

A Semi-Monthly Newsletter

THE

Libertarian Forum

Joseph R. Peden, Publisher

Washington Editor, Karl Hess

Murray N. Rothbard, Editor

VOL. I, NO. X

August 15, 1969

35¢

LISTEN, YAF

This open letter is addressed to the libertarians attending the YAF national convention in St. Louis this Labor Day weekend. Notice I said the *libertarians* in YAF; I have nothing to say to the so-called "traditionalists" (a misnomer, by the way, for we libertarians have *our* traditions too, and they are glorious ones. It all depends on *which* traditions: the libertarian ones of Paine and Price, of Cobden and Thoreau, or the authoritarian ones of Torquemada and Burke and Metternich.) Let us leave the authoritarians to their Edmund Burkes and their Crowns of St. Something-or-other. We have more serious matters to discuss.

In the famous words of Jimmy Durante: "Have ya ever had the feelin' that ya wanted to go, and yet ya had the feelin' that ya wanted to stay?" This letter is a plea that you use the occasion of the public forum of the YAF convention to go, to split, to leave the conservative movement where it belongs: in the hands of the St. Something-or-others, and where it is going to stay regardless of what action you take. Leave the house of your false friends, for they are your enemies.

For years you have taken your political advice and much of your line from assorted "exes": ex-Communists, ex-Trots, ex-Maoists, ex-fellow-travellers. I have never been any of these. I grew up a right-winger, and became more intensely a libertarian rightist as I grew older. How come I am an exile from the Right-wing, while the conservative movement is being run by a gaggle of ex-Communists and monarchists? What kind of a conservative movement is this? This kind: one that you have no business being in. I got out of the Right-wing not because I ceased believing in liberty, but because being a libertarian above all, I came to see that the Right-wing specialized in cloaking its authoritarian and neo-fascist policies in the honeyed words of libertarian rhetoric. They need you for their libertarian cover; stop providing it for them!

You can see for yourselves that you have nothing in common with the frank theocrats, the worshippers of monarchy, the hawkers after a New Inquisition, the Bozells and the Wilhelmsens. Yet you continue in harness with them. Why? Because of the siren songs of the so-called "fusionists"--the Meyers and Buckleys and Evanses--who claim to be integrating and synthesizing the best of "tradition" and liberty. And even if you don't quite believe in the synthesis, the existence of these "centrists" as the leaders of the Right gives you the false sense of security that you can join a united front under their aegis. It is for that very reason that the fusionists, those misleaders, are the most dangerous of all--much more so than the frank and open worshippers of the Crown of St. Wenceslas.

For note what the fusionists are saying behind their seemingly libertarian rhetoric. The only liberty they are willing to grant is a liberty *within* "tradition", within "order", in others words a weak and puny false imitation of liberty within a framework dictated by the State apparatus. Let us consider the typically YAFite-fusionist position on various critical issues. Surely, you might say, the fusionists are in favor of a free-market economy. But are they indeed? The fusionists, for example, favor the outlawry of marijuana and other drugs--after some hemming and hawing, of course, and much hogwash about "community responsibility", values and the ontological order--but outlawry just the same. Every time some kid is busted for pot smoking you can pin much of the responsibility on the Conservative Movement and its fusionist-Buckleyite misleaders. So what kind of a free market position is one that favors the outlawry of marijuana? Where is the private property right to grow, purchase, exchange, and use?

Alright, so you know the Right-wing is very bad on questions of compulsory morality. But what about the hundreds of billions of dollars siphoned off from the producers and taxpayers to build up the power of the State's overkill military machine? And what of the state-monopoly military-industrial complex that the system has spawned? What kind of a free market is *that*? Recently, *National Review* emitted its typical patrician scorn against leftist carpers who dared to criticize the space moon-doggle. \$24 billion of taxpayers' money of precious resources that could have been used on earth, have been poured into the purely and totally collectivistic moon-doggle program. And now our Conservative Hero, Vice-President Agnew, wants us to proceed on to Mars, at Lord knows what multiple of the cost. This is a free-market!? Poor Bastiat and Cobden must be turning over in their graves!

