* abrogates personal moral choice. Economist Murray Rothbard puts it as follows:

"There is no sense to any concept of morality, regardless of the particular moral action one favors, if a man is not free to do the *immoral* as well as the moral thing. If a man is not free to choose, if he is compelled by force to do the moral thing, then, on the contrary, *he is being deprived of the opportunity of being moral*. He has not been permitted to weigh the alternatives, to arrive at his own conclu-

sions and to take his stand. If he is deprived of free choice, he is acting under the dictator's will rather than his own"

People should be free to make their own mistakes and (perhaps) learn from them. The marketplace rule of *caveat emptor* — "let the buyer beware" — is a better policy for consumer protection than government regulations and prohibitionism. The result of shielding fools from the consequences of their folly is to fill the world with slaves.

"Liberal" prohibitionism has become a reflex action. For instance, a publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* and the Earth Day "teach-ins" of Denis Hayes launched the politically motivated environmental movement and the fear campaign against D.D.T. Like the population explosion and the saccharin menace, the "Liberal" crusade against D.D.T. was another effort to replace private judgment with federal prohibition. The insecticide was attacked as a peril to the environment and a threat to life and health. Environmental zealots insisted that D.D.T. *might* cause harm to some birds and fish. As a result, the "Liberal" environmentalists were successful in getting the government to ban the use of D.D.T.

Far from being the bane of mankind, D.D.T. was one of the most important factors in eliminating starvation and disease around the world. One of the greatest killers of human beings in history was malaria, a disease carried by mosquitos. Because of D.D.T., that killer disease had been all but defeated. Even the World Health Organization acknowledged that D.D.T. has saved perhaps one billion people from serious illnesses and starvation.

At the time D.D.T. was outlawed by the Environmental Protection Agency, Nobel-winning agronomist

Dr. Norman E. Borlaug opposed the action as retrogressive, warning: "If D.D.T. is banned by the United States, I have wasted my life's work. I have dedicated myself to finding better methods of feeding the world's starving population. Without D.D.T. and other important agricultural chemicals, our goals are simply unattainable."

Genuine concern for the biological environment and the problems of pollution is an honorable tradition in America. But the contrived ecology movement was and is a political tool concerned more with controlling Americans than with saving endangered species — especially if that species is *Homo sapiens*! The remaining problems of pollution can best be solved not by bureaucratic regulations and prohibitionism, but by more freedom, better technology, and a more effective application of private property rights. With better civil law to protect property rights, and more advanced technologies to clean waterways and airspace, we will develop free-market incentives to cope with pollution in a more rational way. Ownership brings responsibility, accountability, and positive incentives. Private property and the free-market economy are the great social problem solvers. They should be extended rather than restricted by political interference. Economist Murray Rothbard sums up:

"Thus, when we peel away the confusions and the unsound philosophy of the modern ecologists, we find an important bedrock case against the existing system; but the case turns out to be not against capitalism, private property, growth, or technology per se. It is a case against the failure of government to allow and to defend the rights of private property against invasion. If property rights were to be defended fully, against private and

governmental invasion alike, we would find here, as in other areas of our economy and society, that private enterprise and modern technology would come to mankind not as a curse but as its salvation."

Nuclear Nonsense

In 1971 America's Mariner 9 spacecraft flew by the planet Mars on its journey into the Great Beyond. Analysis of the data sent back by this remarkable space probe revealed that the Red Planet was experiencing a global dust storm at the time. It was also noted that while the surface of the planet was cooler than usual, the Martian atmosphere was warmer than normal. This unusual temperature difference was attributed to the dust particles suspended in the Martian atmosphere absorbing the incoming sunlight and thus preventing the warming rays of the sun from reaching the planet's surface at the accustomed intensity. It was also observed that, once the storm was over, the dust settled and the planet's temperature returned to normal.

These observations about Martian dust storms were seized upon by "Liberals" as an opportunity for more scare propaganda to encourage yet another objective on their long agenda. They prompted a "study" conducted by savant-about-town Carl Sagan in collaboration with Richard Turco of Marina del Rey and Brian Toon, Thomas Ackerman, and James Pollack of N.A.S.A. This study is known as T.T.A.P.S., an acronym formed from the last-name initials of its authors. The alleged goal of the inquiry was to assess the climatic effect of nuclear war — specifically, the cooling effect of smoke, ash, and dust which might be thrown into the Earth's atmosphere by the blasts and fires resulting from a massive nuclear exchange.

Carefully arranging its assumptions, the T.T.A.P.S. group set up a model to attempt to predict how much smoke and dust might be stirred up under various nuclear-war scenarios, how much of this dust might be lofted into the Earth's atmosphere, how long it would stay there, and to what extent it would impair solar heating of the Earth's surface. The conclusion of the T.T.A.P.S. propaganda study, published in the November 12, 1983, issue of *Science News*, was that drastic drops could be expected in the surface temperature of the Earth lasting for several months.

Sagan argues from this that a nuclear war — an exchange of nuclear-bomb weapons of any scope — would threaten extinction of mankind as a result of the climatic upheaval he calls "nuclear winter." The only alternative, he claims, is to begin a program of disarmament, starting with the adoption of the "nuclear freeze" proposal. Either we freeze the deployment of nuclear weapons — or their eventual use will freeze us all to death!

While the "nuclear winter" scenario and its assumptions have been brutally exposed as propaganda by other scientists,* we do not have to be scientists to refute the "nuclear freeze" gambit as a folly.