What has YAF, in its *action programs*, ever done on behalf of the free market? Its only action related to the free market has been to *oppose* it, to call for embargoes on Polish hams and other products from Eastern Europe. What kind of a free-market program is *that*?

YAF, the fusionists, and the Right-wing generally, have led the parade, in happy tandem with their supposed enemies the liberals, in supporting the Cold War and various hot wars against Communist movements abroad. This global crusading against the heathen is a total reversal of the Old "isolationist" Right-wing of my youth, the Right-wing that scorned foreign intervention and "globaloney", and attacked these adventures as statist imperialism while the *Nation* and the *New Republic* and other liberals were

(Continued on page 2)

LISTEN YAF — (Continued from page 1)

berating these Rightists as tools of the Kremlin. But now your Right-wing leaders embrace every socialist, every leftist with a 100% ADA voting record, every Sidney Hook and Paul Douglas and Thomas Dodd, just so long as they stand ready to incinerate the world rather than suffer one Communist to live. What kind of a libertarian policy, what kind even of "fusionist" policy is that justifies the slaughter of tens of thousands of American soldiers, of hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese peasants, for the sake of bringing Christianity to the heathen by sword and brimstone? I can understand why the authoritarians applaud all this, they who would like nothing more than the return of Cotton Mather or Torquemada. But what are *you* doing supporting them?

Surely every libertarian supports civil liberties, the corollary and complement of private property rights and the free-market economy. Where does the Right-wing stand on civil liberties? You know all too well. Communists, of course, have to be slaughtered or rounded up in detention camps. Being "agents of the Devil", they are no longer human and therefore have no rights. Is that it? But it is not only on the Communist question where the conservatives are despots; don't think this is just one flaw in their armor. For in recent years, American politics has instructively begun to focus on very crucial issues--on the nature of the State and on State coercion itself. Thus, the cops. The cops, with their monopoly of coercion and their overwhelming superiority of arms, tend to brutalize, club, and torture confessions from people who are either innocent or have not been proven guilty. What has been the attitude of the Right-wing, and your fusionist leaders, toward this systematic brutality, or toward the libertarian decisions of the Warren Court that have put up protections for the individual rights of the accused? You know very well. They hate the Warren Court almost as much as they do Reds, for "coddling criminals", and the cry goes up everywhere for all power to the police. What can be more profoundly statist, despotic, and anti-libertarian than that?

When Mayor Daley's cops clubbed and gassed their way through Chicago last year against unarmed demonstrators, the only libertarian reaction was to revile Daley and the cops and to support the rights of the demonstrators. But your fusionist leaders loved and applauded Daley, with his "manly will to govern", and the brutality unleashed by his cop goons. And take the massacre at People's Park at Berkeley this year, when one unarmed bystander was killed, and hundreds wounded, and thousands gassed by the armed constabulary for the crime of trying to remain in a park which they had built with their own hands on a state-owned muddy lot. Yet your "fusionists" denounced People's Park and hailed Reagan and the cops.

And then there is the draft--that obnoxious system of slavery and forced murder. There is nothing anyone even remotely calling himself a libertarian can say about the draft except that it is slavery and that it must be combatted. And yet how nambly-pamby YAF has been on the draft, how ambiguous and tangled the fusionist leaders become when they approach the subject? Even those who reject the draft do so only apologetically, and only on the grounds that we could have a more efficient army if it were volunteer. But the real issue is moral. The issue is not to build up a more efficient group of hired killers for the U. S. government; the issue is to oppose slavery as an absolute moral evil. And this no fusionist or Rightist has even considered doing. And even those who reject the draft as inefficient love the army itself, with its hierarchical despotism, its aggressive violence, its unthinking obedience. What sort of "libertarians" are these?

And what of the nation's educational system in which so many of you have been enmeshed? For years, I heard your fusionist leaders condemn *in toto*, the American educational system as coercive and statist, and, when in their cups and

heedless of their political status, even call for abolition of the public school system. Fine! So what happens when, in the last few years, we have seen a dedicated and determined movement to smash this system--to return control to the parents, as in Ocean Hill-Brownsville in Brooklyn, and take it from the entrenched educationists--or, as with SDS and the colleges, to overthrow the educational rule of the government and the military-industrial complex? Shouldn't the fusionists have hailed and come to the support of these educational opposition movements? But instead, they have called on the cops to suppress them.

Here is surely an acid test of the fusionists' alleged love of liberty. Liberty goes by the board as soon as their precious "gder" is threatened, and "order" means, simply, State dictation and State-controlled property. Is that what libertarians are to end up doing--fronting for despots and apologists for "lawncorder"? Our stand should be on the other side--with the people, with the citizenry, and against the State and its hired goon squads. And yet YAF's central theme this year is its boasting about inventing tactics to call in the judges, call in the cops, to suppress SDS opposition--opposition to *what*? To the State's gigantic factory for brainwashing! What are *you* doing on the barricades defending the State's indoctrination centers?

It's pretty clear, or should be by now, what *they're* doing there, the fusionists. They're right where they belong, doing their job--the job of apologists for the State using libertarian rhetoric as their cloak. And since, in recent years, they have snuggled close to Power, these apologetics have become more and more blatant. Fifteen, twenty years ago, the "libertarian-conservatives" used to hail Thoreau and the idea of civil disobedience against unjust laws. But now, now that civil disobedience has become an actual living movement, Thoreau is only heard on the New Left, while the Right, even the "libertarian" or fusionist Right, talk only of lawn-n-order, suppression and the bayonet, defense of State power by any and all means necessary.

You don't belong with these deceivers on the political make. I plead with you to leave YAF now, for you should know by now that there is no hope of your ever capturing it. It is as dictatorial, as oligarchic, as close to fascism in structure as is so much of the content of YAF's program. There is no way that you can overthrow the Jones-Teague clique, for this clique is entrenched in power. And behind this clique lie the fusionist gurus: the Buckleys, and Rushers, and Meyers. And behind them lie the real power in YAF--the moneybags, the wealthy business men who finance and therefore run the organization, the same moneybags who reacted hard a few years ago when some of your leaders decided to take a strong stand against the draft.

When YAF was founded, on the Buckley estate at Sharon, Connecticut, there was heavy sentiment among the founders against the title, because, they said, "freedom is a left-wing word." But the "fusionists" won out, and freedom was included in the title. In retrospect, it is clear that this was a shame, because all that happened was that the precious word "freedom" came to be used as an Orwellian cloak for its very opposite. Why don't you leave now, and let the "F" in YAF stand then for what it has secretly stood for all along--"fascism"?

Why don't you get out, form your own organization, breathe the clean air of freedom, and then take your stand, proudly and squarely, not with the despotism of the power elite and the government of the United States, but with the rising movement in opposition to that government? Then you will be libertarians indeed, in act as well as in theory. What hangover, what remnant of devotion to the monster State, is holding you back? Come join us, come realize that to break once and for all with statism is to break once and for all with the Right-wing. We stand ready to welcome you.

Yours in liberty,
Murray N. Rothbard

Letter From Washington

By Karl Hess

Leaders And Heroes

We had a chance to learn a lot about leaders lately. Also heroes.

There was, for example, the moonshot. The three Federal employees who went on the trip were passengers in fact, passengers in life-style, passengers in character, the great culminating passengers of the great bureaucratic trip. But by going along for the ride they have become heroes, instead, officially certified heroes who, in all probability, will be featured, like meat loaf, in the menus of the state's school system until some other Federal employee makes it to Mars.

Politically there was another great passenger hanging on for all he was worth (and that *is* all he's worth, come to think of it). Richard Nixon, whose only discernible qualification for any office has been that he wants it (oh, does he want it!) treated the affair in proper perspective. He said, gosh, that it was man's greatest moment. He meant his greatest moment, of course--a fact he gave away by both dropping his name on the moon and dropping his cool with the astronauts, telling the entire world that the nearest thing about being President was actually getting to take free rides to historic events rather than staying home to watch them like all the kids who didn't want to be leaders quite bad enough. (One recalled, as this marionette figure spoke, that he also had remaked, while helicoptering over Washington's rush hour traffic, that he was glad he didn't have to drive to work. His attitude toward the moon thing seemed just about on the same level: he was *really* glad to get to see the doings close up instead of at home like the working stiff.)