What Sagan and other "peaceniks" want — or claim they want — is a bilateral "freeze" on the deployment of nuclear weapons by both the United States and the Soviet Union. They maintain that such a mutual "freeze" could somehow be verifiable so that we might tell whether the Commu-

*Howard Maccabee, "Nuclear Winter: How Much Do We Really Know?," *Reason* magazine, May 1985; Michael Dunn, "Forecasting A Nuclear Winter Wonderland," *American Defense*, January-February 1984, Box 1064, Colton, California 92324.

Radical Carl Sagan uses false assumptions to forecast a "nuclear winter" and stampede Americans into backing a "nuclear freeze" despite evidence that Moscow always cheats on arms agreements. We cannot expect to snap our fingers and make Communists good; so we badly need a non-nuclear defense in space.

nists are cheating as they have always done on past treaties. But no "freeze" could possibly be verifiable by technical means. Even our most sophisticated monitoring systems cannot see through roofs, boxcars, and beneath the earth where Soviet missiles are stored. Also, the Soviets' missile launchers are designed to be reusable, whereas ours are not. This means they can hide missiles, to be used for second shots, easily cheating on agreed numbers.

The only way that a mutual "freeze" or disarmament *might* be verifiable would be if on-site inspection were permitted by both sides. This the Soviets consistently refuse to allow. They will never agree to on-site inspection of their military capability because it is not in their interest to do so. Carl Sagan says that the United States should go ahead and "freeze" anyway. The man is a nincompoop advocating our *unilateral* disarmament in the face of a massive Soviet buildup.

A one-sided "freeze" on nuclear arsenals is just what Moscow wants — for us — because it would ratify the already arranged Soviet superiority, especially in Europe. This would allow the Soviet leaders to engage in nuclear blackmail against the United States — or even the launching of a nuclear first strike against America

and other nations. Is that farfetched? Not at all. Consider the following warning from Lieutenant General Daniel O. Graham, former director of the Defense Intelligence Agency:

"Remember that the Russians have been putting at least \$1 billion a year into civil defense since 1968, as compared to our negligible efforts in that field. They have been digging under their factories and putting whole new factories underground. If the top factory gets blown away, the standby factory still operates! They have built shelters for all of their key personnel, and they have been practicing evacuation of their cities. With their iron-fisted discipline over their civilian population they believe they can win any race involving civil defense.

"The Soviets' objective is simple: to get into a position so that in a nuclear exchange they would lose only 10 million Russians to perhaps 100 million Americans killed. Now no American — and certainly no elected official in this country — could think of losing 'only 10 million people.' But the Russians lost 20 million, from a smaller population, in World War II, and they know that they can stand it. In fact, their government killed off 5 or 6 million of their own peasants simply to collectivize their agriculture. To them 'only 10 million Russians' lost is a cheap price to pay finally to gain

their long-range goals: to win the titanic struggle between systems so that the entire world will come under the domination of the Communist Party headquartered in Moscow!"

A "nuclear freeze" by the U.S. would make the world more vulnerable to war, not less. We must face the fact that international relations are governed by the perceived interests and convenience of the nations involved. The Soviets cheat.

Given the determination of Communism and the fanatical killers who support it, the "nuclear freeze" initiative is analogous to being locked with a murderer in a room. He has a shotgun aimed at you and you have a shotgun aimed at him. Sagan would have you throw down your gun as a show of "good faith" and as a means of preventing your opponent from shooting you.

It should be pointed out, moreover, that *even if* a truly mutual "freeze" on the deployment of nuclear weapons *could* be achieved by some miracle, there would still be plenty of nuclear warheads and missiles to wreck our civilization for generations. The weapons are already there. We cannot snap our fingers and make them disappear, any more than we can snap our fingers and make men good. There is a better way.

If Sagan is saying that war is hell, we certainly agree. If the mere possibility of a "nuclear winter" does exist — no matter how far-fetched — then we have even more reason to find a way to abolish the possibility of nuclear war, or at least to minimize it as much as possible. If Sagan and his colleagues truly want peace — and

what rational person doesn't? — they should realize that the non-nuclear Strategic Defense Initiative, as advocated by General Daniel O. Graham under the term High Frontier, is the proper means to assure it. After all, it is far better to defend lives than to avenge them. The proposed space-based anti-missile system does not put weapons into space; it puts *anti-weapons* into space which can in no way harm a hair on the head of anyone, Russian or American. Such a defense would prevent the disaster of a nuclear first strike and perhaps eventually make I.C.B.M. warfare obsolete.

You see, the ultimate solution to war is the abandonment of government interventionism, not only domestically but internationally as well. If our weapons have made nuclear war too terrible for mankind to afford, then we must create a passive *strategic defense* that will work. High Frontier proposes to make that possible. This approach, coupled with a policy of minding our own business, permitting free trade and sound money, will do more to bring world peace and prosperity than anything else. I repeat: The principle is the same internationally as it is domestically. It is the principle we have applied in dealing with each of the collectivist clichés to which we have responded in this article. We must strictly confine the *power* of governments to strike at the interests of free men. What is needed is a strategic defense. That begins with less government, more (individual) responsibility and — with God's help — a better world. ■ ■

CRACKER BARREL

- Modesty is the technique of drawing attention to whatever it is you're being modest about.
- The Washington Monument sinks six inches every year.
- Official murder is an instrument of Soviet policy, writes the *Wall Street Journal*.