There was also that leader of the downtrodden, Ralph Abernathy. He said that the whole thing was so awe inspiring that it even made him forget poverty for a moment. And why not? He had an entire special section of seats reserved for him at the launching, thus becoming the first extra-terrestrial Tom, you might say. The awesome demonstration probably also made him forget, if he ever had bothered to think about it in the first place, that a lot of his brothers and sisters are being killed these days because they happen to want to solve their problems here on earth.

There also was Billy Graham, gently chiding his old buddy Dick about the moon thing being the greatest moment in man's history. Fourth greatest, he corrected, right after Christmas, the Crucifixion, and the Resurrection. (Or maybe fifth, right after the invention of the padded collection plate and the 100% religion depletion tax allowance.)

For the best performance by an American leader, however, the prize really had to go to Teddy Kennedy, starring in a re-run of Dickie Nixon's little-dog-Checkers speech,

as produced in actual tragedy by the inmates of the state of Massachusetts under the direction of dynastic destiny out of sheer chutzpah. Since nobody else seems to give a damn that somebody got killed in the process why should we, eh folks?

To savor the play we must first appreciate the scenery. Here is the Senator from Massachusetts, one of the nation's richest, most pampered young men. Unlike the temporary President of the United States, who got the job by holding his breath and threatening to turn blue unless we let him have it, Teddy Kennedy is widely felt to have some dibs on the job by sheer hereditary right, having not made much ado about any more profound qualification. And here, of course, is this tragedy; indeed, one dead girl in a world full of dead and dying can be called tragic. The point is how it is all perceived. And it is perceived as a problem in practical politics, nothing more. Even the surviving partner in the tragedy perceives it as nothing more and goes on TV to make the point as publicly as possible.

Teddy, it is said, just as it was said of Nixon in *his* time of crisis, is fighting for his life. It's a stirring thought. It would be the only thing *in* that life he ever did have to fight for.

But what manner of warped and hollow men could be said to be fighting for their lives--even forgiving journalistic hyperbole--when all that is involved is whether or not the man will hold a public office? And what manner of people can take seriously the posturings of such public men or translate such public puling into private agony?

The incident, indeed all of the incidents, tell us perhaps more about our society, our 'system' than even about the cardboard cutouts, the political Barbies and Kens who strut on the particular stage at the particular moment.

This supposedly noble land had been bred and fed on this obviously ignoble fare. It seems now impossible to say that all of this horseshit is just some aberration of an otherwise perfect civil comity and economic dynamism. It rather seems that all of this sort of loathsome leadership is the inevitable result of a system which, along with its vast capacity for producing goods, has an exactly equal capacity for producing evils.

Teddy Kennedy, telling *his* people (*his* forelock-pulling people down there in the Kennedy village that is the laughably sovereign state of Massachusetts) telling *his* people that he must be loved if he is to lead them, suggestively warning that if he had to step down they would lose more than a great man, they would lose a great name, asking the ever-loving folk in his ever-loving village to make the great decision for him (oh, my god; decisions, decisions, why not ask the little people to share this great burden with me); Teddy Kennedy who must actually think that whether he stays in the Senate or not is somewhere near as important as whether some man in Roxbury can pay his rent this month, or whether any man will live the night through in Vietnam, that Teddy Kennedy *is* your Teddy Kennedy America! Just as Richard Nixon is. Just as are Bobby Baker, Litton Industries, Dow Chemical, Nelson Rockefeller and all the other great practitioners of state capitalism and the profiteers of state imperialism.

What I kept thinking as I watched the *national* leaders disport themselves, and thought of their origins, was that to really love this land you must first learn to loathe this nation and the system for which it stands.

BIG BARGAIN!! SPECIAL OFFER!!

We will give a FREE renewal to anyone who gets us five subscriptions. Send us five subs and enjoy your reward. Help build the *Libertarian Forum*!

FRIENDS! PARENTS!

Do you have a friend or a relative going to college this fall? Why not send him or her a gift subscription to the *Libertarian Forum*? Spread the word! Remember: Student subs are only \$5.00.

Against The Volunteer Military

Many libertarians have been misled into supporting the volunteer military proposal. The argument typically goes something like this: the draft is a clear violation of the principle that each man is a complete self-owner; that to take away the free use of a man's life for two years is to nationalize his most important piece of private property--his own person.

The argument continues: the lottery merely bases the slavery inherent in a draft system on mathematical chance instead of on the chance of getting a deferment and is therefore equally servile. Universal service merely seeks to hide the slavery inherent in the draft system under the cloak of egalitarianism-slavery for all.

The volunteer military idea is seemingly strengthened by analogy to the free market: coercive systems are always inefficient and this applies to coercive systems of acquiring military personnel. A market wage for soldiers will attract the most highly motivated soldiers, the soldiers most likely to re-enlist. Below market-wage soldiers will be poorly motivated, inefficient and will not re-enlist in high percentages--necessitating high training costs due to the high turnover in personnel.

In order to see why the above argument is fallacious, mischievous, and anti-libertarian let us consider the following: A concentration camp is set up whose purpose it is to torture innocent victims. Those unfortunates are dragged in kicking and screaming, are then subdued, tortured, maimed and finally killed. There is only one fact disturbing this otherwise idyllic picture--the concentration camp torturers are not hired at the going market rate as "free enterprise" demands; rather, they are, horrors! draftees. A group of "libertarians" is worried about the poor motivation and inefficiency of the torturers who were drafted against their will and "who just cannot seem to put their hearts into it." In addition, the sad fact is that the re-enlistment rate is low--necessitating high training costs due to the high turnover in personnel.

What does this "libertarian" group then recommend? It recommends that future torturers be hired at market wage rates--a "volunteer torturary" as it were.

It is not hard for the true libertarian to see the error in volunteer military sentiment when viewed through this analogy. The point is that we must *first* determine whether the proposed job of the hirings is consistent with libertarian principles. If it is, only *then* do we look into the method of hiring which must, of course, be voluntary.

If we mistakenly support voluntary methods of hiring people *before* we consider precisely what they are being

hired to do, we may well become unwitting supporters of the *efficient* violation of liberties.

In the present political context the consistent libertarian must oppose the draft, but he must *also* oppose all imperialistic armies, be they drafted or hired.

What the proponents of the volunteer military forget is that there is a fifth alternative to manning imperialistic armies by the draft, lottery, universal service, or the volunteer military--opposition to imperialism under any guise even under the guise of the free market.

Is the libertarian, then, a pacifist, opposed to all armies? Far from it. The libertarian supports *defensive* armies whose soldiers are hired voluntarily. But this is not enough! Such armies must be paid for only by people who desire defense services and who voluntarily pay for them. Such armies would be more efficient than many presently known, but this efficiency the libertarian could wholeheartedly applaud since it would be used to protect, not violate, liberties. Moreover, such armies would be fully just since they would also be support without violating liberties.

— Walter Block

Hear Ye! Hear Ye!

ANNOUNCING A **LIBERTARIAN CONFERENCE!**

The Columbus Day Weekend in New York City
From Friday Night, Oct. 10 through Sunday, Oct. 12
At The Hotel Diplomat

Speeches! Panels! Parties!

FEATURED SPEAKERS **KARL HESS**
DR. MURRAY N. ROTHBARD

PANELISTS INCLUDE: Walter Block, R. A. Childs, Jr., Walter Grinder, Leonard P. Liggio, Joseph R. Peden, Robert J. Smith, Jerome Tuccille

COST: Students \$7.00 Non-Students \$10.00 (10% extra at door)

All who bring sleeping bags are assured of floor space.

MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS NOW!

For Reservations and Further Information, Write:

The Libertarian Conference Committee
Box 341
Madison Square Station
New York, N. Y. 10010

SUBSCRIBE NOW

Please enter a subscription for:

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Subscription is \$7.00 per year.

Student subscription \$5.00 per year.

Libertarian Forum Associate subscription is \$15.00 or more.

THE LIBERTARIAN FORUM

Box 341 Madison Square Station
New York, New York 10010

The Libertarian Forum

BOX 341
MADISON SQUARE STATION
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10010